

CULTIVATING A FIERY SPIRIT PART 2**ISAIAH 51 & 52**

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Isaiah 51 is depicting a dialogue between the people of God and God the Father. He is speaking to His people in a time of crisis. There are 3 key passages in which the conversation is organized around.

Isaiah 51:9, the people of God in intercession in a time of crisis are saying, “God, awake!” In **verse 9** the people are asking the *arm of the Lord to awake*, which is a way of saying, “Lord, release Your power as in the days of old. Come and deliver us. We are surrounded by the enemy. Break in and deliver us.”

Then Lord turns the conversation. In **verse 17** He says, “The problem is not that I need to awake. I am more than willing. The problem is not you convincing Me. The problem is Me convincing you.”

In **verse 17** He tells them to awake. Of course the argument is that they say, “Yea, but we are in a season of discipline. We cannot live with a fiery spirit.”

Instead of the word ‘*awake*’ put the word ‘cultivating a fiery spirit.’ Awakening is living with a fiery spirit before God. That is what God is telling them in **verse 17**, “Live with a fiery spirit. Press into My heart. Live in spiritual vitality and reality with prophetic urgency. Come after Me with passion.” That is what ‘*Awake, awake!*’ means.

The argument that they present back to the Lord in **verses 17-23** is that they are under a time of discipline and will have to wait this out. “When you are under discipline you cannot live fiery for God.”

God says, “Yes you can. I will forgive you. I will restore you. You do not have to wait until a season of probation is over. Arise now and press into Me now.”

The Lord says in **verse 21**, “Please hear this you afflicted ones, those under discipline.” **Verse 22**, the Lord pleads His case, “I have taken the cup of judgement out of your hands. Yes, you have been under discipline, but I want you to press in with confidence. I want you on fire no matter what you did bad

yesterday. It does not matter what your struggle was. Rise up and press in. Press delete on shame and stand with boldness in the presence of God.”

One of the arguments of the people of God for not being fiery is, “Well, I have been struggling a lot, so I am going to coast for a few months until forgiveness sinks in. Then I will coast for another year in probation so I can prove to God that I am sincere.”

The Lord says, “Forget all of that. Awake. Stand. Move into My heart right now.” It is a wonderful conversation. We looked at it last week. I do not want to go through it in detail anymore. I want to go to the next level of the dialogue.

Isaiah 52:1 is the 3rd time the phrase ‘*Awake, awake*’ is used. Now He is saying that the issue is not the fact that they are under discipline, which is **Isaiah 51:17-23**.

The issue now is that they are saying, “We are powerless. We are barren. We do not have any strength. We are hopeless. It is not really working.”

The Lord says, “Awake, awake and position yourself to receive the strength of God. Do all that God’s Word describes to position your cold heart before His fire. Let the impartation of fire have His way in you.” That is what He is saying in **Isaiah 52:1-6**.

In **Isaiah 51 and 52** the nation is in a time of divine crisis. They are under divine discipline. Their powerlessness is ever before them. Their own sin and weakness is ever before them.

So what happens? **Isaiah 51:9**, they join IHOP. They go to the prayer room. **Verses 9-11** are intercession, and it is good intercession. Isaiah the prophet validates this intercession. They did the right thing by going to the prayer room.

They press into fiery prayer, but what happens in **verses 12 & 13**. The Lord says, “You are in the house of prayer and doing intercession according to the Book. You are doing it right, but you are being dominated by a spirit of fear.”

God has become an accurate idea instead of a living Person. They are going through the motions of prayer without actually connecting and communing with God on the heart level.

They ask God the questions in **verses 9 & 10**, “Are You the God of Moses? Are You the God of the days of old? Are You the God Who split the Red Sea? Are You the God that raised the dead? Are You the God that has all the great power?”

Then God turns it around, “You have asked Me a few questions. Now let Me ask you a few questions. You asked Me if I was the God Who did all the miracles. Yes. I want to ask you if you are the covenant people why are you living so dominated with fear? Why is it that you are going through the motions but do not press in at the heart level so that we touch each other in covenant reality?”

