

ALL TORN UP INSIDE—*OUTLINE***The Road to Recovery**

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I. Benefiting from Things Taught and Spoken**A. The Context: How to Profit from Your Prophets.**

1. The word ‘prophecy’ as used in the New Testament and through to today, in fairly loose terms, means ‘things that get spoken into your life that are directive and build you up.’
 - a. “God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.” (Hebrews 1:1-2)
 - b. In New Testament times when a person came to accept Jesus into their life, they accepted Jesus who is the very essence, the very substance of who God is. (John 14:9)
 - c. The New Testament prophecy essentially (speaking in generalities) is more to help you walk in the path that you have already chosen to walk in—to help you know God better.
2. Old Testament prophets were essentially those who announced the verdicts of God.
 - a. They were giving God’s evaluation of things, God’s reaction to things so judgment would come against a nation or against a person.
 - b. When people would hear the judgment or verdict that was brought against that person, they would come to understand a little bit more of how it is that God thinks and what He’s like.
 - c. In addition to that the Old Testament prophets were often prophesying what was going to take place in the future so when things did take place in the future, people would come to believe and want to line up with God’s ways.

B. Characteristics of a Prophetic Word. (1 Corinthians 14:3)

1. “But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.”
2. This verse gives us three of the key elements of any New Testament prophecy, any word or teaching.
 - a. Edification.
 - i) When we use the word “to edify,” it means to build someone up.
 - ii) It has to do with the structure or the pattern of something. It’s the blueprint that lets you know what it is that you’re supposed to be doing.
 - iii) Since you and I have chosen to *build this house* in God—we want our life to be a temple to the Lord and we want it to be built into this marvelous testimony of who God is.
 - b. Exhortation.
 - i) Exhortation is God speaking to us *after* we’ve decided, “Yes, I want to do it.” It’s not angry sounding statement.
 - ii) An example of exhortation would be a person standing behind you when you’re trying to make a straight line, saying, “A little more to the right or left.” It keeps you on track.
 - c. Comfort.
 - i) Comfort is very personal; it soothes and encourages. It releases you when you’ve made a mistake and it’s a welcome, a personal invitation and nurture of God caring about you.
 - ii) This is the beauty of being submitted to somebody who can speak into your life.
3. The purpose of a prophetic word is to give you a pattern to live by.
 - a. It lets you know how you’re doing, according to the pattern of the Lord.
 - b. It comes along and lets you know His love for you and His delight in you is what it is all about.

- c. If you don't feel these elements in it, then I would encourage you to dismiss it.

C. Characteristics of a Prophet.

1. A prophet has a love for the word of God.
2. They have a proven record of impact in other people's lives.
 - a. 2 Timothy 4:3-4 gives us a warning: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths."
3. They aren't strangers. They're people I want to have a relationship with.

D. Physical and Spiritual are Intricately Connected.

1. There are natural and spiritual things that can cause problems.
 - a. If you get people who are physically not doing what they're supposed to be doing, then spiritually something isn't going to happen.
 - b. For example, if no one wants to sit next to each other in church it can create a bunch of strangers.
2. It is no accident that the Bible is so detailed in its description of physical postures that we're to take when worshiping God.

II. Who are the Prophets that Speak to Us?

A. How Do You Avoid the Problem of Getting Your Own Teachers Who Tell You What You Want to Hear?

1. First, you should decide who those people are before you listen to them.
 - a. I have already resolved the fact that these were people who have a prophetic voice in my life and in the life of my church.

- b. But that leads us to another problem: Do we just become a bunch of spiritual zombies?
No.
2. Examine, confirm and follow through.
 - a. If you judge the counsel, do so according to God's word, not your own thinking so you can get out of the mess you are in now.
 - b. Don't just be a hearer of the word, but be a doer of the word. (James 1:22-25)

B. Who Speaks into This Church Family?

1. I invited our district supervisor, Dr. Wymore to our church after we moved into our facility.
 - a. His prophetic word to us was: *Don't grow weary in well-doing.*
 - b. At first the word sounded odd because we were so encouraged and really going for it in the Lord. But periodically I do get discouraged and I go back to these words he spoke and I don't allow myself the luxury of getting weary.
2. Dr. Holland, President of Foursquare during that time said, "Daniel, take notes on what you're doing here as a church because our Denomination needs this kind of model."
 - a. 2 years later he asked me to address leaders in Canada and if I hadn't taken notes I wouldn't have known what to say.
3. The Courtneys who have been part of our Foursquare heritage gave us a word: *God raised them up for their generation, so he's raised you up for your generation. Keep right on going.*
 - a. This was such a promise from them for us. "If you will order your life and arrange the particulars of your life in God like this couple has in their lifetime, then you too will experience that fundamental health of being that you see witnessed in this couple of 85-years-old."
4. Many leaders from *Church on the Way* have given us valuable words of instruction.
 - a. One word from Jack Hayford was a message on "Suddenlies" which I knew was our church facility.

