

TRUSTING GOD IN CRISIS



Come and listen, all you who fear God;
let me tell you what He has done for me.
- Psalm 66:16

MICHAEL S. CHRISWELL

Special Thanks

Before you begin reading this wonderful account of God's incredible faithfulness and providence in my life, please join me in giving thanks to God for our beloved sister in Christ, Myra-Jackson-Rain, who has so blessed this ministry work by transcribing, free of charge, this very lengthy teaching series, directly from the video series at <https://relentlessheart.com/series#/trusting-god-in-crisis/>. She not only captured my spoken words, but she also gave descriptions of things featured in the video, which had no audio to them. Thank you so much my beloved sister for your hard work in the Lord! You have brought so much joy to my heart, and I give thanks to God in Christ's name for answering my prayer for transcription through you!

"God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them." – Hebrews 6:10

"For they refreshed my spirit and yours also. Such men and women deserve recognition." – 1 Cor 16:18

TRUSTING GOD IN CRISIS – 7 YEARS LATER PART 1

Okay. So you can see, God is reaching through to me right there in that moment of desperation, where I'm angry at Him, I'm at the end of myself, where He still, even though I'm telling Him how angry I am, He's actually reaching through, by His grace, trying to comfort me. You are going to understand how powerful that moment is, that I caught on audio recording, at the end of this story. We are getting close, hang in there.

Hey, guys, it's Michael. That's a clip that I filmed telling the story about the divorce, and all that God did, miraculously and supernaturally behind the scenes, back in late 2012. I saw that a lot of you enjoyed and were moved by the journal entry that I had shared, where I set the video camera up at my friend Larry's house, the very night before the divorce trial. And I am so thankful that Father moved on my heart to capture that, and to look back on it, it was so touching to me. I hope you, also, along the way, are making journal recordings, either video, written or audio, of all that God is doing in your life. It's so incredibly important.

I think it's more important now than it ever has been, for us to all gather evidence of God's amazing faithfulness, His loving kindness, that we can share, not only with ourselves when we're going through the darkness, but for other people. So, one of the things I want to do is, I'm going to take this series of videos that I found that I had made . . . again, this is something that has never been seen before, publicly, outside of just a few clips . . . and I'm going to tell you, I want to apologize. I know some of you get a little fatigued hearing about my ex-wife or hearing about the divorce. I plead with you to understand that this is not about a divorce, and it's not about my ex-wife. This is about God throwing a man into a pit. It's like a Joseph story, where Joseph's brothers threw him into a pit. Then, he is later falsely accused and thrown into a dungeon. It's really about a time of crisis. And so maybe your crisis, which is guaranteed to come, if you are going to follow God, and you're ever going to be used, your crisis may look totally different.

So, please don't just check out, because you've heard some of these divorce stories before, or that you're like, "Mike, I'm sick and tired of hearing about this!" Trust me, so am I. But, one thing I am not sick of hearing about is all of the unbelievable and amazing ways that God has dealt with myself and with other people who have gone through these types of crises. Here's what I want you to understand, right as we

get going here, and why I am doing this, and why I know the Father is helping me to do this for you. When we look at Psalm 95:10 through 11, the Lord says, "For forty years, I was angry with that generation."

Who is He speaking about? He is speaking about the Israelites, wandering in the desert.

"I said they are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known My ways, so I declared on oath in My anger, they shall never enter My rest." I noticed . . . when I began to do a deep study on the Israelites' journey out of Egypt, into the wilderness, through the Red Sea, through the Jordan, and then into the promised land, I noticed how, several times, Father mentions . . . and He wasn't a "Father" at this point. He was not God, the Father. He was just God . . . but He mentions "these people do not know My ways."

What we can learn from that is that the mysterious God, whose ways are so much higher than our ways, higher than the heavens are above the earth, He still desires for us to seek after Him, to know Him, and His ways. He says here, of the Israelites, that they will never enter His rest, because they do not know His ways.

The Holy Spirit used to move me to say to people, when they would reach out to me for help . . . one of the first things I felt the Holy Spirit moving me to tell people was that, "In order for you to get God's help, you have to seek God in accordance to His ways. You have to see things the way Father sees them. You have to respond to things the way Father responds to them. If you do so, you are going to begin to achieve the results that you see that a lot of us find we are missing, from the New Covenant, that declares we are to have fullness in Christ, we are to know God this way, we are to experience Him this way. We are to have that peace, the joy, the rest, the abundant life, rivers of living water flowing from within us.

These things all come about, for anybody who has finally aligned their thoughts, their actions, their obedience, and their wills to the ways of God. Now, this is something that takes years to do, and you don't have to do it perfect, right away, to begin to experience God. I've tried to encourage you guys throughout many of the videos that God did not wait until I was perfect before He began blessing me. In fact, I can point out several things in the videos that we're going to be watching here, that I was wrong on, ignorant on, not Christ-like on, and yet, God is still blessing me immensely.

There are going to be some things in this story that I have never told. In fact, I'm going to tell you something, this is pretty amazing: there are some details in this story that you are going to hear that only one other person outside of me knows, in the whole world; one gentleman named Bobby Junkin, who has been one of my dearest, longest friends, brothers in Christ. This guy has been so loyal to me. You are going to hear more about him, in my story coming forward, where God brings him into my life. He is such a beloved dear brother. I love this man. This man was with me when I was at the very bottom. He did not look down on me, but God used him to help me. And he is one of the only people on the whole earth who knows a part of my story that I have never, ever told. I don't think even Persis knows about this, because it was just not something that was ever necessary for me to tell her. It probably wasn't something she would have been interested in hearing about.

But, nonetheless, if you will wait and go through this, you're going to hear some amazing details that have never before been shown.

Again, why am I telling this, why are we still talking about this? Because we want to know God's ways in order that we might enter into God's rest. Now. A couple of Scriptures I want to show you about the need for this. Many times, God calls us . . . sometimes years later after He's done something wonderful, He calls us to tell, in intimate detail, all of His workings. One of the things that I just absolutely am fascinated with is the workings of Father in my life. There have been so many amazing things that God has done, that I regularly lament. Even now there are, behind the scenes, incredible things happening, God moving, and about to happen. Incredible.

And I say, "Father, how am I ever going to tell?" God knows I'm trying. I'm trying to keep up with Father and all the things that He is doing in my life, as best as I can, to constantly hand back to other people something to stand on. I kind of see that the way Father has been pleased to use my life is kind of like turning it inside-out, laying it down, such that it becomes like stepping stones for other people to follow after Christ, right behind me, that maybe don't yet know "Where do I put my foot next?" or "What does it look like when there's not a stone for me to put my foot on next?"

So, this is part of the calling, and part of God's grace to other people, through my life, and perhaps through your life, the same way. He'll take and give people meaning out of the very things that He brought you through, perhaps in darkness. If we are comforted, if we are struck down, if we suffer, it is for your good, Paul says, and so this is something that is for your good.

There are many Scriptures that show, for example, Exodus 18:18, where God calls somebody to tell, in great detail, all that He's done. "Moses told his father-in-law about everything the Lord had done to Pharaoh and the Egyptians for Israel's sake, and about all the hardships that they met along the way, and how the Lord had saved them." Why does God do this? Because He wants another group of people, or another person like yourself, to understand His ways.

God does not, for some reason, reveal every single thing to every person. There are so many things I am ignorant on, that I get to learn from how God dealt with other people. That's all I'm trying to do, is to help you to experience and know some of those things that God has been pleased to do in my life.

Acts 11:4 – "Peter began and explained everything to them precisely as it happened." Now, Acts 12:16 through 17, when Peter shows up, having been let out of jail by the angel, and he shows up knocking at the door where the disciples are kind of hiding out, and they cannot believe that it's Peter, and it says when he came in . . . he kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. Then Peter motioned with his hand for them to all be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison. Then he tells them to tell James and the brothers about that, as well.

