

## ***Fascinated by the Emotions of God, Part 2***

### **INTRODUCTION**

Psalm 16. We'll look at the life of David. We'll continue where we were the other night. You could title Psalm 16, "Enjoying Intimacy with God." You could title Psalm 16, "Enjoyable Prayer." It's one of the most important psalms where David opens his heart and tells us the things that he understood that empowered his heart to be a man after God's own heart.

We care about the life of David because David was called by God "the man after God's own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14, paraphrased). The Church at the end of the age is going to be a church after God's own heart. As I said the other day, the life of David is a divine pattern for the whole Church at the end of the age of the journey into holy passion and abandonment. This may surprise you, but it's really true: King David isn't different than you. King David, in his youth, had the same youthful lusts. He had the same ambitions. He had the same pain and propensity to discouragement and despair. Despair was something that touched David a number of times throughout his ministry and career and his adult life. David knew what it meant to fight through depression, but he knew what it meant to get through it. When David got through depression, that didn't mean he was done with it forever, because it would come back again in another season. David knew about lust; he knew about immorality. He knew about anger.

Whatever you do, don't think of the man after God's own heart, King David, as the man on the pedestal of whom we say, "Wow, wow, wow, wow!" God revealed more about David than any man in the Bible, except Jesus. He revealed his temptation, his weakness, his discouragement, his depression, so that people like me and people like you would read about his life and say, not, "Wow! David!" but rather, "If he can, I know that I can!"

The message of the life of David is this: if he can, I know that I can in the grace of God. If you read David and you say, "Wow!" you haven't read the life of David rightly. If you say, "What an unbelievable man!" the Holy Spirit whispers and says, "No, read it again; you don't get it."

I know some of you weren't even born in 1976, but I was a young pastor, twenty years old, a church-planter, and for my first series, a little church of fifty out in the country, I taught the life of David. "Open to 1 Samuel 13" was the beginning of the first series that I ever taught. I taught the life of David. The first time that I taught the life of David, I taught it wrongly. I'm not saying that I'm teaching it all right now; I'm just teaching it differently than that. I taught, "Big David! Wow, man of God! Hero! I want to be like David! I want to be awesome!" I read the life of David, and I've taught the life of David many times over the years. My understanding began to change dramatically. If you want to read it, start in about the sixteenth chapter of 1 Samuel; read all of 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles, and throughout the book of Psalms.

### **THE STORY OF DAVID'S LIFE: EXTRAORDINARY SIN, EXTRAORDINARY GRACE**

As I began to teach it over the years, I began to study it more thoroughly and to place the different psalms where they belong in the life of David. For example, you would read Psalm 18 right after David's defeat and eventual victory in Ziklag. My son, Luke, taught so awesomely today. I was in the seminar and I said, "That's my boy! That's my boy!" I know it was about him and the Lord, but I couldn't help just shining a little there. Anyway, Psalm 18 was written after David's struggle in Ziklag. I began to get which psalms fit where. I don't have the whole picture; I just have it a lot more clearly than I did.

I began to read David and say, “David? You did some pretty bad things.” I was depressed about David for a while. In the early 1980s, I was discovering a new David. I remember one time in May 1985, I gave a sermon on ten—not the only ten, but ten failures in David’s life in 1 and 2 Samuel. There were more than ten. Everyone knows David sinned with Bathsheba, and everyone knows that he did a few other things, but they can’t remember what. One Sunday morning, I laid out ten of David’s failures. I spent about three minutes on each one of them.

Our church was so upset about David, they were thinking about getting together and voting him out of the Bible. I said, “You can’t do that. You can’t vote someone out of the Bible. It doesn’t work that way.”

A committee rose up and said, “Well, at least we can ban him from the children’s church curriculum. Let’s censor this man out of the children’s curriculum.” I’m teasing about all that. They didn’t really do that, but my point is, they were horrified. I put the real David in front of them, the glory of his abandonment, and the reality of his struggle. When you see that, it’s not, “Wow David! Big David!” It’s, “Wow God! Big God! Messed-up David! Big God!”

I said, “I like that. I can relate to that message!” I like that kind of doctrine. It’s amazing that God chose him to be the man He called “the man after His own heart,” the picture of the end-time church. I say, “David, amazing!”

At first I said, “Lord, why not pick Joseph or Daniel, someone with no failures in the Bible? They didn’t do anything that was wrong recorded in the Bible. Why didn’t You use them?”

The answer is something like, “That’s not a picture of My people’s journey. I want My people to relate to the journey. I want them to know that they can be lovers of God.”

### **IF WE CAN KNOW WHAT DAVID KNEW, WE CAN LIVE AS DAVID LIVED**

It was the life of David that made me say this: “Why not me?” I remember the time that I first said this sentence: “If he can...” and I begin to read other biographies. Remember, most biographies exaggerate. That’s a nice, polite way to say they lie. Most biographies were written by people enamored by the subject of the biography. That’s why they wrote, “Oh, this man is so awesome.” They’re all enamored and they never talk about their sin or their struggle; they only talk about their victories. Chapter one: “The Great Victory!” Chapter two: “The Greater Victory!” Chapter three: “You’ll Never Believe What I’m Going to Tell You!” Chapter four: “Forget it! You Don’t Have a Chance to Do This!” Chapter five: “Put Him in the Hall of Fame!” We read it, we give to our friends.

I read tons of these biographies. I lifted up my heart, my vision, that I was going to be like them. Then I began to grow up a little and I said, “Wait a second, wait a second, those men were as dorky as I am.” We need a real biography.

God says, “I gave you one. It’s the life of David. It’s the real one.”

Psalm 16 is important for this reason: if we can know what David knew, we could live in our heart before God the way that David lived. Let me say that again: if we knew what David knew about God we could live like

David lived, the way that he carried his heart before God. I don't mean that we can be king of Israel. We can carry our heart before God in the way that David did. But if you don't know the things that David knew about God's heart, you can't carry your heart like David did unless you know what he knew about God. The key to David's obedience was his revelation of God's heart. I say this like a broken record, and I encourage you all to say this. I was talking to someone the other day and they said, "Well, I mean, that's just how *you* say it. I don't want to say it that way."