5. These words give you a pattern and something to focus on. People without that kind of prophetic input in their lives are destined to veer to the right or to the left.

C. A Caleb Prophecy—Forgetting the Past. (Pastor Henk Rothuizen’s Message to Us).

1. A prophetic message will help you understand where you’ve been and where you are going. When Henk was with us and spoke on Caleb, and also on the place of Hebron, I knew this was something that is important for us to hear.
2. Not looking back—moving forward.
 - a. Even though Caleb got a raw deal, rather than focusing on bitterness and frustration, he elected to keep moving on in God.
 - b. What are the things, the disappointments and frustrations of other people’s doings that have made you feel left behind, and you’re tempted to keep going back with unforgiveness towards them? God says, “Be released into the future!”
3. Caleb had a taste of ‘the good land.’
 - a. Caleb didn’t allow himself be limited by the grumpiness of people around him, bellyaching all the time.
 - b. Caleb had tasted of the Promised Land. He had been there and because he had already been there, he knew where he was going.
4. Caleb focused more on others’ progress.
 - a. Caleb was a man who loved obscurity and was more interested in other people getting their inheritance than he was in claiming his own.
 - b. Our church spends so much time giving ourselves away to others— helping small congregations, the struggling church and the pastor that doesn’t really know what else to do.
 - c. The benefit of obscurity—seeing you flourish in God because of what we were able to do for you.

D. Hebron.

1. Hebron was the place of unity, of community, of family, of association.
2. Abram and Lot were in ministry together and their flocks grew big and they had so many people with them that the land was unable to sustain them both.
 - a. Principle found in Lot and Abram's parting. (Genesis 13)
 - i) Because of what God is doing to flourish and to bless, not only our church but other people, sometimes God needs people to go someplace else.
 - ii) The beauty of the story is that Abram ultimately rescues Lot when he gets taken captive by another army.
 - iii) Wouldn't that be beautiful for us to have the attitude that whether it's our pioneer churches that have left us, people who have moved away or even people who have left us with a measure of frustration—rather than letting any kind of animosity develop, let's keep having a heart of serving them.
 - iv) "Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?" (Amos 3:3 NIV)

III. The Subject of Abuse

A. An Abusive Authority.

1. A dysfunctional authority uses their place, position or power to gratify themselves and to do harm to the people that are under their care, supervision or their authority.
2. Rather than going to self-help books, follow a pattern that that is spelled out in the Bible to become recovered as God is in the business of restoration.

B. Saul and David.

1. Saul was the King who had been appointed by God but He used his authority in an abusive way in David's life.
 - a. It's a perfect picture of a man (or woman) who is trapped in their own distortion and because of that distortion they have become abusive to other people.
 - b. David had to put distance between him and his abuser, Saul.

2. The Amalekites.
 - a. God told Saul to destroy the Amalekites but Saul thought he had a better idea.
 - i) "...Rebellion is as the sin of divination..." (1 Samuel 15:23)
 - ii) Disobedience and rebellion to God is dabbling in the occult.
 - iii) Saul's disobedience lost him a measure of his true authority.
 - b. When Saul dies, an Amalekite goes to David with Saul's armband and his crown and tells David that Saul, David's abuser, is dead.
 - i) The Amalekite resists and denies your true inheritance.
 - ii) They are people who create rebellion in other people's lives, who resist and want to deny you getting your inheritance, your full promise.
3. Rescue for the sake of others.
 - a. David escapes his abuser but has to battle the plunderer.
 - b. David wins the battle and was able to get back all the family members, all of the possessions of Ziglag, and in addition to that, he was able to raid the Amalekites themselves and take plunder and spoil from them.
 - i) What a picture this is of the force of evil in the world, and the force of the devil. The Bible says, "The thief [devil] comes only to steal and kill and to destroy..." (John 10:10)
 - ii) We learn a very quick lesson here: Just because you're safe from your abuser does not mean that you are safe from your plunderer.
4. David's response.
 - a. Instead of celebrating, David begins to mourn and he weeps over the loss of his abuser.
 - b. The first step for someone who seriously wants to recover from what happened to them in the past—for it to have no more influence over them—instead of celebrating when your abuser is finished off and destroyed, mourn.