Acts 21:19 – "Paul greeted them and reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry." Sometimes, people confuse telling a testimony with either self-righteousness, or putting self in it; you're talking too much about yourself. I get this a lot, because you know, God has primarily called me to tell the story of all that He has done in my life, and so sometimes people, not yet understanding these principles, will say, "Mike, all you're doing is talking about yourself." Really? No, I'm not. All I'm doing is talking about how God has had His way with me, if you see it differently.

So, to give some comfort, go read 2 Corinthians, Chapter 11, where you will see the greatest Christian that I believe has ever lived, in 33 verses, saying, "I," "me," "my" or "mine" 56 times in 33 verses. He did this for a reason. Not because Paul is gloating over self. He is boasting, he is doing it for a reason. God ordained it. Not because he is trying to say that this religion or all of his teachings are about him. No. But Paul is, to you and me, one of the greatest realities of the truth of Jesus Christ that we have. When you think about the impact that those 13 or so letters that he wrote have had on you and me, think about how God has used, and given so much strength to your faith, through one man named Paul. If there had been no "I," "me" or "mine" told in that, you and I would lack all that strength that God had for us through him. Thanks be to the Lord, Jesus Christ.

In the end, no matter whether I use the word "I," "me" or "mine" a thousand times, you will know, and you will hear, the real Spirit of who I am speaking of - my Father in heaven - through the Lord, Jesus Christ, His Son, aided by the help of the Holy Spirit. The Triune God that lives in me, that helps me and you to know Him, that grants us salvation, that takes and gives us redemption for all of the snot in our lives, the loving God, the Great, I Am, that is Who this is all about. The One who said, "Apart from Me, you are nothing." John 15:5 and 6. The Lord, Jesus Christ, that's who it's about. And remember, the

Lord uses you to make Himself known to other people, or He will use me, or He will use other things, to help other people to know that He is real.

So. Here's what I want to do. I'm going to take you through this video interview that I did, again, back in late 2012, where I did a pretty decently concise job, in about an hour and 15 minutes or so, telling this amazing story of how God took me through the most difficult, darkest crisis of my life. Again, don't let this be about a divorce. Let this be about trusting God in crisis. Whatever yours is, fill in the blank.

Now, along the way, what I'd like to do is, I'm going to stop to go in great detail . . . I'm going to stop and pause this video and provide a little bit of insight from older brother, Michael. You see, the Michael seven years ago, he has faith, he has a passion for God, he's so excited, he's willing to take risks to trust God, but he's still ignorant about a lot of things. He's just coming out of the carnal stages of his Christianity. He's really just now paying the price, and really is just now, for about 18 months or so, been showing God real faith, having fully surrendered a few years earlier, October 30th, 2009. It's been about 18 months of having this faith really tested out, God moving me to act, according to His will rather than mine. There is a lot for this guy to learn in this video that you'll see (*pointing to the computer monitor*). Just like there's a lot, still, for this guy you're seeing in this video, right now (*pointing to himself*), to still learn.

But I've learned a great deal of walking with our Father, and He has been pleased to help me to have insight, and to understand some of His ways. You know, many of the Father's ways are truly beyond tracing out, and I love that, because I'm a guy who's always trying to figure out what is "X." I love deconstructing God's ways and understanding ". . .Wow! . . .," and when I do this, it just gives me elation. It gives me such a magnificent view of God's majesty, it humbles me.

Oh, there is a great place for faith, walking not by sight, not by understanding, not by feeling it in my life. But what I have found is, the Lord, thank You, Jesus Christ, has been so pleased, as I have moved through each stage of my life, to give me meaning and understanding after the fact, looking back. I began to see, clearly, that which I could not see when I was in the middle of the storm.

For example, 2018, what an unbelievable test of my faith, one of the greatest tests I've ever gone through. I don't want to get into this now. God has not even permitted me to do so, yet. I actually made a wonderful recording with the Lord's help, just right at the beginning of the year . . . and Father has asked me to not share that yet. Soon I will . . . describing what I went through in 2018, when God effectively removed His presence, His favor, and His grace from my life. It came back, to the praise of God, Almighty, on December 29th, 2018, ladies and gentlemen, one year to the day, without me realizing it in the moment of when God asked me to set down and take a rest . . . one year, to the day. That's how precise our sovereign God of the universe is.

This is the God that you get to call "Daddy." This is the God that you get to call "my Father in heaven, who loves me." This is that good Father, who says of you, "If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children when they ask, how much more will the heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask?" He's a good, good Father. His ways are very mysterious, and as I've said, many times they are beyond tracing out. Many times, God does things, like reversals of things . . . I'm going to talk about this coming up, where I've seen God do things in my life, bless me with certain things, and then reverse either the circumstances, the direction, or whatever. And it's very mysterious.

But God has a sovereign plan in all of it.

Two points I want to add, from the late, great Austin T. Sparks. Austin Sparks, I had read recently in a wonderful article about The Divine Guidance of God, made the point that when you look to the Israelites traveling through their wilderness journey, out of Egypt and into the promised land, they are only seeing event by event. Right? Just like when you and I watch my divorce story, we are getting caught up in that moment, that phone call, that time, that very instance, that Hearing in the Court, what have you. But God

is seeing this from an eternal perspective and an end-perspective. He has an end-goal in mind that is not that particular event that I am going through, or that you are going through, right now.

What he pointed out that I thought was so brilliant, he said that God has two main things that He wants to accomplish with the Israelites. Number 1, He wants to get them in the promised land, in accordance with His promise. That is His main goal, not all the little details that happened in the wilderness. Those things are sometimes a byproduct of their disobedience, God's blessings, and all kinds of things. What God is really wanting to do, the number one purpose of God, is to get them into the promised land.

My friend, that is God's number one plan for you and me right now, is to get you and me in the New-Covenant-equivalent of the promised land, which is fullness in Jesus Christ. You've heard me . . . if you've listened to very many of my videos, you've heard me talk about this, the seven things that Jesus Christ promised to all who follow Him: the peace, the rest, the contentment, the abundance of answered prayers, the fruitfulness, the no thirsting for things in the world whatsoever, the joy of Jesus Christ made complete, the rivers of living waters that flow from within you. These are the things that are promised to you and me as followers of Jesus Christ.

Now, we have to go through wilderness, we have to go through many years of testing, and a lot of difficult afflictions, in order to get to this place, and even when we do, God still has plenty of testing for us along the way. This is God's main purpose.

The second thing that Austin Sparks mentioned, that is God's main purpose for the Israelites, and that what He is trying to work into them, is a sense of them understanding what it is they are missing along the way. He wants them to begin to realize, "Do you know why I made those waters at Marah bitter? Do you know why I made it so that Moses had to strike the rock? Do you know why I let it be so that you had to cross over the Red Sea and the Jordan? Do you understand why I allowed you to have the doves or the pigeons, or whatever kinds of birds it would have been, so much to the point where you started to throw up? Do you know why I wouldn't allow you to have any more manna than what was required for that day?"

Austin makes this amazing point that it was not God's choice to have the Israelites go all over the wilderness like this. It was not God's choice to have them do this for 40 years. It was their choice. God's purpose was to get them into the promised land. They were the ones, with their human responsibility, needing to respond back to the sovereignty of God, willing to be disciplined. They were the ones who were going to determine how long that was going to take. As it is with you and I, the faster we can learn Father's ways, the faster we can recognize and humble ourselves before His discipline, the faster we can come into agreement that His will must be done in this meekness where we prefer His will over ours, the faster God will bring us in to His promised land of fullness in Christ. Okay?

In order to do this, we need to understand God's ways. Many times, the emails that I receive from people, or the comments, people are locked up. They are paralyzed, because they don't understand. Now, there's a big need here. Carnal Christians cannot understand spiritual things. It's one of the great challenges of having a YouTube ministry. I have to sometimes share very deep truths as simple as I can, and yet, people still just cannot see it. They can't get it.