I say, "Oh, forget that old, dumb thing of trying to be unique and original and awesome. If it's practical, just use it." I don't hesitate to take stuff from anyone. I have such a passion to get the truth out that I don't care who said it. I don't try to memorize it; I couldn't care less. I don't give anyone credit, ever, because I just don't care. I don't care. I remember saying something, and I thought that I was quoting Paul Cain, and at the end I went to Paul and said, "Paul, do you remember when you said that?"

He said, "Well, you're the one that first told me."

I said, "Really? You got that from me? I don't even remember it. I always thought I got it from you." It was one little sentence.

My point is this: I don't care who said it; if it works and it's real, run with it. Some men are all uptight about it and they may give you a lawsuit if you don't quote them. In our little world you can use anything around here and it's yours, because you know what? We got it from someone else. No, I mean, Someone else. He's so rich and He's so nice, He says, "I love it when you use My stuff! I love it when you use My stuff!"

"Thank You, Lord."

I'll tell you a funny story that's not related to anything. It's a total bunny trail. It's Rick Joyner. I love this story. It's really short. We're good buddies, Rick and I, and Rick was preaching, and this was some years ago, and this lady was a new believer and she came up to Rick. She said, "Rick, that was really good."

Rick said, "Well, that was the Lord."

She was a new believer; she said, "It wasn't that good!"

Rick said, "Oh, right. Of course."

I love that one. When I tell people it was the Lord, I'm always expecting that lady to show up and say, "It wasn't that good!"

### **DAVID WAS A STUDENT OF THE EMOTIONS OF GOD**

Anyway, the definition from 1 Samuel 13:14 of a man after God's own heart. I want you to get this and use this. David was a man after God's own heart because he obeyed the commands of God's heart, number one. Number two: he studied the emotions of God's heart. It's OK if you say those phrases. You don't have to come with a unique way to say it. He obeyed the commands of God's heart; that's the most common definition of a man after God's own heart, or a woman after God's own heart. We obey the commands of God's own heart, but the most neglected definition is that he studied the emotions of God's heart. Beloved, I know I said this the other

night, but I just want to say it over and over. When you study the emotions of God's heart, when you study what David studied, it equips your heart to live like David lived. You can't read the victories, ignore his revelation of God, and try to live in his victories. I used to do that all the time. The victories of David are accented, the weaknesses of David are completely neglected in the story, and the revelation of God's heart that David had is completely neglected, as a rule, all across the Body of Christ. We have to reverse that. We have to tell about David's victories, but we have to tell how weak and broken he was.

### **WE NEED TO RUN TO GOD, NOT FROM HIM, WHEN WE DISCOVER OUR WEAKNESS**

And then the next question arises: "Well, if he had such great victories and he was so dorky to start off, how did he do it?" That's the question of the hour. It's what he understood about God's heart, God's emotions. David was a student of the emotions of God. When I study God's emotions, it equips my heart to obey. I'm burdened about this point. I know that I'm saying it over and over, because I'm burdened about it. When you get a conference like this, you have 3,000 fiery young adults, ready to go and obey. Here's what I'm burdened by; you'll hear it over and over, from almost every speaker on this platform. Yet some will go out of this place and say, "I want to obey! I want to obey!" You'll neglect to study the emotions of God.

Beloved, it's only true if you see his victories in light of his failures in light of his revelation of God's heart. If you only see his victories, and only call people to those, you're preaching error to people. You have to tell the truth about his struggle, and the truth about what equipped him for victory. It's all throughout the book of Psalms. It's stunning what David understood about God. When I read it, I marvel. I say, "Lord, David understood so much more than anyone in history up to his time!" He was miles beyond all of the others, even in the Word of God, in his revelation of God's heart.

The Lord says something like this: "That's why I call him a man after My own heart. He understood My heart. He understood My feelings. And when he discovered his weakness, he had confidence to stand before Me and run to Me, not from Me."

I know that I say these things like a broken record, but they bear repeating, over and over. We have to be able to run to Him, not from Him, when we discover our weakness. When I was eighteen or twenty years old, my goal was to go and be a poor missionary and die as a martyr on the mission field. That was the ultimate. I thought if you went out on the mission field, lived a poor life, and died, somehow it would really be cool when you went to heaven. We had this young adult movement. We were all going for it. Earlier I introduced these two men, Don and Tim. There was a whole army of us. About a hundred of us went into full-time ministry in a very short amount of time from one youth group. A hundred men and women went into full-time ministry from one youth group in about five years. We were going for revival. We wanted to have the victory of David. We were going to go do it, but all of us hit that wall, because we discovered lust, anger, bitterness, depression. We said, "Wait! What are we going to do with this?"

Many of the men who were my good friends, when they discovered their own lust, anger, bitterness, depression, and all kinds of pride, just broke down, looked up in shame, turned around, and ran from God to go hide somewhere instead of running to God for God to deliver them, because they didn't have a clue that God wanted them in that brokenness. I didn't either, at first. I thought that when I discovered an area of sin, because I had just discovered it, God had just discovered it. I thought, "Now that God just discovered it, everything is different now."

I mean, I remember the first time that I blew it in a bunch of areas. I remember this vividly. I mean, it's so gross now, but I remember saying, "Can You believe it? I can't believe it! Can You?"

I didn't hear a response, but the Lord's answer would have been something like, "Oh, there's a lot more where that came from."

I thought He was shocked because I was shocked. I was scandalized: "Oh! I can't believe it!"

The Lord said, "I will get rid of all your pride. You will believe the whole thing before it's over."

### **THE DANGER OF RELATING TO GOD ON THE BASIS OF OUR ACHIEVEMENT**

God says, throughout the Word, "I want you to relate to Me on the basis of My burning desire for you, My ability to give you a willing heart, and My grace. I want you to relate to Me on that basis."

Here's how I wanted to relate to God. I wanted to go before God and say, "Prayer! Fasting! Awesome Mike! Awesome Mike! Pazazzo! Here I am!"

Then I imagine the Lord would say, "Wow!" The Father says, "Jesus, come here! Get a load of that man in Kansas City. He's different."