If we are going to ask the Lord questions, which is good, make sure we are prepared to hear the question that the Lord asks back to us. The Lord never asks a question because He is looking for information. He has all the information. When the Lord asks a question the Lord wants us to realize the whereabouts of our heart.

The Lord is saying in **verses 12 & 13**, “Who are you that you would live in such fear of puny men? I am the God of Israel. I am the God of creation. Consider your own spiritual identity and who you are before Me. Why are you letting the little picture dominate you, and why is your God-centeredness pushed out of your inner life?”

Verse 17, He turns the conversation around and says, “I want you to arise Israel. I want you to wake up body of Christ. I want you to stand up.”

Verses 17-23, “What about our shame and failure?” The Lord says, “I want you to press through your failure and shame and move into My heart.”

I talked last week about a religious spirit. One of the essences of a religious spirit, a spirit of legalism, is having our confidence based on our own attainment of maturity. Our confidence before God is based solely on the measurement of our own maturity.

So, when we feel immature we lose confidence. When we feel like we have really pressed in and have fasted and prayed, then our confidence runs high. When we do not do those things, our confidence runs low.

That is the essence of legalism, a religious spirit. That is a false way of relating to God. We relate to God not on the basis of how much we have attained to or achieved in our spiritual life in the last 3 or 6 months. We relate to God on the basis of His burning desire and heart for us.

If we relate to God on the basis of how well we have done in the last season, then if you do well you are proud. If you do bad you are condemned.

The Lord says, "I do not want you to relate to Me on the basis of your spiritual attainment. I want you to relate to Me on the basis that I burn with desire for you. I gave a sacrifice sufficient in My Son, and by the Holy Spirit you said 'yes' to Me. That is the basis in which you relate to Me."

He dismantles the argument that they cannot press in with a fiery heart because they are struggling.

Beloved, there are so many of God's people that say, "When I get through with this addiction, when I press through the pain, when I get through with my therapy, when I get through with this next season, I am going to rise up and go hard."

The Lord says, "No. I want you to rise up hard now even in the midst of your pain, failure and bad track record. Arise, stand before Me now and let Me put My strength in you."

Now we are going to **Isaiah 52:1** and skipping all the other issues from last week. He gives a number of exhortations. He says, "*Awake, awake. Put on your strength O Zion. Put on your beautiful garments O Jerusalem, the holy city.*"

Then He describes the enemy, "For the enemy will no longer surround you, dominate you and prevail." **Verse 2**, "*Shake yourself from the dust. Arise. Sit down.*"

Some of the ancient translations have, “*Sit down on thrones of glory.*” The ‘*Sit down*’ is not a contradiction to ‘*Stand up and arise.*’ It is talking about sitting down in positions of glory in the presence of God.

He says, “*Loose yourself from the bonds of your neck O captive daughter of Zion.*”

Here are a couple of interesting paradoxes. **Verse 1**, the Lord by the Holy Spirit calls Jerusalem the *holy city*. At the end of **verse 2** He calls Jerusalem the *captive city*.

He says, “O holy city arise!” Then He says, “O city still in bonds and captivity, still beaten up and worn out and burnt out.”

The reason there are two descriptions is in **verse 1** when He says, “*Arise O Jerusalem, holy city!*” He is calling them forth in the way that He sees them in the grace of God.

Beloved, if we do not begin to see how God sees us in Christ Jesus, we will never have the strength to rise up and be the holy city. We have to first say ‘yes’ to the prophetic decree, “Rise up holy people!”

We say, “Holy people. Are You kidding me? I am still in captivity, bondage, and a mess.”

The Lord says, “Until you see how I see you and say ‘yes’ to how I describe you in Christ Jesus you will never be able to rise up effectively.”

This is an idea that I feel very strongly about. God wants to give us the assurance that He enjoys us while we are maturing. There are 4 or 5 very important ideas underneath the surface of that sentence or two that I just gave. They are very important ideas.

Number one idea is the fact that God actually enjoys us. This is a strange idea to many of God’s people, the fact that He would enjoy us in our weakness. Then the idea that we would actually have the confidence and assurance of that in our weakness is a very strange idea to many of God’s people.

I have had many friendly, sometimes energetic dialogues with God's servants around this subject. One of the stumbling blocks at first is that God enjoys people while they are still on the earth.