This is 1st Corinthians, Chapter 3, where Paul says, "I could not address you as spiritual, but as carnal." We all start out carnal, and it means you may not understand the things that I am saying, yet. You're still more carnal. You've been regenerated . . . rather, you've converted to Christ, but you haven't been fully regenerated. The Spirit of God is not the primary force at work in your life. You are still primarily being driven by your flesh. It's going to be very difficult for you to understand some of these deep truths.

Cry out to God for the deep, spiritual light. Cry out to God to participate in the death of Jesus Christ. Pay attention, and obey, whatever it is that you do have light on. That's how you'll get better understanding. Okay?

A lot of these things that I'm going to share, some will make sense, some won't. Some won't make sense now, but in the future, they will. Ask God to give you understanding of anything you don't understand, and ask God to help you see how these principles apply to your life.

Okay, without any further ado, let's spend a few hours . . . okay, remember. If Moses and Jethro sat down, it wouldn't have been a 10-minute conversation. They would have spent hours, Moses talking. So, if you'll spend hours watching some worthless movie, why not spend a few hours with me learning some of these amazing details of how God, the living God of the universe, dealt with me along the way. I know you're going to be blessed. And again, you're going to hear some things that are truly astonishing that I've never told before, about this divorce. It's amazing. I'm just like, "Wow," when I watch it.

So, let's go through this. Be patient with me. I hope you get a lot out of this. And may the Lord, God . . . In the name of Jesus Christ, Father, I'm asking You, please bless this person. Lord, this is not me talking about me. This is me talking about You, and how You've dealt with me. Now, Father, I know You've called me to do this. Lord, You know there have been many prayers, much prayer, that has been given before this. I say this prayer now for the benefit of the person watching. But Father, I do ask You, Lord, as I have asked You many times, give light to Your people. Help them to find Your ways in this story, and how You are dealing with them. Abba, God, give them eyes to see and ears to hear, that they might be blessed to know You more, and to walk with You. God, there is nothing more important than learning how to walk with You, our God. I thank You, my Father, in the name of Jesus, for answering this prayer. A-men.

My friend, this is about learning how to walk with God. Let's get to it. God bless you.

(Previous video recording of Michael speaking to us from his parent's house sitting on the couch.) Okay. This is where it gets to a very, very exciting part of the story. This is the part of the story where you're going to find yourself falling into one of two categories: You're either going to hear this, and you're going to be totally gripped, you're going to have a new, reverent fear for God, and a new respect for the devil. You're going to desire so much to want what God's very best for your life is, you're going to have a level of faith inspired to go out and seek God like you've never sought before, to believe Him for things in your life that you've never thought possible, to believe Him for deliverance, to believe Him for having a relationship with Him like you've never had before. I'm hoping that's the category that you're going to find yourself in, and I believe that's why God has asked me to tell this story.

But the story is so dramatic, it is so outside of normal, it is so supernatural, that there is a second category you might fall into, and that's the category of "Mike, you're an absolute idiot. You are a nut. You are off your rocker. This is not of God. You are messed up, brother. I'm sorry you've had a bad divorce. I'm sorry you've lost your family, your wife and kids, all this stuff, but buddy, you need to get some help." And I want you to understand that I am very well aware of both sides of this coin. I get it!

My responsibility is not to worry about which side of that coin you're going to fall on. My responsibility is to tell the testimony of what God has done in my life, and it is amazing. I beg you, I implore you, to willingly suspend your disbelief, remembering three interesting facts: Every person on the planet used to be convinced that, in fact, the sun spun around the earth. Everybody thought that. They lived their life with that as a fact. Everybody also thought, at one time, that the earth was flat. They thought if you sailed far enough, you could fall off the end. Another interesting fact, previous to 1940-something, everybody thought that if a human tried to run a mile in under four minutes, their heart would explode. Doctors said this. These are three major "facts" people believed that turned out to not be true, once an experience contradicted that belief.

What I'm going to tell you is going to contradict, possibly, a lot of your beliefs. But I want you to consider the story of Moses . . . who I now happen to have a lot of respect for . . . having been in the desert, and

having to come back and say, “Uh, guys, you’re not going to believe this, but while I was in the desert, God spoke to me, and like . . . He did it through a burning bush.” And they probably looked back at Moses, and were like, “Uh-huh (nodding), and what were you burning while you were out in the desert, Moses?” I get it! So here, come along for the ride with me. I dare you to willingly suspend your disbelief. This is going to blow your mind. I experienced it, I witnessed it. I have witnesses. You’ll hear some witness testimonies along the way, as I share this. I still have days where I’m just, like, “Really, God? Really? REALLY!! You did this?”

(Reaching for two, 2-inch, three-hole binders full of paperwork and placing them in front of him on his lap.) To the depth of my despair, God has brought redemption and blessing. *(Reaching for an even larger accordion file folder packed full of more paperwork, with a stuffed manila envelope of top of it – now his lap is piled with these items.)* I want you to look at this. You remember hearing, in the story, my mom mentions that there were nine-and-a-half hours of Court. This is a sixty-thousand-dollar lawsuit that was perpetuated against me, by the wife of my youth. I didn’t do anything to deserve this, I promise you, and this story will vindicate that. It will validate what I am saying to you.

What I want you to understand is, I was desperate. I was being destroyed. This is called “affliction.” This is the kind of stuff you read in the Psalms, where you see that the psalmist is being surrounded on all sides, he’s being delivered into the hands of his enemy, his life is falling apart. I mean, look at this. This book alone *(Opening a white, 2-inch, three-hole binder full of paperwork onto his lap)*, this was gone through in nine-and-a-half hours in Court. These are *(Flipping through the pages in the notebook on his lap)* all of the exhibits of evidence against Michael Chriswell; why I shouldn’t be able to see my children any more, why I’m “hiding money,” why I never need to be able to take my kids out of a 25-mile radius, why I should do this, why I can’t do this. All day long, this is all the evidence, nearly \$60,000 my ex-wife spent to annihilate me. *(Putting all those notebooks and papers back on the table beside him.)*

So, this leaves me in a position where I am . . . I’m desperate, and I cried out to God. You’ve got to understand, I cried out to God, and I . . . like Jacob, I wrestled with Him. I grabbed ahold of Him, and I would not let Him go until He gave me meaning to this. “Okay, God, are you the God of second chances? Am I going to get my marriage back? Is this. . .” I wanted my marriage back. I wanted my ex-wife to wake up. I wanted her to have the spiritual eyes opened, to see what she was doing. And I believed God for a miracle.

All of my friends and family, and those who really know God, close to me, said, “Mike, you’ve got to give this up. We’ve been seeing this coming for years; this is not going to happen.” And God confirmed for me, along the way . . . I don’t have time to tell you now . . . but He did, in fact, confirm for me, eventually, that I was living on false hope, that this was going to be the death . . . that this marriage would die, but it wouldn’t be the death of me. And I would not be useless. Because I was so afraid . . . “God, I’m a Christian man. I have desires to be in ministry and to make a difference for other people, for Your name, Jesus Christ. I’m ruined. I’m washed up. What are You ever going to do with a divorced guy . . .”

(Michael stops the video we are watching here to comment, present day.) So, how neat is it for me to look back at this guy, who’s having this experience, and he has no idea what lays before him in the future. He has no idea the weight, even, of the words that he’s just said, about realizing that this is not the end of him, through this divorce, that God does still have some plans and some usefulness for him. I believed this, in faith, and God had given me enough evidence . . . a few words from other people, and then just primarily, God speaking to me, directing me, and speaking to my heart about this.