"Lord, would you mind telling my friends what You just said?"

We want to relate to God on the basis of our accomplishments. We want to produce something that "wows" God, so that He says to all of the angels, "Come look at that. That's unbelievable, that dedication!"

Here's the problem: If we relate to God on the basis of achievement, spiritual or natural—spiritual achievement means victory for a month straight over a bad thing, or prayer and fasting for six months—if we want to relate to God on a basis of achievement, how much we can achieve, how hard we can do it, how well we do it, how good our report card is in the Spirit; if we want to relate to God on that basis—which is impossible, by the way—if you succeed, you're proud; if you fail, you're condemned. Either way it goes, you're either proud or condemned, and the grace of God is quenched. The Lord says, "Mike, I want you to stand, no big offer, no big claim, no big nothing, confident that I'm lovesick over you and I want you and I have the power to change you."

### **OUR FAILURE CAN'T DEFILE CONFIDENCE THAT'S BASED IN LOVE**

At first it was hard. I'm telling you, the human spirit doesn't like this, because there's so much pride in the human spirit. The religious spirit is driven by pride far more than dedication. There's this deep well within us that we have something unique about our dedication that moves God. We want to relate to God based on how powerful our dedication is, so that we can move Him. Here's the proof when you have that. We all have residues of that. Even those of us who have been around for a while, we still have residues of that. Here's the proof that that deep thing is working in us. When someone else blows it we say, "Can you believe that?" Our judgments against others are always the alarm system that there's a residue in us that we're relating to God based on our own achievement. "Can you believe that man did that?"

The Lord says, “Ahem. Do you forget so quickly? Are you relating to Me on any basis other than the fact that I really like you and I’ve forgiven you?” Our judgments towards others are the alarm system in us that we’re still relating to God based on what we produce. When we can accept others in the grace of God, like ourselves, we understand how we stand before God. Then the pride goes away and the condemnation goes away.

When I’ve had a tremendous season of prayer and fasting, I can’t go before God any more confident than if I’ve blown it for a month and everything is horrible. I feel worse when I blow it, and I feel better when I don’t, but God doesn’t feel any differently. That’s the key: God doesn’t feel any differently. I do, but He doesn’t. If I could stand steady based on His desires and His emotions and begin to lock into that instead of mine, if I begin to study His emotions, confidence wells up in me. It’s the kind of confidence that’s so strong, that even knowing that I prayed and fasted can’t defile that confidence. How good I’ve been for a week or a month doesn’t dilute or defile that pure confidence based on love, but neither does my failure dilute that confidence. My achievement or my failure can’t dilute and defile confidence that flows from the revelation of love.

I’m not there yet. I’m closer than I was five or ten years ago, but I still do that; I still throw my chest out and my shoulders down. The Lord says, “Are we still doing that? You still think that I like you because you lived great last month? Well, let Me tell you, it wasn’t really that great, not really. Are you still running from Me because you blew it last month? Come on! Let’s move on. I burn with desire. I have a big heart. You’re weak and you stumble. You have a little heart. Let’s do it together. Big heart; burning desire. Little man; little heart. Hey, I like that,” says the Lord. “Let’s do it together forever.”

“Well, in that case, I’ve got it made.”

“You’re getting it, Mike!”

“I’ve got it made! You mean, You like me the whole time?”

“You’re getting it.”

“Well in that case, I don’t ever have to run from You. I don’t have to pretend and I don’t have to run from You. I don’t have to hide from You. I don’t have to try to make anything happen.”

### **WHAT A WONDERFUL FEELING, TO LOVE AND BE LOVED**

Let me tell you a secret—you all know it: it feels wonderful to be loved. Oh, I love to be loved! It feels so good. When we feel the wonder of being enjoyed and loved, even when God knows all of our weakness, when we feel that enjoyment and that wonder, we don’t want to go do other stuff. There’s a big hole right in our being that only the feeling of God’s love and God’s enjoyment in our weakness can satisfy. It drives away all kinds of counterfeit desires. I say, “Lord, this is so good. I want the whole world to do this. This is the fun way to live.” That’s what we’ll do forever in eternity.

### **PSALM 16:11—A MOUNTAINTOP EXPERIENCE OF THE REVELATION OF GOD**

Beloved, the life of David is critical to understand. David had confidence that God loved him and that he was a lover even in his weakness. That’s the life of David in one sentence. David has more than that. Psalm 16:11 is one of the pinnacle revelations in David’s heart. Again, these three lines in verse 11 are so loaded. Don’t think

of them as three casual lines. I like to say these lines were the titles of sections on his library. David had thousands of hours of things to say about all three of those lines.

Don't think that just because you read those lines and heard three minutes of teaching on them, "Well, I've got that one down." Psalm 16:11 sums up David's theology of God's emotions more clearly than any one verse in the whole Bible. It's absolutely powerful. You won't get this hearing a teaching on it or reading a commentary on it for a week or a month. This is something that you will grow in, inch by inch and year by year. We'll fight for this. In other words, we get it in our brain, we get it on our lips, we tell people. That's why I want people to get this stuff and preach it, because I always learn the most by preaching it. I told you this morning, for years and years I would read these other men's books, memorize them, get up and give them as a sermon, word for word. The guys at the college would say, "Well, what did you mean by that point?"

"I have no idea what Watchman Nee meant when he wrote that"—or Tozer, or whoever. None of it was real to me, but you know what? I was just echoing it, and the Lord was training my heart because I learned this: it's really important to get it in your brain. You have to fill your brain with it, but it doesn't come alive until it gets on your lips. I get it on my lips by speaking it and teaching it. Even better than that, although it's effective to get it on my lips, I get it in my language with God in my prayer life. When these ideas get into your dialogue in prayer with God, when you talk to God based on these ideas, the language of your heart starts changing, and beloved, your emotions are going to change in just a short amount of time.

### **NO ONE ELSE CAN DO FOR YOU WHAT ONLY YOU CAN DO IN GOD**

Some people think this. They go to a conference, hear three teachings, and say, "Cool." They go through the prayer line: "Pray for me. I want to get it all." I love praying for people, but let me tell you, we can pray for you and give a little impartation, and I've prayed for people many times, and absolutely nothing happens. There's no impartation. I never know when it does and when it doesn't. I'm always willing to pray. Sometimes something really powerful happens. A lot of times nothing happens. A lot of times, I don't even know. It doesn't even matter.