I remember talking to a couple of leaders once at a restaurant after a meeting. I said, "Do you think that God enjoys people?" They said, "Well, we know you are setting us up." I said, "I am. That is true. But still tell me."

"Did God in Heaven at any time actually enjoy people?" They said, "What do you mean?" I said, "Does He out and out smile when He looks at people? Does He like people? I do not mean, does He love them and has to stamp their passport because He already killed Jesus and is stuck with them? Does He actually enjoy them?"

We have this idea that God stamps our passport, "Accepted." But then He has a bah-hum-bug, "Because I have to. I like Jesus so much and He went to such an extreme. My goodness, it is done. Okay, come in. But I have My eye on you."

These guys said, "Okay He actually does enjoy people." I said, "Good. Does He actually ever enjoy people while they are still on the earth before the perfection of the resurrection?"

They said, "What do you mean?" I said, "Does He actually smile at anybody before they are perfected in the resurrection? Anybody? Did He ever enjoy anybody on the earth even for a moment? Even in a weak moment did He smile and actually like them while they are on the earth in less than perfection?"

They said, "I know you are tricking us." I said, "How about Paul the apostle? Did He, not love but like Paul and enjoy him even for a moment, even the last moment before he died when he could not have possibly sinned again?"

"Okay. He enjoyed Paul at the end." I said, "But Paul was not perfect, but God enjoyed him before he was perfect." They said, "Yea, we suppose."

I said, "Where is the line, the maturity level on a scale of 1 to 10? Where is the line where the smile breaks out and God starts to enjoy imperfect people? Where is the line of no return where God smiles and you cannot get it back? Is it a level 2, 5, 7, when they are in prison and there is no way out? When does the enjoyment begin of imperfect people?"

We went on and on and the point is this. Some will finally concede that God enjoys humans in the perfection of the resurrection. Others will actually go as far as to say that He actually enjoys humans before they are perfect, but only at the end.

Beloved, I say this, the knowledge of God's enjoyment of us in Christ Jesus with a 'yes' in our spirit is the critical issue for us maturing in a consistent sustained way. We do not mature and then He enjoys us.

It is the knowledge of His enjoyment, that He sees us as the delightful one, that gives us the ability to be **verse 2**, the captive one, afflicted one with pain. That gives us the courage to rise up and press in.

The result of that, years down the road, is maturity. Maturity is the by-product of this revelation touching the heart. We do not mature and then He enjoys us. We know He enjoys us and that gives us the essential strength to rise up from the dust, dirt and brokenness.

When there are chains of shame, hopelessness and accusation like arrows hitting us, the knowledge that He calls us the '*holy city*' gives us courage.

He is actually talking about Jerusalem, but it is a spiritual principle as well. He is speaking to the people of God, all ages. This is how the grace of God operates at any time frame of God's dealing with His people at redemption.

Beloved, look at **verse 2**, "*Shake yourself from the dust. Loose yourself from bondage.*" You get this picture of a guy laying in the dirt and mud with chains around him, heavy, dirty, fatigued.

The Lord says, "Stand up. Shake the mud and the dirt off. Break the chain and throw it away." This is such a critical passage of Scripture because it is at this very point where so many of God's people fail to respond in the way the Word of God describes.

All they are aware of is that they are sitting down covered in dirt and chains. They say, "If the chains go away and the dirt is somehow gone and I am not aware of it, then I will get up."

The Lord says, “No. You have it backwards. While you are dirty and the weight and pressure of the chain is on you, that is when I want you to arise and come before Me as the holy one with garments of beauty on you.”

There is something in our spirit, a critical moment in every single believer’s heart where we say, “No. I do not want to do that. I just feel dirty and dumb. I am just going to stay.” Those believers stay in the dirt.

Then there is another type of person that is broken and beat up. The thing touches their spirit and they say, “Lord, is this really how it works?” The Lord says, “This is really how it works.”

There is not a man or woman in history who arose, who did not arise out of dirt and chains when they rose up.

I thought Paul the apostle was a Pharisee one-day, and then a mature apostle the next day. No, he was an angry Pharisee one-day. Then he was an immature, angry, a whole bunch of unsettled issues in his life next day born again believer.