But what I didn’t understand is the path that I had to take, in order to get to this place of spiritual abundance and usefulness to God. Indeed, God was going to bless me with a bountiful ministry. Here we are, seven years later, and as I look over to YouTube, right now, *(As he refers to his computer monitor)* it is amazing to see that there are currently 109.4 million minutes of YouTube time that has been watched on my channel. My video views are 9.4 million, and I have over 80,000 subscribers. My story “Trusting

God in The Storm” has been watched 20.7 million minutes by itself, and I think it’s over a million-and-a-half views by now.

What’s incredible is, this is all what the Lord has done. He has done all of this. And as we get farther through the story, I’ll begin to share more about how it was that God brought me into ministry, and then all of the testing that came with it. That’s like a whole other section of the book, where God is going to test me, repeatedly. Father has done all of this. In spite of many men wanting to promote this, and many temptations to promote myself, this has all been done by God. It’s incredible to look back and see.

I think it was Zac Poonen, who I first heard and learned this lesson, when he says, “My brothers and sisters, do you really want to know the path to spiritual abundance? Do you want to know what it looks like?” And he turns, and he begins to teach out of Psalms 66, Verses 10 through 12, where it says, “For you, O, God, tested us. You refined us like silver. You brought us into prison and laid burdens on our backs. You let men ride over our heads. We went through fire and water, but You brought us to a place of abundance.” And see, this is the same process. Even though this is the Israelites, and even though this is 3,000, 4,000 years ago we’re talking about, now God still works the same primary way.

If you want to go to this path of abundance in Jesus Christ, you’re going to have to participate in sufferings. You’re going to have to be tested and refined, as God refines silver. You’re going to have to be thrown into dungeons. You’re going to have to let men be riding over your heads, you know, legal situations. Men will sue you. You will have people falsely accuse you. You will have family members turn against you. You will have in-laws lording it over you, controlling you. You will have terribly tiring bosses abusing you. You will have friends controlling you. You will have spouses lording it over you. This is part of the process of learning to walk in that humility, the dependence of God that is required, in order to eventually get to this place of abundance.

There’s so much more. Let’s take a further look.

(The video we were watching where Michael was in his parent’s house, speaking from the couch previously, continues.) All of a sudden, I became aware that I am seeing the number “666” showing up a lot in my life. It’s starting to show up everywhere: *(showing examples and illustrations)* gas pumps, checking account balances, the number of video views I would see on a particular video, software license codes, telephone numbers, pulling into the driveway, my odometer would be this (*“61755 MI TRIP 1: 666.6 MI”*), and I’m thinking, “Wait a second here. This is real. God is trying to show me that there is something real to this spiritual warfare thing.” I didn’t have any idea. I was clueless about all of this. So, I’m thinking that the devil is harassing me.

Fast forward, I have to go to my attorney’s office one time, and I show up 30 minutes early, so I go across the street to Barnes and Noble. I am there, and . . . recently, I had moved all of my email from Outlook to a new thing called “Google Apps.” While I’m at Barnes and Noble, all of the emails had transferred, so when I check my email on my iPhone, guess how many emails I had? *(Showing an example of his phone screen showing “666” over “Mail”)* Six-hundred-and-sixty-six (666) emails.

So, here I am seeing this . . . now, this is probably the . . . somewhere . . . 25th, 30th time I had seen this number. Each time, I’m just like, “Really? God, what is this? WHAT IS THIS? How do I even tell anybody about this, God? This is the weirdest thing I’ve ever seen. What is going on?”

Fifteen minutes later, I’m at my attorney’s office. They put me in the waiting room. They come back 15 minutes later to find me weeping, tears just streaming down my face. I’ve just spent the last 15 minutes reading over *(Showing an example of “VERIFIED MOTION FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION” documentation)* a Motion to have me psychologically evaluated. So now, she’s stepping the war up to a whole new level. I’m like, “God, what is going on?”

All of a sudden, the tape started to spin in my head, "Wait a second. I had just seen "666" thirty minutes before I'm at my attorney's office." And I began to realize, "Now, wait a second. Over the last couple of weeks, I have seen this number "666," and then I get some bad news, either a terrible text, a bad email, or a legal letter." I'm like, "Wait a second." All of a sudden, it all makes sense, and it turns out this invisible God, who I have been seeking with all of my heart, all of my mind, all of my soul, all of my strength, who I had trusted for everything when I hit bottom, is reaching back out to me. Having already begun to show me, in a dream, He wants to teach me about spiritual warfare, now He's giving me physical evidence of this spiritual warfare, and He is warning me in advance.

(Michael's mother speaking.) After Michael moved in with us, we had talked about him seeing numbers, and that was a way that God was communicating with him. Bob and I kind of rolled our eyes when we heard him say that. But after he'd been here for a while, we'd be out, and he'd say, "Look, mom, there's "222," and a few minutes later, "there's another 222," and that would go on for days, until he then would tell us what the "222" meant. It would lead him to Scriptures that would tell him either what to do, what not to do, comfort him. It was exactly what he needed, every single time. But we still weren't convinced. We thought, "That could be a co-incidence."

But when "666" would show up, more than one time, like two or three times in one day, Michael would come through the door, and he would say, "Guys, be prepared. Something is going to happen. I saw "666" three times today." And it wouldn't be a half a day would go by when we would either get something in the mail from the attorney, from the Court (*On the screen – "This is just one example of about 150 – See this at 11:47 am – picture of a police car with the number "1666" on the back – Get this at 2:30 pm – an envelope from a law office – "Praise Jesus for the warnings – Matthew 5:39-41"*). But it was always negative, and he said, "See, God warned me, so that I wouldn't be knocked off my feet."

Then came other numbers. They were numbers of encouragement, they were numbers when he was trying to make a decision, and he didn't know which way to go, God would be specific. And we started seeing this, over and over and over again until it got to the point, Bob and I could no longer deny that God was talking to Michael in a special language that we had never heard of, and it was through these series of numbers. Michael knew it. Michael believed it. And he listened, and he did whatever he was told, through Scripture.

But it took us a while to believe that that truly is what was happening.

(Back to the video in his parent's house on the couch we were previously watching.) I started to take pictures of all of this.

*(On the screen: "Two important points to remember before you see this... 1. I never LOOK for the numbers...they just show up! 2. There is ALWAYS an "event" of some kind that happens after I see the #...not 80%, not 95%, but **100%** of the time. Here is an example I caught on camera of how they just show up...")*

*(He is speaking, in another video driving in the car) . . . the day I married her, I'm convinced something happened to her when she was a child, and look there, right there - "666" right when I'm filming this, on this super-duty Ford pickup truck (*Showing more examples of pictures captured showing "666" in various forms and locations – signs, book covers, book titles, odometer readings, phone numbers, Scriptures – John 6:66, film editing information, calculations, identification numbers on the backs of semi-truck trailers, online identification bank codes, license plates, receipts, gas purchases, particular video likes, number of emails, number of items selected on a particular MPEG4 process, MB sizes, police car numbers on the back, computer file sizes, bank account balances*).*

(He is back in the video at his parent's house on the couch we were previously watching.) So now, I'm seeing this "666." Well, I started seeing another number, "555." *(Showing examples of pictures captured showing "555" in various forms and locations – semi-tractor-trailers identification numbers on the back, odometer readings, times on the clock, license plates, phone numbers, views of particular videos, street addresses, gas purchases, times on posted videos)* And all of a sudden, I'm like, "God, what is this?" You saw this referenced in the video, where I saw it on the mailbox the day of Court, "555."

One day, I'm praying, and God says, "Look at page 555 in your Bible. So, I quickly turned to page 555 in the Bible, and I read the story of *(2 Kings 19 – Jerusalem's Deliverance Foretold)* Jerusalem's Deliverance Foretold. And as I read that story, God said, "I am telling you in advance, I am going to deliver you. If you will trust Me, I will deliver you." I just felt this in my spirit one day while I was praying.