The Lord says, "Take your hand out of your pocket and pray for they man and just give him a kiss on the way. Don't define it all; just pray for him."

Here's my point, even when it's a powerful impartation, even when it's the most powerful time ever in my little ministry, still, that only makes a little impact on you. I can't do for you what only you can do in God in your secret life. No one can do this for you. You can't go through a prayer line to get it. We could give you a little jump start. We can lay hands on you in a prayer line and give you a little booster. At the end of the day, not Benny Hinn or anyone else can give you this. At the end of the day, you get it in your secret life in God.

### **YOU CAN'T AWAKEN YOUR EMOTIONS BY SHEER DETERMINATION**

Here's how you do it. I train the IHOP-KC staff and the others to fill their mind with it. Year one, year two, fill your mind with it. The strangest thing is—it's true with me, as well—we start filling our mind with it, and it takes us a few years before we even get it on our lips. We need to get it in our minds on Monday and on our lips by Monday night. Somehow we get it in our mind on Monday and two years later, we start talking about it. Or it's two years later before we start getting it into our prayer language with God. There was a time some years ago when I began to use this language when no one was around. I said, "God, You're filled with pleasure. God, You're joy, and You're glad, and You like me, and You delight in me." When I got it into my language, alone, I

said, “Oh, I like the feel of that. Oh!” You can change your mind. You change your mind and God changes the emotions of your heart. You don’t have the power to change your emotions directly. You can’t just, “Joy!” or “Groan!” “Go have joy in the Lord!” “Turn the music up!” Then, a bit later: “It didn’t work...” You can’t just pop it out. It doesn’t work that way. You can’t awaken emotions by determination. “Love! Passion For Jesus! Groan! Groan! Sigh!”

“Is that passion, Lord?”

“No, no, I love your energy, but that’s not passion.”

### **THE WAY TO CHANGE YOUR HEART IS TO CHANGE WHAT FILLS YOUR MIND**

There’s nothing wrong with that. There’s nothing wrong with that energy. I’m not saying that’s bad. I’m not at all putting that down. That stuff is great; really, it is. I really mean that; people trying hard, responding with their body is wonderful. It’s a whole lot better than what a whole lot of other people are doing on the other side of town tonight, Saturday night, right now. The Lord likes that; He really does. I’m not putting that down. I love screaming at conferences, as you can tell. What I’m telling you is this: at the end of the day, that’s not the way my emotions are changed. You leave the conference; everyone else looked awesome, everyone else looks overflowing, and you think to yourself, “Gee, it’s just ole me again.”

The Lord says, “You don’t change your heart by doing that. You change your emotions and your heart by changing what’s in your mind.”

I can promise you, the way to change your emotions is by changing what fills your mind. It won’t happen in a day or a week. I can lay hands on you, and so can everyone else. It can be that big occasion where the big stuff happens. It’s still only an inch. The big stuff is still just an inch. It’s that secret life in God, for the months and years ahead. I love to pray for people; I can pray for them and give them a little jump start, but it’s nothing close to what happens for the next one, two, three, and four years in their private life. Fill your mind with it; study it; get the teachings and the end-time tapes. Get all of these books that we’re talking about, and a lot of other books that we don’t have from other places. Read it and study it; study it and read it. I wish that it didn’t take people two years to get it on to their tongue after it gets into their brain. They might preach on it in the next month. By “on your tongue,” I don’t mean preaching on it, although preaching on it really helps me. I preach myself into more truths. I studied them and put them in my brain; memorized them and preached them, and by about the thirtieth time, I said, “I think that I believe this stuff!” I’ve preached myself into a lot of good things, straight from other people’s materials. I don’t care; I want to know God. I don’t care how I get there. I’m going for this thing.

“Preaching is good; it helps me.”

The Lord says, “No, I want it to get into your private life with God. I want it to get into your language with God. I want you to say this to Me when no one is around, when you talk to Me intimately.”

The man says, “Oh, I don’t ever talk to You intimately.”

The Lord says, “Well, then that’s why it’s stuck in the head. It’s got to get on your tongue in your language with Me.”

Then the man says, “Well, it’s hard.” You know, it’s really hard to burn for God alone. I mean, we have to have our private life in God. What I mean is, we need to be with other fiery, godly believers. I know some of you have no choice; you’re in an out-of-the-way place. Maybe there are thousands of people. I don’t mean that there’s no one there, but there’s no one fiery around you. It’s a hard place. It’s a wilderness. Ask God: “Lord, give me a few friends. Give me, four, five, six, eight, or ten friends. Lord, please have one of them play the guitar.” No, I mean it. Get those fiery friends, but get one Dave Wiens in there that did all of the scales, you know. You have to have someone, if you can, who plays one of those instruments, because there’s an anointing. Get in the circle. You have to get with people who are on fire. The greatest gift of God in the IHOP-KC, forerunner world, isn’t even the teaching, *per se*. Teaching is helpful; it’s a blessing of God. All of these things are helpful. It’s the people on fire, hanging out with the people on fire. That’s where it really, really makes a difference, because they’re talking about it all the time.

Go back to your college campus and get six or eight friends.

You say, “I don’t have any.” Get some. Don’t stop until you get six or eight friends, even if you have to go to the other side of town. Do anything, to get six or eight friends. And get one of them to play the guitar. And by that I mean, get together, worship, and learn to sing the Word. The anointing will start flowing. You get that anointed atmosphere and oh, my goodness, it’s wonderful.

You know what? If you get it in your brain, you get it in your private life with God; if you get in a little group and start singing it, you get your worship team and you start flowing in it, that’s good too, but after a little while, T-10, T-9, T-8... in a small amount of time your emotions begin to change; your emotional chemistry changes. Here’s how our emotions change. Our emotions don’t change by simply going to a prayer line: someone prays, and they’re now changed. That’s not how it works. Again, every now and then there’s that special thing that happened to that one man, that one time. Those are real, but mostly, the Lord says, “Mike, open your Bible, find the teachings, and fill your mind with them. Now get them into your language. Say them to your friends. Teach them, talk about them, sing them. Get them into your private life with God. Say them back to Me.” God says, “Say the ideas back to Me.”