- i) What the Bible teaches us is not to give place to a spirit of revenge in our soul. Ultimately, the spirit of revenge will destroy you.
- ii) There were two occasions when Saul was in a vulnerable position and David could have killed him. Even though Saul was abusing his authority, David knew that God would never cause him to prosper.
- iii) A person who abuses someone is not really in control of what he or she is doing. If we can have mercy and understand that the people who have done damage in our lives were probably themselves acting out whatever had happened to them, you can at least mourn the damage done to them.
- iv) David sang a song of mourning for his abuser.
 - a) In the song that David sang, there was no statement about what a bad guy Saul was.
 - b) There was a statement of what Saul could have been, of the benefit that he did do. David leaves himself out of the picture.
 - c) Have an eye towards redemption and 'good.'
- c. Distortion of revenge.
 - i) Our inability to separate what a person has done from the person, creates a secret desire to take revenge, and revenge is simply another manifestation of murder.
- 5. The wrong future and false authority.
 - a. The Amalekite came to David and offered David this crown of authority and this armband of strength.
 - i) "Here now, why don't you wear his crown? Why don't you take his authority and arm yourself with Saul's strength?" This is an offer of a false authority.
 - ii) One of the things that people who have been abused are tempted to do is strengthen themselves and become strong enough to regain their personhood, their authority and their ability to make choices.

- iii) For people who have been abused, their authority has been taken, their identity has been robbed from them and they live in a foggy state of almost “shock” to the soul.
6. Reliance on God.
- a. The abused imagine that reacting to an abuser will resolve their relationship with God, but it doesn’t work that way—that’s backwards.
 - b. If you will resolve your relationship with God, *that* will ultimately resolve your reaction to an abuser.
 - c. Instead of being a product of his past, David wants to have his future be a product of his Redeemer.
 - d. I find that for many long-term Christians, when God speaks a very simple thing into their lives, they’re like “What?” Well, let me ask you, how well are you with what you’ve known? Seek God.
7. David finally goes to God and He tells David to go to Hebron.
- a. God says, “Get into relationship! Become intimate with people. Open up your life and your soul.”
 - b. The natural response to abuse is for people to isolate themselves and defend themselves and keep themselves from ever getting in that fix again.
 - c. David refused the crown from the Amalekite, but later he receives a better crown. When David goes to Hebron the people anoint him as King.
8. Obedience and relationship. Forgiveness, not justice.
- a. Real authority is the ability for you to give yourself away. How much authority, power or strength do you have if you can’t make yourself vulnerable to other people? That isn’t authority, that’s fear. Be in relationship.
 - i) Our culture says, “Stay safe; guard yourself.” But according to the Bible, you will not be recovered.

- ii) How you get back your real self, authority and strength is always in the context of relationship.
 - iii) The first thing David says after receiving his kingship is to thank the people who buried Saul. (2 Samuel 2:4-5)
- b. David was willing to get beyond abuse, to step beyond. To me it speaks of forgiveness. Until you forgive your abuser, you will never be free of your abuser.
- i) Forgiveness is a statement of guilt. You cannot forgive an innocent person.
 - ii) Forgiveness no longer wants the guilty to get what they deserve.
 - a) The trauma, the tragedy of unforgiveness, even though you don't realize it, again is ultimately, a statement of murder.
 - b) There is a promise in the word of God that if you will live your life and follow the pattern that David followed, then your house in God will grow stronger and stronger. (2 Samuel 3:1)

IV. Absalom's Rebellion

A. Absalom Also Went to Hebron, but He Went There Under Very Different Circumstances Than Absalom Did.

1. Absalom actually went to Hebron in order to usurp the throne—to grab hold of authority in an ungodly way.
2. In the story of Absalom, rather than being an abuser like Saul was an abuser, Absalom is a *user of people*.
3. You'll get a lot of invitations in life, even from people you like, but it isn't necessarily the invitation that you're going to want to grab hold of. It may be a rebellion party.

B. Absalom's Character. (2 Samuel 15)

1. Absalom, one of David's sons, was handsome and outgoing, loved prominence, visibility and was the life of the party.

2. A user of people.
 - a. Absalom was a murderer, but used his underlings to do the dirty work.
 - b. He had no interest in seeing people under his authority bettered.
 - c. Absalom was determined to get what he wanted; he was patient, very focused and single-minded to achieve his goal.