In everyone of our lives, there is that place, the critical moment of decision that happens over and over. It is that frame of mind where we say, “God, is this You? If this is You I am going to rise up and press through.”

So many of God’s people say, “No. The dirt is on me. The chains are on me. I am going to stay here. There is no conceivable way I have a future with You.”

The Lord calls them to stand up. Look at this, **verse 1**, “*Awake, awake!*” In other words, cultivate a fiery spirit. Move in to the heart of God. Do not be content joining the IHOP staff, **Isaiah 51:9-11**. Do not be content to just learn the model.

Do not just lead the prayer meetings. Do not just be a worship leader and then, **verse 12-15**, have your heart disconnected from God dominated by fear. Your whole inner man is disconnected from the reality of God while in truth you are born again, and you are in the prayer meetings.

The Lord says, “I want you to press in and live with a fiery spirit.” “Well, I am under discipline,” **verses 17-23**, “and I do not know that You want me.” The Lord says, “I do want you.”

Isaiah 52:1-6, “Well, I have no strength. I am weak.” This idea of putting on strength is kind of a frustrating exhortation. It is a command. “*Put on strength.*”

You say, “Well, how do I do that? I have chains, dirt is on me, and it is horrible. Strength. How do I do that?”

He is not asking you to create strength. He is asking you to position yourself as prescribed in the Word of God to receive strength from Him. Whenever God calls His people to put on strength, He is asking them to put their cold hearts before His heart on fire.

He says, “I want you to position yourself to receive strength.” That is what the exhortation means, “*Put on strength.*”

You find it in the Old Testament a number of times. You find it with Paul the apostle telling Timothy. **I Timothy 2:1**, “*Timothy, be strong in the Lord.*”

What he means is not to create divine strength. He is not saying that. He is saying, “Position your heart. Respond to the Lord in a way in your private life where your weak, cold heart is in a position the fire of God’s heart.” Position yourself to receive strength.

Now the Lord tells them these two exhortations, “*Awake, awake! Put on strength and your beautiful garments.* Put yourself in a position to receive the strength of God.”

Then He goes on and almost adds insult to injury. Here this person is in chains, dirt, lying on the ground and beat up. The Lord says, “Put on beauty now.”

They say, “Beauty! Lord, do not even use the word beauty. The word beauty hurts me! The idea that I could enter in to the realm of Your beauty in the way that I am living, are You kidding me?”

The Lord says, “I want you to press into the truth that the beauty that I possess is the beauty that I impart to you freely.”

When He says, “Put on beautiful garments,” He is not telling the redeemed to try and make up something. “Open your spirit to the beauty that I have prepared for you.”

The beauty that God possesses is the very thing that God imparts. **Isaiah 61:3**, “*He gives beauty for ashes.*” He takes the ash heap of our broken humanity, and takes all of our misspent passions.

We do not have this oak tree. The oak tree has been burnt by all of the passions of lust, anger and ambition. All there is is a heap of ashes. We burn on fire with sinful passions. All we have left is a heap of ashes.

Nobody wants those ashes. They are good for nothing but to throw out. The Lord says, “I will take those ashes and give you My beauty, but you have to believe Me.”

When He says, “*Put on beautiful garments.*” He is saying, “Open your spirit to the truth of the beauty that I give you.” When He says, “*Put on strength.*” He is saying, “Open your spirit and position yourself in the place described in the Word of God to receive strength as a gift.”

Now look at these words of action. **Verse 2**, “*Shake yourself from dirt and mud.*” That is not fun. When I am doing bad I feel bad. When I am doing bad and have stumbled and fallen, for that moment there, and some people for a long time, you do not want to be forgiven.

You just want to pay God back by suffering a little bit. You say, “Just let me sit here in the mud for a little while. I deserve it.” The Lord says, “I am not even going to let you approach Me on that basis.”

Again, if it is on the basis of how good you do then if you succeed you are proud. If you fail you are condemned. You can always tell a person that is condemned easily is a person that will be proud easily if they succeed.