You know what happens? In a small amount of time, there’s revelation in my heart. My heart starts getting tender and I say, “Oh, man, I’m starting to feel a little of this.” It’s not an unbroken progression of spiritual victory. It truly is three steps forward, two steps back; three steps forward, two steps back, but you’re constantly taking ground all of the time. I’ve had more great advances only to hit a wall and go back, but when the five years comes and goes, I’m always taking ground, all the time. It’s not a matter of taking new ground in a very powerful way every day; you’re taking this new ground and it’s so clear. That’s not what I’m talking about. You stay with it. You stay with it.

Someone says, “How are you doing?” I don’t know. I don’t measure how I’m doing. According to that measuring thing, if you do good, you’re proud; if you do bad, you’re discouraged. I threw out the measuring rod a long time ago. I said, “Forget all of that stuff; I’m just filling my heart with the truths of God’s heart.

Then someone says, “How are you doing? Are you doing better or worse than six months ago?”

“I don’t know; I don’t care. All I care about is that I’m doing it today. I just want to do it hard today. I don’t know if I’m better than six months ago. I don’t know if I’m better than you, worse than you, I don’t know. I don’t care! I have to touch reality. I don’t want to measure.” That measuring thing is so distracting. It’s just so goofy and distracting; it really is.

### **JUST A LITTLE OF GOD’S REALITY WILL MAKE YOU RAVENOUS FOR MORE**

Another five years go by; I look around and I say, “Lord, I feel that You like me. Oh, I like that, and I feel like I like You! I love this! You like me; I like You. What a way to live. You like me, I like You, and I feel it. Wow!”

Someone says, “Hey, do you want all of this, that, and the other?”

The Lord whispers, “No, that’s not what I have for you. Men will think that it’s really awesome. I like you; you like Me. It’s working. You’re getting happy on the inside.”

What I’m getting at is this: you don’t go down a lot of paths that you would have gone down when you have this reality burning inside of you. I have it a lot more than I had it twenty years ago, but I don’t have it nearly as much as I need it. See, I’m not there. I’m a whole lot different than I was, but oh, my goodness, I want so much more. Just a little of this makes you ravenous for more. There’s no end to it. We’ll be doing this our whole life.

### **JESUS IS THE BEST PART OF THE REWARD THAT GOD HAS FOR YOU**

Look at these three phrases in Psalm 16:11—oh my goodness! It’s a library of truth. Again, these weren’t simple, little, flippant sayings that David threw at the end of his song to kind of balance out Psalm 16. He was saying, “This is the pinnacle of what I understand about God.”

Look at verse 5. Oh, what a sentence. “You are my portion” (Ps. 16:5, paraphrased). David is talking to Jesus. He says, “You, Jesus, are my portion.” I’m just going to get to the bottom line: It meant He’s the best part of the reward that God has for you. God has a reward for you, but the very best part of it, the cream on the top is Jesus. Jesus says, “I’m the portion of God’s promises to you. I’m the best of the best.” Instead of *portion*, you can write, “the best of the best of what God promised me.”

### **THE HUMAN HEART IS EASILY DISTRACTED BY THE BLESSING OF GOD**

God has promised me many things, as He has you. The older you are, the more experiences you have with God, the more promises He gives you. God promises me certain things in economics. God has promised me certain things in the anointing. God has promised me certain things in influence. God has promised me certain things about this, that, and the other. I have ten, or twelve promises about different areas. As the years go on, He actually adds to those promises. I mean, He knew about them all the time. I say, “How come You’re just now telling me? You could have told me that ten years ago and made me really happy.”

The Lord says, “If I would have told you ten years ago, you would have gotten drunk on the promise. I want you drunk on Me, not on the promises. Now you like Me more and now the promise of what I’m going to do doesn’t make you drunk.”

“Oh! If you would have told me that ten years ago, I would have drunk on how much You were going to do this thing?”

“Yes, the human heart gets so easily distracted by the blessing of God.” The Lord says, “Here’s what I will do. I’ll tell you a little now, a little later. Every few years I’ll give you a little installment, because I want you to get drunk on Me, not on what I will do through you. Because if you do it the other way around it will hurt you; it will injure you.”

I mean, it’s always happening. Five, ten years go by and the Lord gives me more information. “Lord, I could have used that information back ten years ago!”

He says, “No, it would have derailed you. It would have distracted you. The structures of your heart are not formed in love with Me enough to handle what I really wanted to tell you, but you can handle it now. I have more I can tell you, but you can’t handle it right now.”

### **THE GREATEST PLEASURE IS WHEN GOD REVEALS GOD TO THE HUMAN HEART**

David says, “You, Lord, You’re my portion. You’re the cream of the crop.” “The cream has risen to the top,” is what I’m trying to say. The best of the best of all of the promises is knowing Jesus. Let me break it down. Knowing Jesus is what I mean, but I want to say it differently: it’s me feeling that He likes me and me feeling I like Him. It’s me feeling fascinated by new understanding of Him. The most exhilarating experience in this age or in heaven is when God the Holy Spirit reveals a little about God the Father or the Son. When God reveals God, when God the Holy Spirit tells me a new thing about the beauty of Jesus, I say, “Oh, man! Oh I love that feeling!” The pleasure of discovering new things about God exhilarates the human spirit. God has a billion volts and I only have a 110-watt unit. God only gives me one little volt at a time.

I say, “Oh! Unbelievable! Oh!”

The Lord says, “That’s only one more volt than I gave you last time.”

“Oh! Wow! That’s awesome! I love the feeling of this!” There’s such a pleasure of discovering things about God. God is like a vast ocean of glory and beauty and love. Beloved, we’re standing before that vast, endless depth and length, the endless, vast being of God. His beauty, love, and power will thrill us. We will marvel. With every drink, we will say, “Oh!” Here we are; we think we’re deep in God. We think, “Oh man, we’re deep in the Lord.”