C. How to Recognize an Absalom.

1. Absaloms take advantage of the mercy and kindness of rightful authority in order to begin their plotting. (2 Samuel 14:33)
 - a. If you're going to be a good king, like David was, your heart has to be one of mercy toward people—bent on lovingkindness. You're supposed to generate an atmosphere of great grace and a lot of latitude, where you presume the best about people.
2. Absaloms have no sense of personal repentance.
 - a. Absalom was not agonized or tormented by the things he had done—he was only focused on what other people had done.
 - b. Absaloms are always talking about what other people have done or haven't done.
3. Absaloms desire a platform.
 - a. Absalom provides for himself a chariot. (2 Samuel 15:1)
 - b. Absalom had no interest in getting himself a chariot and then going out and joining the front lines of the armies that were fighting against the enemies of the kingdom.
 - c. People who want a platform, their interest is circling the city, not going off to the eastern front and fighting a battle.
 - i) Be careful of people promoting themselves.
 - ii) It's not how nice your chariot looks, but how many battle scars your chariot has, seasoned in battle.

- d. The Absaloms are very interested in appearance.
 - i) The spirit of Absalom's modus operandi—the way that it functions and operates—is found in 2 Samuel 15:2-4. Basically, it tries to find other people who are malcontents.
 - ii) Absaloms will never encourage anybody to actually go and talk to somebody who can do something about it.
- 4. Absaloms intercept people's complaints and problems.
 - a. They can be overly sympathetic. Not everybody who asks you about your problems is really interested in your welfare.
 - b. They use people as stepping-stones.
 - c. Absalom encourages people to idolize him. (2 Samuel 15:5) He reaches out with some statement of "I'm with you" and enjoys attention and gratitude.
- 5. Absaloms deflect from true authority. (2 Samuel 15:7-11)
 - a. The Bible says, "Deep will call to deep..." (Psalm 42:7)—spirit calls to spirit.
 - b. Instead of being *bonded in love*, and *love covers a multitude of transgressions*, instead of being *kind-hearted, tender-hearted, forgiving of one another, recognizing that there is no sin or corruption that anybody else has got except that is common to everybody else*, and *being willing to overlook the normal mistakes that people make*, the enemy wants to form a bond of frustration, problems and difficulty.

D. Healing Relationships or Distorted Intentions?

- 1. Hebron is the place where David had been crowned, and Absalom wants to steal away the authority.
 - a. The only problem is David received the crown in a place of relationship because he went there in obedience to the Lord.
 - b. Relationship became a point of healing and recovery for David.
 - c. Absalom wants to use people and relationships. David needed people.

2. Absalom went to Hebron because he thought that if he imitated what David did, he would also have authority.
 - a. Relationship that is designed to do good to another person always takes a long time to develop. Be leery of people who aren't in it to do you good, but only in it to do *themselves* good.
 - b. Unintentionally people have mistaken good friends for truth because they have agreed about some wrong an authority has done and made—pacts and agreements about what is or isn't going on.
 - i) You don't want to be linked to someone in this way.
 - ii) Proverbs says that if you have entrapped yourself financially to somebody by borrowing money from them, go on your knees and entreat them to be loosened from the bonds that you are in. (Proverbs 6:1-5)

v. Life with Forgiveness

A. Forgiveness is the Basic Foundation, the Dynamic of the Kingdom.

1. Everything of what God wants to accomplish in the lives of human beings is tied to forgiveness. That foundation is critical if you and I are going to progress as the people that God wants for us to be.
2. The foundation of our church family, the things that God is going to build upon in the future, those foundations are being enlarged from the right hand unto the left. (Isaiah 54:2-3)
3. Without the shedding of blood, there can be no forgiveness of sins. And without forgiveness of sins, there can be no relationship between the Lord and us.

B. Without Forgiveness.

1. We can often stumble over the fact that people haven't asked us for forgiveness, and because they haven't done their part, it's really hard for us to imagine doing our part.
2. Diminished Future.
 - a. Without forgiveness, the future God has to offer people, other than a continuation of where they are right now, is not there.

- b. The only way to keep these debts from draining the resources of our soul is for us to close them. The way that we close them is by forgiving.

C. Repentance and Forgiveness—Deliverance and Rescue.

1. The essence of repentance is a radical transformation in your thinking patterns, in the conclusions that you've come to about the way you live your life.
2. God won't forgive without repentance and He won't deliver a person without repentance (on their part). No change is possible without forgiveness.
 - a. If someone has offended you, and they come and repent of what they have done, but you don't forgive them, there is no prospect for change.
 - b. It isn't just them *repenting* that will bring about change, but you have to forgive them or you "lock them up" and keep them held in the pattern that they were in.

D. Personal Vindication.

1. We are taught to pray, "Our Father who art in Heaven..." and it continues "...and forgive us our debts, [sins] as [in the same manner in which] we also have forgiven our debtors [others]. (Matthew 6:9-12)
2. "In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 7:12)
3. Sin breaks relationships.
 - a. If a friend hurts me, I am no longer in relationship with them but I am in relationship with their sin. Your relationship is with the wounding your friend has done.
 - b. Forgiveness is a way of getting sin out of the picture so once again the relationship can be restored.