(We are back to Michael, present day, to comment.) As you might imagine, I have so many thoughts that come into my mind and heart, as I look back at this guy, telling this story, seven years ago. You know, I wanted to tell this story right away. God began to tell me to tell the story of all that He had done in my life, so I started journaling all of this, keeping track of it, and obviously, I sat down and told this story that you are now watching. When I first began to share it with some guys that I had been mentoring, in discipleship through a Bible study, friends and family, I started to get a different reaction than I expected. I actually started to have people kind of turn against it, and actually become very discouraged, even.

I would have people say things like, "God doesn't speak to me that way. God doesn't use numbers with me." And they would become discouraged. Or, "I never heard of such a thing." They would be negative, antagonistic, about it. So, I went into this kind of naïve, thinking that people would be so amazed and "Wow, that's incredible. I hope God will do something like that for me," when in fact, it spawned a jealousy amongst mostly carnal Christians. I really didn't fully, totally understand the difference between carnal Christians and spiritual Christians at the time, because at this time, I'm coming out of carnal Christianity and becoming a spirit-led person who walks with God. And so to everybody else who had been "churched-up" real well, and "Bible-studied-up" real well, this kind of supernatural providence of God looked incredibly strange, as you can see.

You know, my parents struggled with it, immensely, but because they lived with me, and they saw it, they were forced to acknowledge that this was really happening. This was not a co-incidence; this was not a delusion. And they saw that I was actually able to tell them the future, based on seeing these "666's" and these numbers. So, I imagine how difficult that was for them to grapple with it.

But perhaps, you have understood this as well, that we have two parts of us: one part of us is the part of us that is "you," our sinful nature, the flesh, the natural man – Adam. The other part of us is spirit, born-again by the Holy Spirit, able to commune with the Holy Spirit and to receive, discern and understand the things of God. The Bible says to the natural man, without the Spirit, the things of God seems as foolishness to him. Right? He doesn't understand them.

So, in this way, we still have two people when you become born again, and I have never lost . . . even after all of these years of following God . . . I have never lost the capacity to be an atheist. I have an atheist living inside of me who doesn't want to believe God, who wants to rebel against God, who doesn't trust God, and who thinks that all of this stuff is better placed in the category of "Delusion" rather than "True Faith In God." But I can see how Father had wonderful reasons for causing me to delay. You'll see there are some incredible things I'm going to tell you, coming forward, in this story. But it's neat that by telling this story seven years later, you know, an atheist or even a carnal Christian, or a legalist, a very religious person, can no longer look at this and go, "Aw, man, this guy is just a delusion. This guy is just wacked." Really?

Well, if I truly was, then I should be reaping what I sow, and we should say, as Jesus said, "You will know a tree by its fruit." So, seven years later, if I'm living under the deception of the devil . . . if this was all of the devil, and this was not of God, or this was my own delusion of my mind, if this was my own mental illness, as many atheists say, "Oh, I pray you get some help" . . . it's funny how they say "I pray he gets some help" (*chuckling*), an atheist saying that . . . but if any of these were the case, then we could look at my life now and see the fruit. Right?

I mean, if you go down to your local overpass, and you find some drug addicts or some homeless guys, you'll see their life looks very different from mine, right, and you can look at them, and when they tell you the stories of their friend who comes and visits them, their imaginary friend at night, or they tell you about the spirits that they speak to when they take this certain drug, or what have you, you can know "These guys are delusional, they're lost, they're dark." And what would be your evidence that you are right? You'd see the fruit in their life. Their life doesn't work. They are homeless, they are sitting under an overpass with a needle in their arm. Their life and heart are a complete train wreck. Right?

Now, that's not to say that people living in the big house are not living some kind of delusion. That's a different kind of delusion. But we are speaking about the evidence in a person's life where the supernatural moving of the hand of God has been.

You can look now, seven years later, and go, "Wow, Michael was right to follow this supernatural guidance of God." And my friend, I'll tell you what's amazing, is that all these years later, there are now, I don't know, maybe 200 of these numbers . . . 150 to 200 of these numbers. I haven't really counted . . . but if it were not for me following God's unusual hand of providence, to guide me to specific Scriptures this way, there would be no video I am sitting in front of right now.

There would be no video of mine that you'd ever heard that could've ever, in any way, been a blessing to you. Because I have followed God leading me many, many, many times with these numbers pointing me to Scriptures, in order to get me to this place today where I have fullness in Christ, and literally hundreds and hundreds of answered prayers, and a truly exciting life of living every day by faith, I'm telling you these stories.

You can know that I'm not a guy who just picked up a Bible and began to say, "Hey, I want to be a Bible teacher." Nope. I wasn't called to do that. That was never my choice. I'm a guy who's living in faith behind the scenes. Okay? Notice, I tell you everything after it happens, right? I'm actually living what the Bible tells me to live. I'm practicing what I, then, eventually preach. So, behind the scenes of my life, I'm not a guy who's sitting around studying the Bible all the time and just coming up with Bible messages. I'm a guy who's actually walking with Father, hand-in-hand with my Lord, Jesus Christ, AND then I turn around, with these experiences, and I share them with you.

That's a big difference than somebody who makes their emphasis in learning the Bible, teaching the Bible, you know, speaking the Bible, so forth and so on. Yes, I do speak the Bible. Yes, I quote a lot of Scripture in my videos. But I'm trying to make the point that this is a living, breathing Word of God, and a living, breathing faith, and a real walk with God that you're getting to be able to see. Okay? This is not theory. This is not my ideas. This is not my good teaching.

This is the good providential guidance of the Holy Spirit in my life. And it is amazing. It's so amazing for me to look back on this, as crazy as it seems, because when this started happening to me, I thought, "Wow, this is just . . . I have never heard of anything like this." Okay? So . . . I have child-like enthusiasm. I'm willing to take risks. I'm open-minded . . . but when this started happening, it just threw me for a loop.

But I chose to believe. Unbelief . . . I'll never forget when Tozer explained, he said, "You know, there are two kinds of Christians: Those that hear from God and get all kinds of guidance from Him, and those that don't." And he said, "What's the main difference I've seen between these two?" He said, "Spiritual receptivity. The Christians that are being moved by God, they are open to hearing God speak in a way that may look, very much, like a burning bush, or it may sound an awful lot like a talking donkey, or it may appear very much like a man's hand, writing on the wall. It may sound like a voice coming from a cloud. It may feel or present itself like a dream or a vision. It may be an insight, a silent but penetrating Word spoken to the heart and to the spirit. There are all kinds of ways God speaks." But Tozer made the point that it's those who are receptive to the speaking voice of God that are the ones who hear It.

I had to, at some point, decide, "Okay, Father. I don't understand this, but I'm going to jump in with this, and I'm going to believe it." Now. I hope you are listening and following along with my autobiography, "Astonishing Grace To The Chief Of All Fools," where I kind of explain about the numbers more in depth and include some really important warnings. If you'll notice, none of the numbers, with the exception of the "666," ever pointed to anything in this story outside of the Bible. It's very important to remember that. There are all kinds of counterfeit madness, angel numbers, new age numbers. All that stuff, I think, is fit for the trash bin. Leave it alone. Let it go. Only is God using this weird way to drive me to Scripture. So, I hope that point has been made clear, and I hope this will challenge you to really trust God, and to believe Him.

I mean, is there anything that's too hard for God? Is it too hard for the God of the universe who keeps the whole universe and all the stars and the oceans and the mountains and the seas . . . and the squirrels fed, every single day, and all of the animals and insects and people . . . is the God who keeps all of that, is it too hard for Him to turn my head at just the right time to see the right number? Or to make it to where when I click on my phone, I see this number? Or to cause me to notice it? Is it too hard for God to do something like that? Certainly not.