One young man says, “Man, you’re deep in the Lord.” I look down and I’m not even in the water. I’m just on the wet sand. I mean, I’m not three inches in the water, the sand is wet, but that feels good. Beloved, none of us are very deep. I promise you that, but I tell you, I may not be in really deep in the water, but my toes are feeling it just a teeny bit. I love this thing called walking with God and feeling Him and knowing Him. I used to be way back here on dry sand looking at the water and saying, “How many years will it take me to get to that water?” Now I’m right there on the wet sand. I’m not very deep, but boy, I’m starting to get it. Billions and billions of years from now, we will be in the pleasure of that ocean. We will feel more; we will know more. God is a God of pleasure. He will bring us pleasure. He will make us exhilarated at the discovery! How exciting it is to discover something new! I don’t mean just a new idea; I mean when the Spirit zings you with it! You feel it and you say, “Oh! Oh!” You can always tell at IHOP-KC; Gary Wiens is over there saying, “Oh! Mmm!” I’m sitting at my little table doing my little Bible study; I turn around and Gary goes, “Mmm!” Little tears are coming down. I look at the person next to me and I say, “Gary just got another zap!”

He stands up and he goes to the door. I mean, he always has that same look. It's a great look. "Sigh! Pant!" He's going out the door. So I go out the other door. I know if I see him in the hallway, I'll get like three full sermons for the next month at the next conference.

"Hi, Gary!"

"Oh! Oh! Oh!"

"Give it to me, Gary! Give it to me."

The angel says, "Those little guys. We only gave them one volt. They get so excited."

### **FASTING INCREASES OUR ABILITY TO RECEIVE MORE, FASTER**

You know why so much of the Body of Christ is bored? I'm talking about the sincere Body of Christ right now. I'm talking about the on-fire Body of Christ. They're suffering from spiritual boredom because they're trying to obey the commands of God, like David. They're studying his victories and trying to imitate his victories. They know hardly anything about His emotions. With a locked heart, they're trying to jump higher. They're trying to be more victorious with a locked heart. They do that for three months and they get so tired, they just sink into condemnation and boredom. Beloved, you won't jump your way into this. It's not going to be some religious, self-determination that makes this thing work. I beg the students, at the Forerunner School and at IHOP: I beg you, get this! Study it! Study it! Study it! Get in on your tongue! Say it to each other! Say it to God! Sing it! Pray it! Sing it! Say it! Pray it! Get it in your tongue! Get it moving all the time. Don't measure it in a month; let a year or two go by. If you get impatient, throw in a bit of fasting on it. Just salt it with fasting.

Because here's what fasting does if we fast with the right attitude. If we're fasting to earn revelation, forget it. If we're fasting because we love God and we want more, fasting increases our capacity to receive more, faster. Fasting doesn't earn it. I have a series on tape called "The Bridegroom Fast." It's fasting to enlarge our capacity to feel. How many of you like to feel? How many of you like to feel loved? I'll tell you something that's as exciting as feeling loved: it's loving back. I love to be loved, but I love to love. I mean, it's a two-way deal. If I was only loved, that would be awesome, but feeling all the energy and the strength of your being focused in purity—oh, I love that feeling! I love being loved and I love the feeling of all of my strength and energy focused in purity back. I say, "Oh, I was made to love!"

But there's something else. I love to be fascinated. I love those little one-volt things. I'm over there crying, "Oh! Oh!"

Gary says, "I think ol' Bickle got something up there."

You don't have to do little twitches. That's not my point. It's not the volume. I'm the kind of guy who says, "PASS THE SALT!" I say it loudly, even at home at the dinner table. It's not more anointed. I try to tell people in our ministry line, "I shout on the microphone, but that doesn't move God. It doesn't move these spirits. The demons don't care at all. It doesn't move anything, shouting." I say, "That's just my personality. It doesn't hurt anything, but it doesn't help anything, either. It's just who I am. I shout for the salt at the dinner table. That's just my personality."

When I get something good, I say, “Oh! Oh!” I don’t have to do it; it’s fun. Or I get a few more cups of coffee and start moving my leg. You can tell when Allen Hood is hooked up. It’s happening, man; it’s happening. He sits right behind me. I lean back so that some of it will get on me. It doesn’t really work that way.

Beloved, one, year, two years, three years, four years. It’s not a moment; I’m on a marathon pace. We’re in a marathon. I tell them, “Stay steady. Get the goal down the road. Don’t measure it in the next month or year. Don’t compare to one another. Don’t see if you’re better this month or last month. That’s a trap. You’re proud if you succeed and you’re condemned if you fail. Don’t look at your neighbor and figure out if they’re doing it.” That’s none of my business. I want to get that goal down the road. “Jesus, I want to keep moving.” I will fill my mind with it. I will get it on my tongue. Every time I learn something, I’ll preach it. I’ll say it over coffee; I’ll sing it. I’ll do everything with it. I’ll get it into my prayer life. I’ll say, “God, You like me; You like me.” You get it in your language. First it’s the mind, then the tongue, then the heart—the emotions. I’m talking about the emotions. I start feeling liked.

### **WE LIVE TO BE FASCINATED WITH THE EVER-FASCINATING GOD**

Oh, I love to be liked. I know that I’m repeating myself, but the Lord just wants me to stay here. I start feeling liked. “Lord, You know, I’m kind of messed up. Are You still into this thing? Do You still like me?”

He says, “Oh, you’re way more messed up than you know, but you’re way more glorious in your destiny than you realize. You have no idea what you do to My heart.”

“Lord, when You came after me, did You know what You were getting when You started chasing me?”

Beloved, we think that God is surprised at what He gets when He catches us. He knows what He’s getting when He comes after you. He knows that. You don’t know, but He knows what He’s getting. He’s not shocked. He doesn’t say, “Oh, I didn’t buy this. I wanted something else.” He knows what He’s getting when He gets you. He knows it.

I say, “You like me. I feel liked.” I tell you, a thousand other emotions are subdued, are quieted when I feel liked. There are all of these raging negative emotions—rejection, pride, legalism, depression, immorality, all the lusts that you can name. There are hundreds of them. My emotions are quieted under one experience—feeling liked. It’s an amazing reality. I say, “Lord, it’s really quite simple.”