A person that is proud easily then when they hit the wall (they certainly will) they will be condemned easily. Those two go together. The Lord wants us having our confidence in Him.

He says, “*Loose yourself from this chain that is around your neck.*” It is the call to action and effort.

Some people have this confused idea that a life of grace is free from effort. Beloved, what I am going to tell you is so important right now. They have a total confusion about the grace of God.

They think in law you work. In grace you do not work. That is not true. In law, you work. In grace, you work.

You put effort in the grace of God. The grace of God is not about not exerting effort. The difference between law and grace is not about exerting effort or not exerting effort. It is about the motivation you have while you are exerting effort.

The legalistic person says, "I am going to pray and fast to try to motivate God to like me." That is legalism.

The man or woman in the grace of God says, "I am not going to exert effort to try to make God like me because He already does. That is Who He is. I am going to exert effort to get my cold heart in front of His fire because He does like me."

The issue of law and grace is not the issue of effort and no effort. It is the issue of confidence and motivation. People have this idea that if they put effort in their spiritual lives then somehow they are earning it.

No. I cannot earn the free gift of God's Spirit setting my heart on fire. I cannot earn that. That is a free gift of God. It is because God likes me. It is because Jesus took the wrath of God for me.

However, I must rise up and exert effort to put my weary frame in front of God's fire through fasting, prayer and feeding my spirit on the truths of His strength and beauty.

The feeding of my spirit is the effort that I exert. If you do not feed your spirit you can claim grace all day long. God says, "I am motivated. I love you and you are a mess. You are in grace, but if you do not exert effort then the confidence that you have that I love you will never bear fruit."

We have to get people to have confidence that God likes them and enjoys them. Then out of that confidence they exert effort to take their unrenewed mind with all kinds of wrong ideas, their weary body, shame and sin-consciousness.

Then we need to bring it before God's fire by the Word of God, feeding our spirit, filling our spirit. That takes effort to do that.

I know what it means to sit in the dust and say, "I do not feel like it." The Lord says, "You really need to do it because I love you so much and I like you so much. If you do not feed your spirit on the truth right now then you are going to buy into the lie. It is not about law or grace. It is about your laziness."

Beloved, you cannot ask God to do for you that which God has assigned for you to do. There is a division of labor in the grace of God. You cannot do God's part, and God will not do your part.

Let me say it again. There is a division of labor in the grace of God. You cannot do God's part. You cannot create Holy Spirit fire. You cannot create God's interest and tenderness toward your brokenness.

I cannot produce tenderness in God's heart when I come before Him in my brokenness. That is a free gift. I cannot produce Holy Spirit fire. I cannot do God's part. God will not do my part.

He says, "I will not stand up for you and feed you. I am tender, motivated, and passionate about you. I have My Holy Spirit available to you. The gift of righteousness in My Son is yours. Now you must rise up, take those truths, feed your spirit, move in and touch My heart. Then let the domination of fear (**Isaiah 51:13**) be driven out of you."

Well, if I have to go to the prayer room.... I am not meaning just the IHOP prayer room. It is the place whether at home, car, in the woods where you stir your physical body up and exert effort to put your cold heart in front of Him, wherever the prayer room is.

If you do not do that you will die of malnutrition claiming grace all the way down to spiritual malnutrition and sickness. There are more people claiming grace in a confused way.

They say, "Grace, grace, grace. I do not have to do it." I say, "Beloved, you cannot motivate God to be tender toward you. You cannot motivate God to give you power and fire. That is a free gift. You cannot do anything to make that happen, but you can do a whole lot to position yourself to receive it."

It is the illustration that I use so often about the farmer and the preacher. The farmer and the preacher go home after church one Sunday. The preacher says, "Farmer, this land is so beautiful, beautifully manicured and 1,000s of acres. God really blessed you." The farmer says, "When God had this farm it was a wreck."

It is the division of labor. He says, "Until I water and weed, there is no life producing dynamic going on."

God produces the life inside the seed. If there is not life in the seed, the farmer can weed and water all day long and nothing is going to happen. But there is life in the seed. But just because there is life in the seed, the farmer still has to cultivate.

Because there is a tender heart and the Holy Spirit is willing to touch you does not mean that you are going to do nothing and just hope that your heart sets on fire.