Okay. So, I'm going to leave this here, for now. I'm going to cut this off as Part 1. It's long. I hope you enjoy this and get lots out of it. If you have some questions, by all means, perhaps put them in the comments, and I'll try to answer some of those specifically in the next session. That would be a great idea. I've never done this before. So, if you have some questions, put them in the "Comments" section below, and I'll start to read them. And then maybe, as the intro for the next video, I can answer some of your questions, or perhaps along the way.

God bless you, in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. I'll see you on the next video.

LETTING GOD DEFEND YOU, INSTEAD OF YOU: PART 2 OF TRUSTING GOD IN CRISIS

Today, we're going to be going into Part 2. Thank you, guys, so much for watching Part 1, and thank you so much for the comments and a few of the questions. I told you this was my first time offering to do the "Questions" thing, and I realize the flaw in this is that inevitably, some of you are going to ask questions that are going to be answered shortly in the story (*pointing to the upcoming video on his computer monitor*). So, how about we do this: Definitely ask your questions, as they come to you. If you have questions about this story, or something that maybe I didn't cover that you would like to know, that you feel other people could benefit from, as well, maybe put them in the comments, but allow me the permission to answer them at the end. Okay?

We'll do that. That will make more sense and be a little more fair for everybody. Maybe I'll just do a "Question and Answer" session at the end? That would be kind of neat.

So, today we're going to be looking at Part 2. Let's dive right into it . . . and by the way, for those of you who maybe have just found this video, and you kinda don't know what's going on and where we're at, I really encourage you, if you haven't done so already, to watch my story of what God did with me . . . it's called "Trusting God In The Storm" on YouTube . . . watch that story first, if you haven't had a chance to see it. And then, also, for those of you who have additional time, I really want to encourage you to start from the beginning in my autobiography called "Astonishing Grace To The Chief Of All Fools," which will help you to really understand the Biblical principles behind this chaotic life that I have lived on my way to finding Jesus Christ and life to the full. May God bless you today, as you listen, and I'll see you at the first commentary here shortly. Okay, let's take a look.

(Continuing in the video from his parent's house speaking from the couch.) A couple of days later, I'm doing a seminar at Belhaven University in Orlando on story-telling, and I have a room full of entrepreneurs. At the back of the room, there is a man, his name is Antonio Phillips, a dear brother. That guy waited for me at the end, until everybody else was done asking me questions, and he walks up to me, and he says, "Mike, I need to speak to you!" And I was kind of taken aback by his brevity. I said, "I tell you what, I'll meet with you," and I was reluctant, because everybody wants to meet with me after I talk, and I didn't have a lot of time, I'm going through a divorce, I'm trying to build a new business, so I ended up blowing him off for about two weeks through my partner, who was keeping my schedule.

Finally, one day, I said, "You know what? I told that guy I would meet with him. I need to meet with him." I go and meet with this guy, and this guy, long story short, has been through a seven-year battle, divorce and custody. He understands the Court System, both the legal secular side, and the spiritual side, better than any person I had ever heard of. This guy was able to articulate things about the Court System, and things about divorce, from God's perspective, that I had never heard. And he tried to wake me up.

He said, "Mike, you believe that you have to fight this, with all of your might and soul, because that's how you're going to show your kids that you love them, isn't that right?" And I said, "Yeah, (*nodding*)." He says, "In fact, you don't wanna not fight, because if you don't fight, that may make your kids believe you don't love them. Isn't that right?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Michael, that doesn't mean you don't love your kids. Michael, they're not your kids to begin with. First, they belong to the Lord." And he said, "Can I share something with you? Even if you win, you still lose."

And he began to explain to me how the Court System is set up, such that there is a "win-lose." No "win-win." And that is a downward death spiral, no matter what. He began to tell me tales of other people, including himself, who had actually won small victories in Court, but would pay a dear price spiritually, later, just from all of the drama that came from being tied to this individual, and all of the back and forth, the pull and the nagging, the getting the kids in the middle over time-sharing, and just the constant drama that can suck the life out of every person's soul involved.

He said, "Michael, I want to challenge you to pull out of the battle, and let God fight this fight for you," and he began to share with me the Scripture where King Saul is in pursuit of King David. King Saul has told everybody around that David is after King Saul – 1 Samuel 24 – that David is trying to murder Saul. So, he's out lying to everybody, slandering David. And the story is told that King Saul walks into a cave and doesn't realize that David and 400 of his men are hiding in the back of this cave. All of David's men say, "Look at this. The Lord has delivered your enemy right into your hands," because Saul now has come into this cave to relieve himself. David sneaks up and cuts a corner of his robe off, and the men are all saying, "Kill him! He's been delivered into your hands." David, as soon as he cuts the cloth, begins to feel remorse, and says, "Far be it from me to touch the Lord's anointed one."

After Saul exits the cave, David walks out and says, "Saul." He turns around and sees David there, and he knows exactly what's just happened. He is quickened in his spirit, and the most interesting dialogue of all occurs. David says, "Why are you pursuing me like this? What have I done to you?" And he basically says, "The Lord delivered you into my hands today, but far be it from me to touch the Lord's anointed one. May the Lord take vengeance, not me." And he says, "If I've done anything to deserve this, may the Lord judge me ever so severely, but if I haven't, may the Lord deliver me out of your hands, and may the Lord judge between us both."

So, here you have a situation where David, in faith, totally gets out of this battle, even though it appears God's delivered him. He gets out of the battle, and he trusts God, because he believes that vengeance belongs to the Lord, because the Bible says so. So, now, he shares that story with me that night, and encourages me to get out of the battle. But I'm going to be really honest with you, just like I have been really honest with Antonio. As we were leaving that night, I thought, "Wow, he seems like a great guy, seems like he loves the Lord, but he seems a bit radical to me. I'm not a hundred percent sure I'm buying this whole deal." Right?

Well, the next morning, as God would have it, as I turned my page from the page I had been reading to the page I would read for my next morning's Bible study, what story do you think I would read? The exact story of King David and Saul that he had just told me the night before, and I was stopped, dead in my tracks. I got on my knees, and I began to weep, because I knew that God was asking me to do something that was incredibly difficult and that went extra-ordinarily away from common sense. I knew that God was asking me to lay down the fight and to trust Him.

So, I began to pray, and I said, "Father, I will do this," and as soon as I said, "Yes," God said, "Michael, I will deliver you. I want you to fire your attorney. I will do this in a very unusual way that will bring Me much glory, and it will not be because you had a better attorney." I heard those words in my spirit as if they were written on the inside of my forehead. This is how you know when you are being spoken to by God, among other ways. So, I made the decision, right then and there, having already spent about \$15,000 in the lawsuit, to get out, to be done. Now, keep in mind, at this point, the divorce had started in August. This is now March. We're only seven months into it, I believe around there, and I'm pulling out, I'm ready to get out.

(back to present day video where Michael is in front of the computer monitor) Okay. So, I've made quite a few notes on this one, some things I want to share with you, so I'll be referring to my notes here. But hang in there with me, and I really believe that God is going to bless you through this. One thing I want to be remindful of is to remind you that behind the scenes of this story . . . I'm just kind of telling what happened . . . behind the scenes is a tremendous amount of time and effort being spent in prayer and seeking Father.

You've probably heard me mention, in my other videos or in my autobiography, about how during this season of my life, I'm waking up every day around five o'clock in the morning. I'm in that chair in the living room, and usually between five and nine o'clock in the morning, I would be full-on in Bible study mode. I would get anywhere between three to four hours a day, almost every single day, for about three to three-and-a-half years. My mom used to tease that, more likely than the sun coming up that day was guaranteed that she would come out and see her son sitting there, studying the Bible. I was so hungry for God's help, and I knew that meant I needed to know God's ways. How does He think? So, I was in that Bible for thousands of hours.