He says, “It’s really, really simple.” Then, it’s not enough that I feel liked. Oh, I love that feeling. I love to like Him back. I love to love Him, when all of the strength in my being is locked into Him. It’s exaggerated to say, “All of the strength.” but let’s say, enough of it’s locked into Him.

“Oh, I love You and it’s real. Oh, I love to love You. I was made to be a lover. I love to be fascinated!” I feel, I marvel, and I experience one little volt. God has a billion. One touches me and I like it! I want to be fascinated.

The Lord says, “Fill your mind! Fill Your mind! Get it in your language. Let Me stir your heart.”

I say, “Lord, I want more. I have to have it more.”

He says, “Then fast. Increase your capacity. Grow, grow!”

### **IF IT DOESN'T GET INTO YOUR LANGUAGE, IT WON'T TRANSFORM YOUR HEART**

In verse 5, David said, in essence, “The Lord is my portion. Lord, You’re my primary reward” (Ps. 16:5, paraphrased). Now look at verse 2. Here it is; this is very, very important. Every line of Psalm 16 is vital to enjoyable prayer. I’m only going to talk for another moment or two. I’m going to have Luke Sullivant come up and get ready to lead worship, but look at verse 2; David says this: “O my soul, you have said to the Lord, ‘You are my Lord, My goodness is nothing apart from You.’ As for the saints who are on the earth, ‘They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight’” (Ps. 16:2).

David is talking about his inner life with God. David talks to God deep in his heart. Beloved, if these ideas don’t get to your prayer language with God, they won’t work. David actually in his secret life turned it into language. “God, You are my Lord.” Let’s say it another way. If you say, “You’re my Lord,” a lot of you will think, “You’re my boss.” That’s not what David is saying. David is saying, “I love You. I love You. I love You. I’ll do anything that you say.” Think of a lovesick woman before her bridegroom: “I love You, I love You.” That’s what he’s saying. He isn’t saying, “You’re my boss. I salute, I report to duty.” He’s saying, “I love You. Within my soul, I say, ‘I love You.’ I’ll do anything that You want. I love to do what You want. I love You.”

Now notice that David is talking within his soul. If Bible teaching doesn’t get into your language with God in your private life, it doesn’t transform your heart. Then he says—oh, I love this!—“My goodness is nothing. My accomplishments in the Spirit or in the natural, what I produce in my ministry, what I produce in my discipline is nothing. If You don’t desire me, if You’re not coming after me, if Your burning desire stops, my fasting will don’ting. My fasting isn’t what makes it work. You’re burning desire. You want me. That’s what makes it work. Whether my ministry is big or little, whether my prayer life is awesome or powerful, that’s not the big point. My goodness”—you can say, “My accomplishments”—“are nothing compared to You wanting me. That’s where I stand. That’s where the balance of life is. You like me. You want me.”

Beloved, he’s so secure. He’s relating to God on the basis of God’s desire for him, not on the basis of his spiritual achievement or his ministry achievements. They’re nothing. “You want me. That’s why I’m confident.”

### **“AS FOR THE SAINTS IN THE LAND, THEY ARE THE EXCELLENT ONES”**

Look at what he says in verse 3; he says, “When I feel that you like me, I like everyone else who loves You.” Beloved, in verse 3, he says, “When You like me, God, all the other saints, all the other men and women who love you, I see them differently.”

I’ve studied the life of David these many years. I wouldn’t have David’s buddies on my staff, that’s for sure. If they signed up for the IHOP-KC staff, I would tell Marci, “I don’t know. Check out this guy; I don’t know about him.”

David looks at his comrades and says, “They’re excellent.” His whole view of others is different because his view of himself is different. Beloved, you can’t like your neighbor; you can’t delight in them until you delight in who you are yourself before God.

### **WE LEARN TO ENJOY PEOPLE WHEN WE ENJOY OURSELVES IN GOD**

The woman prayed, “Lord, I want to love my neighbor as I love myself.”

The Lord answered, “That’s the problem. You love your neighbor like you love yourself. You hate yourself; that’s why you hate your neighbor.” Beloved, that’s the problem. We do love our neighbor the way we love ourselves in God. We despise our neighbor; we despise ourselves.

What David is saying is, “When You’re the One that I love and I stand before You apart from my own goodness, I feel this confidence in love. I look at all of the other lovers of God in all of their brokenness and weakness. I have mercy for them. I like them; I see them differently. They’re so different.”

Beloved, we enjoy people when we enjoy ourselves in God. We enjoy ourselves when we understand God differently. It’s a great way to live. It’s a great way to live.

We’ll end at verse 8. I never got to Song of Solomon. That’s where we were going. That’s my favorite. Song of Solomon is this times ten. Song of Solomon is David squared. I mean, it’s to the nth degree. I urge you to read Song of Solomon and study it. I will be bold, because I believe in it: I have two commentaries, two study aids, that are 250 pages each. I’ve written 500 pages on the Song of Solomon. They’re just study notes. We have it on the Internet—we have it on CD-Rom. Get it.

I have about 150 commentaries on the Song of Solomon. I’ve poured years of prayer and fasting and love. I mean, I study it saying, “I love You, I love You.” I’m just being honest. I’ve studied it with adoration, and with delight and diligence.

I’ve written a little on it—these 500 pages, these two books. I really want you to get this. Take it and put it on your computer. Change the wording; put your name on it. It’s yours; run with it. Write new language; cut and paste; add verses; take verses away. “I didn’t like what Bickle said there.” Get rid of it then. Put what you want; just run with it.

I was going to go to Song of Solomon because the Lord spoke to me. I had a very, very powerful experience in 1988. I’ve said it many, many times, and I can’t go into it because of time. The Lord spoke to me audibly in July 1988, and He basically said, “The Song of Solomon is what the Lord is going to do across the whole earth.” I had never read the Song of Solomon. I didn’t know what it was about. The Lord audibly said, “Song of Solomon is what I’m doing.”