There are more lazy Christians with a lethargic, dead spirit with no spiritual sensitivity because they are lazy number one, or they feed their spirit on totally wrong ideas about God. It is not the thing that puts their spirit in contact with beauty or strength.

They feed their spirit on wrong things. I have seen real diligent Christians feeding their spirits even on Bible verses but with all the wrong twists. They just get more angry and condemned even in their diligence.

When we come before God we have confidence. We have confidence that He is tender towards us even in our weakness. That is the grace of God, the confidence that He is motivated with tenderness when He looks at our efforts.

Again, I do not do efforts to put Myself before Him to motivate Him to like me. It is the other way around. Because He likes me, I am motivated to do the effort.

We feed people night and day on the idea that God delights in them because of Christ Jesus. Then we have the confidence that if we do these weak little things, because they really are weak, God will do His part.

God says, “I want you to fill your mind with ideas about Me that are true. I want you to throw in a little bit of fasting, a few ‘I love You’s’ and have a ‘yes’ in your spirit called a spirit of obedience. Even if you blow it, I want the ‘yes’ there. I want the right ideas about Me, and I will take it from there. I will ignite that over time and put power on it.”

John 7:38 is a very important passage. I want you to see it with your eyes. We are familiar with the passage, but there is a phrase in it that is often overlooked.

Jesus said, “*He who believes in Me as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.*” It is the key phrase “*as the Scripture has said.*”

The phrase qualifies the type of believing. Here is how many people read this, “He who believes in Me....” Now the next idea, “...as the Scripture prophesied, so your spirit will be filled with living water.” That is not what He is saying.

He is saying it differently than that, “He who believes in Me in the way that I tell you to believe in Me, he who believes in Me My way of believing, the river will flow on the inside.”

The phrase “*as the Scripture says*” qualifies and describes the type of believing.

Here is how a lot of people believe in God. I go to church, do the devotional thing, and drop in at the meeting. What else does He want me to do?

Jesus says, “That is not how the Scripture says to believe upon Me. The Scripture of the Sermon on the Mount says that I want you to live a life of fasting and prayer. I want you to give yourself. I want your money to be Mine. I want you to fill your mind with truths about Me as a Father and Bridegroom. I want you to believe on Me the way that I described believing on Me. If you do that, the rivers will be loosed on the inside.”

Many people read the phrase “*as the Scripture says*” as “as the Scriptures prophesied the rivers would flow.” It is not about the flowing rivers. It is about the quality of believing.

Beloved, we have got to believe in the eager abandoned way that God says. Then the rivers will flow. They will take care of themselves.

Now we are going to look at the way God says to believe, **Ephesians 5**. I am going to be very brief on this because we have hit this passage over and over. We will hit it many more times.

Ephesians 5:14, we have to believe upon God the way that God describes. We have to come before a tender Father, a passionate Bridegroom, with whole heartedness and not on the run. We have to come with fasting.

Beloved, fasting is a part of normal one-on-one Christianity. The Western church says that the radically on fire ones try it. It is absolutely a foundational part of new believers, Christianity 101 in the New Testament.

Prayer and fasting is not something radical people do. It is what new believers learn in their first session of the new believer's class. Giving. "Well, I am an American. We give a little here and there on the run."

The Lord says, "No. Giving is a critical part of your emotional chemistry when you give the way that I said to give." The way that we steward time and money is a significant dynamic that qualifies the way we believe.

The kind of believing that includes prayer, fasting and giving is the kind of believing that God says will release rivers on the inside. You do not earn the rivers by believing that way, but you posture your heart with no defenses before the flame of God.

The flame of God gets right to you, and there are no barriers to work through. We have to believe the way that God says to believe.

Here it is in **Ephesians 5:14**, "*Awake you sleepers!*" Paul is quoting **Isaiah 51**, the very passage we are looking at. There are 2 or 3 places in **Isaiah**. **Isaiah 26** as well. I believe this is a direct correlation to **Isaiah 51** as well.

"Awake and get fire in your spirit!" is the context. The **Isaiah 26** context is about the resurrection from the dead. I believe that what Paul's context is getting fire on your spirit, using New Testament language.