E. Unforgiveness is Part of That False Crown and Armband.

- a. The Amalekite offered to David a false authority and false power.
- b. Unforgiveness acts as an empowering device that a victim uses to even the score and "do one better" to the victimizer.

- c. *Mercy* is what forgiveness is all about. *I extend mercy to you.* Hear the difference between “being merciful” and “having you at my mercy.”
 - i) Having you at my mercy means that you have to wait upon me and I am the one that can decide your fate.
 - ii) “Unforgiveness” in really simple terms is any hurt that is in the past tense.
 - iii) Unforgiveness is a way of empowering yourself. It is a way of defending yourself. It is a dangerous armband and a very dubious crown—even though you are a judge.

F. Random Points on Forgiveness. (Romans 2)

1. Humble yourself by admitting you have done wrong. If you are defending yourself, that isn't asking for forgiveness.
2. Ask for forgiveness.
 - a. Go to the person against whom you have done the wrong and ask them a question: “Will you forgive me?”
 - b. “What I did was wrong. I see that now. I can totally understand why it hurt you. I want to ask you if will you forgive me for what I did, because it was wrong?”
 - c. It's easy to say you're sorry without sincerity. You can just feel badly someone is hurt without truly admitting you are wrong.
3. Change your behavior.
 - a. If you're not changing your behavior, you're not asking for forgiveness.
 - b. If you're really asking for forgiveness, you are only asking regarding the things that you can change.
4. Truth vs. righteousness.
 - a. It's one thing to point out what your friend did wrong, and because you think it's true (and it might be), you think you are righteous.

- b. There's a huge difference between truth and righteousness.
5. God's judgment is to bring forgiveness.
- a. If a person doesn't know they are guilty, they are never going to ask for forgiveness and will then never be forgiven. God's judgment is to bring forgiveness.
 - b. We must be very careful for any judgment in our life that is not associated with forgiveness. I think you can end up "seeing" things when you are not forgiving—things that aren't really there.
- G. Friends and Foes of Forgiveness.
1. Bitterness.
- a. The word "bitterness" means acid or poison. What eats you alive about what someone else has done is not what he or she has done.
 - b. The Bible teaches that what someone did cannot follow you if you forgive the thing they did.
 - c. But of course, you don't realize that, so you keep blaming the thing that they did, justifying why you feel bitter, and again, the bitterness is the thing that is killing you.
2. Clamor.
- a. When we are unforgiving, our shriek of what's happening to us is the loudest thing going on.
 - b. We don't realize it's hurting our own ears until someone taps us on the shoulder and we stop screaming, realizing it is suddenly much calmer.
3. Malice.
- a. *Malice is your desire to "get them." It's payday sweetheart. You did this to me; I'm doing this to you.*
4. Blindness of your sin...
- a. When you are unforgiving, your own blindness of *your* sin increases in size.

- b. When you are unforgiving, God's willingness to forgive you decreases, so you have more sins that you don't know about, and you have less likelihood of being forgiven of those sins.
5. Tenderhearted.
- a. Being sympathetic, having sympathy for what the other person has gone through, or why they did what they did, is being tenderhearted.
 - b. Jesus demonstrated this when He said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34)
6. Kindness.
- a. Kindness certainly means to 'be kind' but it also means to be employed, useful and easy.
 - i) Using the opposite analogy, we get employed by unforgiveness to make someone else's life hard.
 - ii) If I want to be forgiving, then I ought to offer myself *to be employed* to make this person's life easy. (Proverbs 25:21-22; Romans 12:20)
7. Forgiveness will empower you.
- a. If somebody truly seeks your forgiveness, and you grant it to him or her, it leaves them feeling so grateful and respectful of you.
 - b. "But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared." (Psalm 130:4)

H. Caleb's Characteristics.

- 1. Caleb was one of a group of people who went to spy out the Promised Land and when he saw it he thought it was fabulous even though he also saw a few obstacles in the way.
- 2. Others with him saw the obstacles or hurdles needed to be overcome in order to get those blessings and said, "No!"
 - a. Many of us have the false idea that if we could just get to the border of the "Promised Land" our struggles and issues would be over.