I read the Song of Solomon for the first time that day in 1988. I was horrified. I read all eight chapters. I said, “This is horrifying to me!” It really was, because the Lord told me that He wanted me to spend my whole life on the Song of Solomon. It was the most awesome encounter that I’ve ever had in my life in terms of my direction of ministry. It happened one time, in 1988. I was so excited, just because of the buzz. God literally spoke to me audibly and said, “Song of Solomon 8:6,” or, “The book of the Song of Solomon, that’s your life message.”

“Oh, I have a message. I don’t know what it is, but I’ve got one. I knew one would come one of these days.”

I read it, and I said, “Oh, my goodness, flowers and roses and fragrance and cake and stuff!” I said, “No way! No way.”

As most of you know, my father was a world champion boxer. As a matter of fact, when I was a boy, I used to come and watch my father box in the auditorium next door, the 10,000-seater. I remember, I went there many times as a boy to watch my dad knock the guy out. “Yay!” He would take me into the locker room with all of these professional boxers, these big, old men with big muscles, and, “Whoa!” I trained for years for boxing. Because my dad was world champion, I could say, “My dad can beat your dad and I can prove it!”

I grew up in the boxing world. My dad got mixed up with the mafia. I know it sounds like a movie, but it’s true. He did. The Mafia was really big in Kansas City in those days, and he did a few little task forces for them. I don’t know what he did. My mom didn’t know. My father died when I was eighteen and I said, “Umm, what did he do?” I didn’t even know it, but we had a few family friends who were shot and killed in cars. They were found in cars. One night all of the windows were shot out in our house. A number of those kinds of things happened.

One time, I was watching *The Godfather* with my mother. My father had been dead for a few years. I said, “That stuff happened to us!”

She said, “Well, I don’t know what was going on, but he did stuff.”

I said, “No!”

She said, “Yes, he did.”

I said, “Like what?”

She said, “I’ve no idea.”

I said, “He did stuff?”

She said, “Remember when our windows got shot out that one time? Then so-and-so died in a car?”

I said, “Ohh...”

I worked hard and got a scholarship to play college football. I was a tough man. David Ruis wasn’t being true; I wrestled him and I could whip him every time back when he was on staff. He said it wrong today; He said that I had it backwards. Anyway, I was a little tough guy. Here I was, a man of God: “Devil come out or I’m coming in after you!” I was preaching the life of David.

Then the Lord spoke to me. I tell this story, but I don’t want to go into it. The audible voice of the Lord said, “Song of Solomon is your life message.”

“Awesome! I’ve got a life message!” It was the most exciting experience.

That morning, I read the Song of Solomon. I said, “God, I’m a boxer’s son. I would rather do the life of David, the book of Romans, the book of Revelation, something like that. I don’t want to do Song of Solomon. I don’t like Song of Solomon.”

I got 150 commentaries over the next few years and started reading it. Then, to make a long story short, I began to love it. Now it's fourteen years later, and I understand that the life of David and the Song of Solomon are the same message.

### **WHEN YOU'RE FASCINATED WITH GOD, INFERIOR THINGS LOSE THEIR HOLD**

David was the lovesick warrior. The lovesick worshiper was the warrior king. Beloved, men of God out here; I want every man in this room to stand up. I want to talk to you for just a second—every man in this room. Men, I'm very serious here. Men, this is real. God is calling a generation of men to enter into the affections of God's heart; to be stunned by His beauty like David. Song of Solomon is absolutely, line upon line, the feelings of God's heart for weak people.

Men, if a group this size got on fire for this, I don't care what kind of bondage you're in. Well, I do care. If you're absolutely stuck in pornography, and I'm sure that a number of you in this room are—I mean, I understand how life works—God wants you. We want you. By that I mean, we believe in you. You can get out of it. You may be absolutely stuck on ten other things. God knows that; that's not a problem. He can get you through that. There's a giant hole in you. When that hole gets filled by feeling these things that I talked about, you don't have to grit your teeth and repent real hard; you start losing interest in them.

What if a group of men, this size—let's say next year there are 10,000, 30,000 of us. Let's say there are a whole bunch of men, eighteen, twenty-two, and twenty-eight years old, who said, "We're going after King David. We'll go after the beauty of God like king David did."

David said, "I gaze on Your beauty."

"We're going after Song of Solomon. We'll understand the message of the bride. Hey, if Bickle is a tough man, or so he thinks, hey, if he can, we can! Why should he go up there and not us?"

### **A REVOLUTION IN THE BODY OF CHRIST OF LOVESICK MEN**

Beloved, it's not about denying your masculinity; it's about fulfilling your masculinity. It's about feeling the power of God in your heart. We need to see a revolution in the Body of Christ of twenty-year-old men who drink deeply of this, who live in fasting and prayer. They live in fasting and prayer, not because they're dedicated, no; they're living in fasting and prayer because they love pleasure. I want to feel more. I love pleasure. That's why I'm doing it. We can stand as an offence against the kingdom of darkness as lovesick men, leaning on the breast of Jesus, fascinated with beauty. In our brokenness, we say, "Yes, but we're running to Him. Yes, I'm still hooked and addicted to these five things. I'm running to Him! He wants me! I'm going this way! I'm not going that way!"

Beloved, I'm not saying, "Get cleaned up and start studying it." I'm saying, start studying it and you'll be surprised how you'll get cleaned up in the next few years. It may not happen in a month, but it will happen in a few years, I guarantee it.

You say, "A few years?" Well, it took you a few years to get like this. It's not going to go away in a moment, but it will be undone. All of these things can be undone. It will take a small amount of time, but stay with it.

Amen.

**MINISTRY TIME**

Let's pray. Are you ready, Luke?

Father, I ask You to touch these men. I will ask the ladies to stand up. We'll lay hands on the men tonight. All of the ladies stand up and turn around; if there are like five ladies in a row, just move out into the aisle. We want men to get lovesick. Women, isn't that what you want? Women, don't you want the men lovesick for God and confident in God?

We'll move around. Again move around if you need to. We want to lay hands on men. Now if these men are real men, here's what they're doing right now; you're laying hands on them, and they're... you know what they're like. So don't lean hard on them. Just be easy on them right now.