He says to the church of Ephesus, “I want you to wake up!” The church of Ephesus had the greatest revival of all the churches in the New Testament. The church of Ephesus had a revival greater than the city of Jerusalem.

Acts 19 & 20, the mighty revival in Ephesus. Here it is a time later and already they are getting lethargic in their spirits.

Paul says, “Hey you guys! **Isaiah 52**, get with it. Shake the dust off. Put the chains down.” “Yea, but I feel bad.”

I told you last week that the victim mentality is not somebody that acknowledges that they have pain. That is called truth and honesty. A victim mentality is a person that because of the pain they release their responsibility to move in and engage their spirit with God.

They say, “I am hurt; therefore, I am not going to engage my spirit with God.” That is a victim mentality.

It is not the acknowledging that you are hurt. It is the quitting because you are hurt. It is the giving of the responsibility to rise up in your brokenness and shame, receive the truth of His beauty and put your heart in front of His fire.

It is the giving that responsibility away to the therapist. Therapists cannot do that for you. Any counseling where the counselor becomes bigger than life and assumes the responsibility that only the individual human can exercise to engage their spirit in the knowledge that God has given them beauty for ashes.

Any counseling model that cuts that short is a counseling model that is going to be ineffective. A victim mentality is not one that says, “I am hurt.” That is honesty. It is, “I am hurt therefore I quit. Therefore I want other people to engage my spirit with God and get me well.”

That is absolute heresy. You cannot give that responsibility to another no matter how beat up you are. God says, “I alone have given you the responsibility and privilege of Me touching your spirit if you will exert effort and put your weak heart in front of My fire.”

“Awake, awake!” Verse 15, “Walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise.” The number one issue, look at **verse 16** about awaking. What is the number one issue in awaking? It is spending your time right. Redeeming your time.

The Lord says, “If you squander your time your spirit will get weak and your spirit will get passive and lethargic.” Beloved, you cannot have a fiery spirit squandering your time.

If you are going to awake and have the anointing, *Jesus’ shining on you*, rise from the dead spiritually (**Isaiah 26**), you will have to redeem the time because the days are evil.

What does that mean that the days are evil? He is saying that there are demons, powers and principalities in the unseen realm everywhere. The days are evil. There is more demonic power in the atmosphere.

Ephesians 2:1, the prince of the power of the air, there are demons everywhere. When you buy into the fact that when you just go to work on Monday morning there are demons everywhere and the days are dangerous in the spiritual environment of the whole earth, then you will redeem your time.

If you think the days are good and everything is neutral then you will squander time because you do not believe there are demons hitting you in every direction. When you believe the days are evil and the atmosphere is charged with demonic powers everywhere you go, the anointing is sufficient.

I am telling you Beloved, you will never redeem the time until you believe that tomorrow matters in the way you carry your spirit and feed it. “Well, I am just kind of depressed and down.”

Beloved, you have the power if you just feed your spirit to cast chains off, put dirt off, and to rise up. I promise you that you do.

“I am just beat up and I am quitting. I want my counselor to do it for me.” Lie, lie, lie. Nobody is so beat up that they cannot say ‘yes’ to a tender God that is giving them free grace. It is impossible.

“No. You really do not know. I am really beat up and do not trust anybody.” There is a way that God has constructed your human spirit that it will respond to the Holy Spirit and the tenderness of God if you will say ‘yes’ at the critical point of decision.

You are going to redeem the time; you are really going to measure your time. You are not going to earn God's fire by spending your time right. You are going to put your cold heart in front of it, and the power of it is going to hit you as a free gift.

Then he goes on in **verse 18** and says, "Get anointed with the Holy Spirit. Get into the presence of the Holy Spirit. Spend your time getting into the realm of the anointing. Be filled with the Spirit."

How? This is one of my favorite verses. It is spontaneous singing. Open your heart. Add **Colossians 3:16** to this because it is the companion verse to **Ephesians 5:19**.

"Open your heart and sing the Word of God with your spirit. Sing with tongues, sing the Word. Open your heart." I have spent session after session talking on this.