- b. Understand that the giants that seem to lurk in your land of promise are every bit as intimidating as anything you experienced while you were working your way through the desert.
 - c. When we come into the Promised Land we still need to do what He has told us to do—step into the things He’s asked us to do.
 3. Caleb was willing to be in relationship with the people because he knew that unforgiveness and revenge could never give him a future.
 4. Caleb stands as a marvelous example of a man of vision, faith and hope.
 - a. Caleb had a vision for this inheritance.
 - b. Caleb has seen the Promised Land and he has a fundamental conviction that this future place exists.
 - I. Revelation.
 1. We, of course, haven’t been to our future, so we have to settle for a thing called *revelation*.
 2. Your future isn’t an issue of time—it is a pre-existing reality. You aren’t making your future. Our job as believers is to walk with the Lord in such a way that we end up at the place that He already has in mind for us.
 - J. Evaluate the Whole Text.
 1. Jeremiah 29:11 is a beautiful scripture, but like all of these beautiful scriptures that we love to quote, they have a context that must be evaluated if we’re going to really understand what’s being said.
 - a. “‘For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.’” (Jeremiah 29:11)
 - b. The people of Israel are living in the land of bondage and oppression.
 - c. People come along and say things like, “Thus saith the Lord, it’ll be a day or two, three at the most and you’ll be out of here. Deliverance draws nigh. Never mind, you’ll be out in no time at all.”

- d. Jeremiah comes and says, “No. I’ll tell you what God is saying. It isn’t tomorrow that you’re getting out of here, it’s going to be seventy years. You might as well settle in, build houses, have a family, plant crops and so on. Learn how to multiply and increase in the land of your captivity.” (Jeremiah 29:28)
2. Another word for deliverance is to be ‘pulled out.’
 - a. One word or picture for deliverance means “to be pulled out,” “to be extricated,” “to be snatched away,” “to be rescued from whatever you’re in,” “to get you out of the fix that you are in right now, just like that,” or “to get things that are in you, out.”
 - b. The other word for deliverance—instead of “pulling out”—is “to pull you through.”
 - i) It isn’t a quick exit. Your deliverance is in how you learn to live your way through and wade your way through the circumstances and conditions of your life and your spiritual muscles are strengthened.
 - ii) You are equipped. You are being given more understanding and capacity to being a stronger, a more capable warrior (because it’s a military term) in the future.
 - a) *God says, I’m going to do you great good; I have plans for your welfare. I’m going to restore your fortune.*
 - b) *Literally, I’m going to repent your captivity. “To repent,” means to turn around, to exchange, to make different what has been.*
 - iii) When God brings you out of the fix that you have been in—whether it’s right away or seventy years from now—what He does is brings you back to the place where you got off track. (Jeremiah 29:14)
 - a) Deliverance does not insulate you from having any problems in the future.
 - b) Deliverance brings you back, but you are still faced with the same choice. Are you going to make the same steps as before and get back into bondage, or are you going to make the right choice and follow the Lord as He leads you?

K. Holding on to God’s Promises.

1. In the midst of these forty years Caleb held onto the promises that God had given him.

- a. This reminded me of this beautiful scripture: “For this reason I have often been prevented from coming to you; but now, with no further place for me in these regions, and since I have had for many years a longing to come to you...” (Romans 15:22-23)
2. Caleb had hope.
 - a. The word of God brings encouragement and hope. (Romans 15:4)
 - i) When I need hope I tend to focus on four books: Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, and Deuteronomy.
 - b. You can’t say to yourself that you really hope for something you already have.
- L. The Promised Land Vs. Dreamland.
 1. The Promised Land is when the Lord comes to you and says, “OK, this is going to be true, and this and this...”
 - a. God has promised to keep His word. He will fulfill His promise, but that isn’t the same as saying, “Well, go ahead. You can just kind of pick it yourself.”
 2. Dreamland or daydreaming is a very tempting place to go.
 - a. Daydreams tend to be spawned out of things like lust, covetousness, envy, a desire to be rich, and generally speaking, are not good recommendations for accepting an invitation to go there.
 - b. The problem is that ideal world can be substituted for your “Promised Land” and you will be more frustrated because you want your ideal world, and by not getting that, you blame God and everyone else.

