**DAY 8**

**DEAL WITH IT**

Our spiritual voyage to maturity is a holistic journey. Seeing our outside world change, and having an amazing life of freedom and influence, always starts on the inside! Whenever we step into seasons of ***Pursuit***, especially when it involved prolonged times of fasting and prayer, we will find that the work of the Holy Spirit quickly targets unresolved issues in our hearts and deals with the unhealed areas of our souls. At first, this can be discouraging or unsettling and appear that we are losing ground instead of advancing during our time of fasting but don’t be discouraged! The Lord is simply preparing us internally for all He has planned externally. The greater work that we are all wanting to see God do in and through our lives will only get accomplished as the greater work of the Holy Spirit takes place from the inside out!

*“Now to Him who is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly more than all that we dare ask or think [infinitely beyond our greatest prayers, hopes or dreams], according to His power that is at work within us.”*Ephesians 3:20 [AMP]

This is one of those “too good to be true” verses. Seriously?! God is willing and longing to do far beyond anything we can ask or think? Infinitely beyond our greatest hopes and dreams? I don’t know about you but I can hope and dream up some pretty grandiose things and ask for some ridiculous miracles and outcomes. The operative phrase in this verse is, “According to His power that is at work within us.” Another way to say it would be, “In alignment with, or an equivalent measure to the level of the Holy Spirit’s work within us.” **The key to seeing God move in power is to invite Him to move in power within us.** Today, as we seek the Lord, let’s consider a few areas that have the potential to limit or derail the greater things of God in our lives, and then ask the Holy Spirit to do an internal work as we agree to deal with it.

Following are areas where we need to evaluate and then take any necessary action, to move into the “superabundantly more” program.

 *“So, if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.”*

 Matthew 5:23-24

1. **ELIMINATE ALL OFFENSES.**

The sacrifice (or gift laid at the altar) is our prayers, worship, fasting, and pursuit of God in His Temple or presence. The instructions are quite clear. If while we are seeking God, we realize there are any unresolved offenses in our lives, we are to leave our “gift” or pursuit of God and resolve the issue first. One important nuance of this verse is that it’s not even you that is carrying the offense or the grudge against someone else. He says that if we recall that “someone has something against you.” So that means if we are unaware of any offenses or hurts, we have caused or misunderstandings that are causing someone in our relational world to be offended, then we can’t go on pursuing God with a clear conscience, a clean heart and expect powerful results. But if we know or have a strong feeling that someone is offended with us, whether the offense is legit or they believed a lie, or are holding a petty grudge over some trivial matter, that’s not the issue. The issue and release point of God’s blessing is when we go to them and do our best to bring resolution. It’s amazing how the heavens open up after we have done our part to resolve and release all the offenses in our lives, so let’s dive in and deal with it!

**TAKE A MOMENT**

Ask the Holy Spirit if there is anyone you need to text, call, or visit to work through some unresolved offense. You may not need to pray or wait on God for this one; you might know immediately as you read these words. So, here’s the “to do,” don’t wait or procrastinate. Take action immediately. If you have already attempted to resolve it and they are unwilling, then you are free to move on and seek God with a clear conscience. If you feel you have done all you can in the past and an issue remains unresolved, perhaps the Holy Spirit would lead you to try one more time? No pressure here, but the Lord desires you to live free and experience easy access to His presence when you “bring your gift to the altar.”

1. **DON’T GIVE UP YOUR REAL ESTATE.**

The Greek word for foothold is “topos” which means to give ground or real estate, to give legal right to inhabit. Ephesians 4:27 in the Amplified version says, “And do not give the devil a foothold (**an opportunity to lead you into sin by holding a grudge, or nurturing anger**, or harboring resentment, or cultivating bitterness.)”

As you wait on the Lord, the Holy Spirit will be faithful to bring to light all areas of real estate in your heart that you’ve given over to the enemy through resentment and bitterness. The Lord desires that you would live completely free of any and every trace of anything that may be holding you back from experiencing your full potential in Him, so let’s deal with it.

*“In your anger, do not sin.” Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.”
Ephesians 4:27*

*“The unexamined life is not worth living.”
~ Socrates ~*

1. **KEEP NO SECRETS.**

During these days of ***Pursuit***, give God full and continual access to every area of your heart. King David sang, “Search me, oh God, and know my heart.” This is an invitation to live a life of transparency with the Holy Spirit. God already knows our thoughts. You’re not bringing him anything new, you’re simply inviting the Holy Spirit to examine your heart (your thoughts, motives, secret ambitions) to identify and deal with any heart issues that are diminishing your life. As you grow in this area, you will discover a new and powerful intimacy and security in your prayer time. This is the beauty of living an examined life.

*“God, I invite your searching gaze into my heart. Examine me through and through; find out everything that may be hidden within me. Put me to the test and sift through all my anxious cares. See if there is any path of pain I’m walking on, and lead me back to your glorious, everlasting ways – the path that brings me back to you.”* Psalm 139:23-24 (TPT)

1. **REFUSE TO GET STUCK!**

Positioning your heart and mind to release every offense, forgive people quickly and not hold onto past hurts is the way to insure you will continue to move forward in your life and ministry. Regarding offense and betrayal, Jesus made some clear statements that apply to all of us and we don’t even have to believe them, memorize or quote them to see them activated in our lives. This stuff just happens!

*“Then He said to his disciples, “It is impossible that no offenses should come.”*  Luke 17:1 (NKJV)

*“In this world you will have trouble.”* John 16:33

So, it’s not a matter of whether or not offenses, betrayals and tribulations will continue to be a part of life on a fallen planet, but a matter of what will you do with them. As I look back on over three decades of life, ministry, and pastoring people, I’ve had a share of betrayals and wounds, as well as offending and hurting others. My observation is true every time. I’ve made a decision to forgive, resolve the issue to the best of my ability, and release the grace of God into the situation. I’ve watched the Lord move me into new levels of authority, blessing and potential. The real issue is keeping our hearts clean and clear before God and to be able to always release grace and forgiveness to others.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*“May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.”*Psalm 19:14

**PRAYER DIRECTIVE**

Ask the Holy Spirit to examine your heart and to reveal any areas where you might have given the enemy a “foothold.” Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any unhealed hurts or wounds you might have tucked away in the recesses of your heart. Ask him to show you any relationships in your life that might be damaged or anyone who is carrying an offense towards you, then make a prayerful and verbal commitment to deal with it.

**THOUGHTS & NOTES**