It doesn't mean that I know more than you about the Bible, because truthfully, I think I have a little bit of a natural learning disability where it's very difficult for me to retain what I read. I get to reading the Bible . . . or any movie I watch, I can watch it many times, because I don't really remember a lot of what I

watch the first time. I've been like this since I was a kid . . . so, it's kind of a laborious, bitter-sweet thing. But it took me a tremendous amount of time to remember these principles that you now hear coming out of me all the time, in Scripture. So, just keep in mind: Prayer. What you're hearing are answers to prayer. God is not just doing this without me having a vital role of humble, dependent prayer, at this point. Okay?

So, another principle that's going on behind the scenes that the Lord kept showing me a lot was Matthew 5:39. This is when God really begins to point me, as a "Christian" for 19 years, to actually obeying one of the more difficult teachings of Jesus Christ: Matthew 5:39 through 41, where He says, "Do not resist an evil person." He says, "If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to them the left. If they sue you for your cloak, give them also your tunic. If they ask you to go one mile, go with them two." At some point, with the ministry of the Holy Spirit, I decided, "I see how this applies to this situation where my ex-wife is coming at me with all guns blazing, and I need to determine, you know, am I going to obey this?" I felt for sure that God was calling me to it.

I can tell you, with 100% certainty, God was doing it. But see, I had lived 19 years thinking I could be inside of a place where a bunch of people called "Christians" gather, listening to some man teach the Bible, and that I was good. I was in a totally deceived state. As a Christian, believing that, you know . . . I prayed a prayer, I intellectually believed in Jesus, I'm really excited about being with other people who intellectually believed in Jesus, and praised God, and God is great and God is good . . . but I did not, as a Christ-follower, actually KNOW, intentionally OBEY, or even UNDERSTAND the actual teachings of Jesus Christ. This (speaking about not resisting an evil person) is one of the first ones that God brought me to, to teach me to do this.

Then, I saw Luke 6:30, which Jesus said, "If anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back," and I began to go, "If anyone takes what belongs to you," and I began to see, "Wait a second. Does this apply to just material things, or could it also apply to children?" My children were effectively being taken from me when my ex-wife moved out, and she just didn't ask, we didn't talk about it. July 15th, she just moved out, in 2010, and she took those five babies with her . . . they weren't babies, but they are my babies, you know what I mean . . . and then, two weeks later, I get the divorce papers, on July 30th, 2010.

She took my children. She took a lot of things. So, I started to see, God is telling me, "Let it go." And this was very difficult, because everything in the carnal nature, everything in the flesh, wants to fight for material possessions, for one thing. But on a whole other level, as a father, you know "you're going to fight for your kids, man. I mean, what are you doing here?" You can see it. I'll talk a little bit more about this Antonio Phillips thing in a minute.

1 Corinthians 6:7, also, where Paul says, "Look, you as believers, you call yourselves believers and you have lawsuits among you, can't you even find somebody to mediate between you? Do you not know that the saints will judge the angels?" And he says, "Those of you who have lawsuits between yourselves, calling yourself a believer, you have been defeated already." And I started going, "Wow, okay, so the divorce is a lawsuit, and although I didn't want to participate in it, I'm having to participate, I'm having to attorney-up, and having to kind of try to push back, and he says why not rather be wronged or cheated?" So, I began to see a totally different side of divorce, and handling an evil person, from what the world tells you.

You're not going to hear this anywhere in the world. You're certainly not going to hear it from an attorney. Attorneys will lie to you and tell you that they want to help you get the quickest, easiest solution, and honor your values. That's all hogwash. They are doing it for one reason only, and that is for money. Let me just tell you this . . . and no disrespect to some Godly attorney who may happen to read this . . . there is a reason why we say, "What do you call 10,000 attorneys at the bottom of the ocean? A good start."

There is a reason why. So, don't ever believe what an attorney tells you, that they want to help you, and all that stuff.

I also want to mention that one thing that I am aware of that maybe other people were not aware of, or don't have, is that I had pride, as a father . . . in the face of losing my business, my home, my material possessions, my dignity, my finances, friends, reputation, I still had these five amazing children. And let me just tell you, if you have never had five kids, and you've never been a single father, then you cannot possibly understand the pride that comes with having five beautiful children follow you like baby ducks.

I called them my little ducks, because whenever we went out anywhere, they would follow me, and people would regularly announce how amazing my kids were, they had never seen kids so well-behaved. People were always asking me, "Are these all yours?" And as a single dad, it was like driving a Lamborghini, to some extent, meaning there were people with eyes on you, everywhere you go. It was very honoring. Okay?

And my kids were attractive, physically. They were attractive in their dispositions and in their behavior, and it gave me this kind of sick sense that, "You know what? I've lost everything, God, but you ain't gonna take this from me. I'm a good father." I didn't say that to God, but perhaps I felt that in my heart, like I longed to prove, "You know, look, I'm a good father. It doesn't matter what she says about me, I am a good father," because the truth is, I am. I'm not going to deny it. If I said I wasn't, I'd be lying to you.

I was a very good father, you know. I was involved. I'm the one that when they fell into the swimming pool, found out about it. I'm the one they would come to, because mom was on her computer, ignoring. I'm working in the house, and 50% of the time, it's me . . . I'm the one that proactively, when I hear the sound, I get up from my work and run and go see what's going on.

So, I was very involved. I changed every bit of 50% of the 20,000 diapers that we estimated we changed. My ex-wife could come and go whenever she wanted to, particularly when we worked out of the house. So, I was not this guy who went off to an office and left my wife to fend for five kids and try to survive all day. We had nannies, at times, and I was always available, doing stuff with the kids. I was their number-one source of entertainment, their number-one source of love and affection, and really, discipline. I was always very . . . my kids would testify to this, if they tell the truth . . . they'll testify that dad was very active in this. So, nonetheless, I had pride in this. God was going to strip me of it.

Don't you know, Jesus Christ said, "Anyone who comes to Me and does not hate his mother and father, his brother and sister, his wife and children, even his own life, cannot be My disciple." "Anyone who loves mother or father, brother or sister, wife or children more than Me is not worthy of Me." See, this was a lesson that God was going to have to teach me, for real, through actual experience. God does not ask every mom and dad to give away their kids or to walk away or give up the battle. That's not how it works. God doesn't ask everybody to quit their job. That's not it at all. But you have to recognize something I hope to allude more to down the road, is that God has a special calling and purpose for my life, okay?

Joseph and his eleven brothers, which one got separated from the others? Joseph. Joseph is different. He's been set apart. He has a calling. David, and all of his brothers, which one of them had to go through the fiery flames of hell? Which one of them was tormented by a demon-possessed Saul? It wasn't all of them. It was David. God had a special call, so David was going to have special experiences, both good and horrible, just as Joseph, just as Paul, just as Gideon, just as anybody who God ever chose to use for something. So, keep that in mind.

You don't have to follow my circumstances, but you follow the principles. My life circumstances, my calling, is not yours. My suffering is not yours. My blessings are not yours. But my God is yours, and the Word of God is . . . my Word of God is your Word of God, and the principles that I follow apply to you, as well. You let the results be up to the Father, but you OBEY AND you TRUST HIM. I was going to be one of those ones who God was going to be pleased to strip me of these children . . . for a season or forever. Who knows? It's up to God . . . and to allow me to be moved into the purpose.

My friend, this ministry that has touched the lives of thousands of people . . . thousands of people, in a rich way, not just in encouragement. I personally have received thousands of emails from people that have told amazing testimonies of how God has used this ministry. I've always explained to my kids, "Do you think God loves you more than He loves them? Do you think God loves those people any less, those who don't have, or never have had, a father to love them or tell them that they're loved, those who have never had a big brother or big sister, those who've never had a Godly family member?"

"What about all of the spiritual orphans around the world who don't have anybody, who don't have a big brother, who your father has become one to those people? Are those people any less important to God than you? You have a father who loves you. A lot of people don't."