VI. Patience and Comfort in the Word

A. Two Fundamental Truths if You Want to Get into Your Inheritance in the Future.

1. The first is the fear of the Lord. “Who is the man who fears the Lord?”
2. The second is the instruction that God will give you. “He will instruct him in the way he should choose.” (Psalm 25:12)

B. The Fear of the Lord.

1. People misunderstand the concept “*to fear the Lord*” as being afraid of God, being nervous whenever God is around.
2. The fear of the Lord only operates to keep you from breaking what you’re not supposed to break. It has no bearing at all on your personal love and intimacy with the Lord.
3. When you are afraid of the Lord in that regard, afraid of breaking what He’s told you not to break, then a beautiful thing happens; God begins to teach you. (Psalm 25:12-15)
4. He doesn’t teach people who aren’t afraid of Him.
 - a. Why should He bother saying to somebody, “Now don’t break this,” when they’re going to break it anyway?
5. Caleb learned how to respond to the instruction of God.
 - a. Whether you are in the desert land or whether you are in the Promised Land, God’s modus operandi is the same; He keeps instructing.
 - b. We know from reading elsewhere in Scripture that when the people of Israel finally did get into the Promised Land, they ceased being obedient to what God was saying to them and they lost out on their inheritance.
 - c. Caleb who was also in the desert, was obedient to the Lord and he ended up getting his inheritance.
 - d. Don’t fall into the trap of thinking that it’s one or two or three big choices that you make. No, it’s all about today and tomorrow, and if you obey, you will end up in the Promised Land.

VII. Real Spiritual Inheritance Makes Opportunity for Others

A. God Has a Vision, a Dream, and an Inheritance for Each of Us.

1. He has a spiritual place in our lives that He wants to come into.

B. Your True Spiritual Inheritance Will Always Include a Welcome and a Place for Other People.

1. Jesus is the best example—we went to Heaven but He went to make a place for everybody else.
2. If there isn't room for others in your vision for your future, your vision isn't from God.
 - i) Who else does your vision include and bless?
 - ii) Who does it exclude and leave out?

C. Suffering.

1. Suffering is a normative part of the Christian experience.
2. Suffering because of other people's stuff is the most glorious kind of suffering that there is.
 - a. If you read 1 Peter 2:13 through 1 Peter 3:9, there's a whole section here that basically says that suffering because of somebody else's stuff is to be expected.
 - b. You're probably going to suffer the most at the hands of people who are in authority over you—whether it's in your government, your job, or in your family.
 - c. Our natural disposition as human beings when we're suffering for somebody else's stuff is we want to get even with them and we want to get out of there.
3. We're in this together.
 - a. The Lord called everybody together and said, "I need volunteers."
 - b. He calls us together and says, "I've got a great assignment for you. I want people who will suffer the consequences of other people's stuff. None of what you're going to suffer is a consequence of what you've done, but that's the kind of volunteer that I'm looking for. It's called Christianity."
4. Jesus is Our Example. (1 Peter 2:21-25)
 - a. Jesus suffered because of other people's stuff. You have been called for the same purpose.

- b. Jesus kept entrusting Himself—literally surrendering Himself, yielding Himself to Him who judges righteously.
- c. The promise from God is that other people’s stuff can never keep you from ultimately getting into the Promised Land.

D. Is There Room for Others?

- 1. The characteristic of Caleb, a man who ended up in the desert as a consequence not of his own sins, but the sins of others is so similar to the story of Jesus.
- 2. Caleb had a willingness to be a man who lived in obscurity; a man who was totally selfless in his desires, but he wanted to see others get their inheritance. (Hebrews 12:1-2)
- 3. Jesus never ever worried about His inheritance, because God had secured His inheritance and His future.
 - a. Jesus was free to come and simply be obedient to the Father and to be an instrument in the Hand of God in order to secure the inheritance of other people.
 - b. He didn’t fall into the trap that we fall into imagining that if we help somebody else get theirs, we might not get all of our inheritance.

E. Real Glory.

- 1. Obscurity and selflessness are the real way that a person comes into true glory. (Philippians 2:3-9)
- 2. The word “glory” has the meaning of “weightiness” or “substance.”
- 3. God’s way is different from ours.
 - a. God’s way of bringing salvation, a Savior, was that He sent His Son who was born in a stable.
- 4. It is God’s design to focus in on the needs of others, serving others.

F. Selfishness Vs. Selflessness.

- 1. Selfishness is wanting my own way or wanting to accomplish more for me than others.

2. The word “selfish” here is literally the word “to be contentious” or “to be defensive.”
 - a. It has to do with fighting to defend or to take care of “my rights, my privileges,” the things that I deserve, my profit and my advantage.
 - b. It wants to maintain the upper hand and take care of me and become the center of focus.
3. Being right!
 - a. God helped me to see that the problem with being right the way I was right, is that it’s the end of the story. It was as though I could rub my hands together and be absolved of any further responsibility.
 - b. It doesn’t help anybody else and it doesn’t accomplish anything. There is no redemptive possibility in a posture that I adopt when “I’m right!”
4. Selfishness and empty conceit.
 - a. The grossest form of conceit or selfishness is how people can always be drawing attention to themselves.
 - i) We can justify ourselves so easily, but it’s still selfishness.
 - ii) Being more important than other people tends to evaluate everything in life on the basis of what it does to ‘me.’
 - iii) The Book of James talks about selfish ambition and a desire to have more and be more. (James 3:16)
5. Righteous.
 - a. Learning how to be righteous is *having a heart for the sake of other people*.
 - b. Jesus was right but that wasn’t the end of the story.
 - c. Jesus, although He existed in the form of God, wasn’t grasping for position.
 - d. Jesus emptied Himself. He was never worried about losing what He achieved or what He deserved, because His focus was not on a wrestling match with people.