I have seen so many people in IHOP that will not enter in to **verse 19**. Others will tap their foot, listen to the good music, and I am not the policeman trying to figure out who is or is not because I want to go myself. But I have a passion as a leader that the people would enter in.

I gave this illustration the other day. There is a man working in 100-degree weather for 10 to 12 hours. Heat is pounding on him. His body is broken with fire and heat. He is so hot. He has a worse problem. He is parched with thirst.

A man brings out a refreshing cup of cold water, a big pitcher. He says, "Oh, my body is hot, but worse than a hot body I am parched with thirst. I have not drunk a think all day and it is 100-degrees."

The man comes and pours the water on the man's body. It cools him off and it feels wonderful, but he is still dying of thirst.

People go to IHOP, an anointed environment. They sit there, tap their foot, and get the feel. They say, "Man this feels good." It is like they have been in 100-degree weather, and someone pours cold water on them. It feels wonderful, but they are still dying of thirst on the IHOP staff because they never engage their own heart in a personal deep way.

Beloved, I cannot do it for you. The people up front cannot do it for you. You are never going to feel like doing it before you do it. This is what we do. We exert effort. We redeem the times. The days are evil. The atmosphere is filled with demonic powers and conflicts.

The tender God with free power says, "If you will rise and put off your chains, you come in the spirit of beauty and I will give you the sufficient power to set you on fire again."

He goes on with 2 more ways. **Verse 20**, "*Give thanks in all things.*" **Verse 21**, "*Submitting one to another.*" These 3 things, **verse 19, 20, & 21** are very different.

All of them require living before an audience of One. Every one of these 3 dynamics will change your spiritual and emotional chemistry.

Verse 20, "*Give thanks for all things.*" This means when circumstances are bad, the most natural thing to do is not give thanks. What we do is our lives busy. We get shamed. We go and sit in an anointed atmosphere, but we never open our spirit and engage.

"I feel bad, am tired and ashamed. I will just have them pour water on me and not drink."

Number 2, circumstances get bad and the most natural thing to do is worry and complain. The Lord says, "No. Move in all the way. Thank Me for the breakthrough."

"I do not want to thank you. I want to get mad, complain, get on the phone, be in a bad mood and worry." The Lord says, "You will never get free then. Hang the phone up. Stop the complaining and worry. Begin to thank Me for the supernatural provision and breakthrough."

"That bugs me because I have to have vitality with You to do that. I am just going to be mad. I am going to sit this one out, too."

The Lord says, "It is because of shame you sit out **verse 19**. Then because of complaining you sit out **verse 20**. Then in **verse 21** I want you to open your spirit to other people who are imperfect and submit to spiritual authority."

God will always have spiritual authorities in our lives. We have this idea that if our spiritual authority is good then we will yield. Beloved, they are all a mess. The good ones are a mess. The Lord knows that.

The Lord says, "I still want you to say 'yes' in your spirit to other people's directives." I am not talking about a spirit of control and obeying people in a mindless way.

There was something that happened to me just the other day. I will not tell you all the details about it. Someone said, "No." I said, "Yes." I said, "No." It was their call.

The convicted me and said, "Go humble yourself and do what they want." I said, "That bugs me that they are saying 'no'. It is a dumb 'no'. I should be able to do that."

The Lord said, "It is not an issue of whether their rule is dumb or not. The issue is if you touch Me then you will get liberty, and you can do it their way." I said, "Yea. But their way is dumb."

The Lord said, "That is not the point. The point is that I want to usher you into My presence. You have to submit to people to get there."

Verse 21 is relational. **Verse 20** is circumstantial. **Verse 19** is shame and spiritual weariness. He says, "If you will press in on those 3 issues before an audience of One and if you will drink when your natural man does not want to, you will get the anointing (**verse 18**) and you will wake up (**verse 14**)."

Beloved, we have got to move into this thing. We are just going to pray and end because of time and our commitment to be out of the building.

Father, we do love You. Lord, we want to rise up. We ask You in IHOP to awake. You tell us to awake, move our hearts and press in with our hearts. Lord, I want to be a man with a fiery spirit. I want to move into your heart. I want to move into the anointing.

I want to feed on the anointing. In the name of Jesus. Amen.