i) His focus was on doing whatever it was God told Him to do. There is such freedom, such release in this understanding.

e. I'm going to let my inheritance come from the Lord, not from my own abilities.

G. 1 Corinthians 1.

1. Paul says, "...there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble..." (1 Corinthians 1:26)

2. Paul speaks about God choosing the foolish things... [the hidden things]. They are so plain, they're not noticeable—they don't stand out.

a. "...But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God." (1 Corinthians 1:27-29)

b. In verse 27 'the wise' literal word means 'clear and apparent.'

c. God takes the base things of the world—things that are not noble born, the common things—in order to confound the things that people most think of as being amazing.

d. God doesn't make great Christians out of real dynamos. God makes great Christians out of people like us, because the greatness isn't inherent in the person, the greatness is inherent in God's use of us.

H. God's Ways Are Not Our Ways.

1. It's all about obedience because how we naturally think often doesn't line up with God's thoughts.

2. The Kingdom is made up of people who the world thinks are idiots.

3. We don't defend ourselves. We don't secure our own territory. We trust that by serving others, God will secure us.

I. Numbers 13: The Context.

1. God said to Moses that he ought to send out spies to go into the Promised Land and check it out and then they come back and give their report to the people. (Numbers 13:25-26)
 - a. Many reports described how frightened the spies were at what they saw and people get all upset with their leader because now they're worried that they're not going to get to the Promised Land. (Refer to Numbers 14:2.)
 - b. The people of Israel are just like Christians. They are fair-weather friends if anything gets rough or tough.
2. God has already massively delivered them out of Egypt and told them it's a land of milk and honey. Notice that God never said that it is a land without enemies.
3. Earlier in Exodus 23-24, God tells them what to do. "...If you obey Me, I will go before you and drive out the inhabitants of the land..."
 - a. That's all part of the Covenant of Promise.
 - b. Conveniently, the people of Israel, and Christians, forget about the enemies, forget about the problems.
 - c. For every promise God has, you will come to the edge of it and you will see something of the possible fruit. But you also will see the enemy in the land. (Numbers 13:32-33)

VIII. Lessons About Possessing Your Inheritance

A. The Promised Land Is Different Than the Land You're Living in Now.

1. To have experienced salvation or to have experienced deliverance in your life, at some point along the way, is not the same thing as being in your Promised Land.
2. People make the mistake of thinking a great deliverance is the same as 'possession.'
 - a. People who want to go right from deliverance into their Promised Land never make it—there is a process of learning to attentively follow the Lord.
 - b. Deliverance is being freed from the chokehold of spiritual forces. Some of your progress in God is hindered by your own doing and some is the enemy's doing.

3. Between Egypt and the Promised Land, the people of Israel learned obedience to the Lord.

B. Facts and Myths About the Promised Land.

1. The first myth about the Promised Land is that you and I won't have to do any changing to get into it.
2. The second myth is there won't be any opposition and you can just waltz in and all will be well.
3. There are giants in the Promised Land.
 - a. Here's another lesson. The word "to possess" is the same word as "to dispossess."
 - i) You cannot possess your "Promised Land" without driving out somebody.
 - ii) There has to be this purposeful sense of expulsion. God made it this way.
 - iii) If you don't do that, then the people that you leave in the land—their worship practices and the spiritual influence—will become as thorns in your side and pricks in your eyes. (Numbers 33:55)
 - iv) How we link up with what He's doing is that we drive the enemies out, instead of saying, "Well, they're not bothering anybody. I've got my room. I can plant my crops and let them have theirs."
 - b. It doesn't matter how big the giants are as long as your God is bigger.
 - i) Curiously, when the people of Israel evaluated their situation and decided not to go into the Promised Land, the giants got bigger. (Numbers 13:33)
 - ii) Disobedience has a cumulative effect to make it less and less possible to be obedient.
 - a) It's amazing how we justify a situation and decide to walk away. Later it seems impossible to do.
 - b) The issue is not giants, the issue is "gods." Who are you going to follow?
 - c) Caleb was a man who welcomed change. He was a man of repentance.