Exodus 14:14. There were many times that my conscience was stricken in this process where, when she starts to come at me with such evil . . . and to say it's not evil would be for me to lie or to try to sugar-coat it, and I'm not going to do it. The Bible says, "He who does what is righteous, is righteous. As he is righteous, he who does what is evil is of the devil." And this is how we know who the children of God are, and who the children of the devil are. "You will recognize them by their fruit."

And so, when she came at me with this evil, knowing that my enemy is the devil, not her, she's just being used as a pawn in his hands, I felt such pressure to try to defend myself. I became so shocked by the behavior that I was seeing behind closed doors . . . being the one who it was said I'm the one who's the weirdo, and I'm the one who's the freak, and all these things . . . but seeing what I saw in this person, I began to say, "Man, if I don't do something, nobody is ever going to believe me." I started making recordings, even in front of her. She knew that I was making these recordings.

I would get the phone out and record, and hold it up, and it wouldn't even matter, she was in such a rage. She just kept going. It didn't even matter whether she was being recorded or not. But here's what I want you to know; my conscience was stricken when I did this. Why? Because I'm thinking at this point, God needs help, like God can't defend me. See, this is where you have to learn about whether or not you really trust God. It's easy, anybody can try to defend themselves. But how you know you trust God is when you can look at Psalm 9:49 square in the eyes and say, "A-men. Does He who formed the eye not see? Does He who formed the ear not hear?"

I had to learn to give up my defense and allow God to fight this battle, and I had to recognize that God sometimes intentionally puts people up against impossible odds. Think of Judges, Chapter 7, Gideon. You watch this story, he gathers all these men, and then God whittles them down, and says, "No, too much." Whittles them down, and says, "No, too much." He ends up going from like 31,700 or something, all the way down to 300 men to fight a battle that has an innumerable number of soldiers in it. What is God doing? He's making absolutely certain that Gideon and nobody ever confuses God's power from their power. God does these kinds of circumstances.

He will put you in very difficult circumstances, so that you cannot do anything to help yourself. Exodus 14:14, you need only stand and watch the deliverance of the Lord. The Lord will fight for you. You can be still. See, this was my first time trying to learn these things, and I didn't have anybody like me to coach me on this. God was having to coach me. And, thank God, for a few devotions here and there, and just

intense Bible study, I started seeing, “Man, this is real.” And of course, the grace of God, through showing me numbers. See, none of this could have happened without an extra-ordinary, massive effort from God. I would’ve never got it; I could’ve never understood these things.

So, let me tell you one reward, an amazing reward, that happened for me. There was . . . the biggest temptation to defend myself was against the accusation that I had had an affair. My ex-wife had gone to a local Starbucks where I was always frequenting with my laptop to do my work to get out of the office, and I got to know the ladies there very well over about a two-year period. “Hi, Donna Hotz, I hope you’re still watching. Love you, Sister, and God bless you for finding God and seeking Him with all of your heart, mind, soul and strength.”

Donna was one of the ladies that was at this Starbucks there at . . . I won’t say the name of it, because I think she’s actually still there, so I won’t say the name of where this was at, but anyhow . . . so, she (speaking of his ex-wife) had gone to these ladies and basically, after the divorce, she confessed openly at the coffee counter that the reason why she’s divorcing Michael is that I had had an affair while she was pregnant with the twins.

When they came forward and told me this, they said, “You know, Michael, this doesn’t just add up.” They had been watching me for two years, and Donna and one of the other ladies told me something that was such a great compliment, I felt it was such an honor . . . and this shows how much people are watching you. Not just me. They are watching you . . . they told my ex-wife, “Wow, this is really bizarre. This doesn’t sound anything like the Michael we know. This doesn’t sound like he would ever even be capable of something like this. We have men who come in here all the time that look at us inappropriately, they talk to us, they flirt with us. They try to put on all their moves and all that kind of stuff.” And she (speaking of Donna Hotz) said, “Michael is the guy who doesn’t do that.”

That was such a blessing for me to hear, and I would’ve never known that they were watching me like this, or that they saw me differently like that, until I was falsely accused by my ex-wife. I can’t even tell you how encouraging that was for me hear. It was a small little nugget of vindication, okay, at a time when I’m being brutally accused by the devil, and somebody stood up for me that I didn’t even know was watching me. So, people are watching you, they are watching your life. I was a Christian, and so I was careful of how I treated other people. I’ve always been very careful about how I treat other women in my life, and I tell you the truth, I don’t think there’s a woman on this planet . . . I say this publicly in front of, perhaps, thousands of people . . . I don’t think there’s a woman on this planet who can ever say that I’ve ever looked at them inappropriately, flirted, or given off one ounce of a sense that I was available in that way, or interested in that way.

On the contrary, it’s happened to me, but I haven’t done that. Okay? This is something that is important to me. Job says he made a covenant with his eyes not to look at the fair maiden. So, anyhow, what a praise to God that was, but let me get on with my point. This was so painful for me that my ex-wife was running around and telling people, even business colleagues, that I had had an affair . . . she even went to the leadership of our church, not with me, but apart from me. I never got a chance to tell my side of this story. She didn’t do the teaching of Christ Jesus, coming to me first, then taking two or three other witnesses, and then going to the church. No. She never came to me. She never went with two or three witnesses. She went directly to the church and told them I had an affair, and I was abusive, and all these horrible things, right to my church leadership.

I didn’t even find this out . . . my church was so cowardice at the time. Incidentally, the pastor ended up killing himself, took his life, to give you an idea of what may have been going on in the church leadership . . . but I didn’t even find this out from this church until I was out surfing one day with a leader in the

church, a counselor . . . we were out surfing one day, and he just brought it up and told me, and I'm like, "What?"

The point I want to make is, this was very, very painful, and everything in me . . . you can imagine when I had evidence to believe it was her who had had the affair, and she's running around telling everybody I did, the pain of this was excruciating. Some of you know exactly what I'm talking about. Let me encourage you, it is very usual that the devil moves on a person to accuse you of the very thing they have done. This is a very known principle. So, whenever somebody comes at you hot and heavy, accusing you, ask yourself the question, "Is it not true, or is it not possible, they themselves are guilty of the thing they are accusing you of?"

This became one of my biggest temptations, and here's the point: I had known and believed in my heart . . . I mentioned this early on in the autobiography . . . that my ex-wife had had an affair while we were married with a former employer. I tell this story where it became pretty obvious to me something happened. I called at her hotel room one night, and I knew they were spending way too much time together, going to Europe together, and all this kind of stuff, and I KNEW, but I made her come off the road. I tell the story about finding out that she's texting him again, and "What the heck are you doing?" . . . and she lies, and all this kind of stuff . . . I had real reason to believe that there had been a relationship that had continued on, but I couldn't prove it.

So, now that I'm staring down the barrel of this horrible divorce story, and I have to feel the sense to defend myself, I start thinking, "You know what? I can flip her over on her back with this affair. If I can prove that she had the affair, not me, the Court won't believe anything that comes out of this lady's mouth, and maybe this is how I can deliver myself." I have to tell you, I could've very easily made a few phone calls. I knew a couple of people . . . actually, the one person who kind of . . . a former employer of mine . . . who kind of let the cat out of the bag, I could've called him. I could've called several other people that knew of some of these things, and I could've secured a witness to this that would've absolutely proven that I knew she had an affair. But you know something? God stopped me, every single time.

Every single time, I couldn't do it. You know how David cut the corner off of Saul's garment, and then it says his conscience was stricken, and then we see in 1st Samuel 24, what you just heard me talk about, about how he needs to allow God to judge between he and thee. God was teaching me the same thing. He was teaching me a total abandonment of defending self. It is incredibly difficult to do this. Okay? Especially when your whole life, future, finances and life with your children is on the line.

So, the temptation to defend myself, to find some evidence and throw it back at her and get her kind of off her heels a little bit was very, very much, but God stopped me. And I had a choice. I could either go with everything my flesh was telling me, or I could put down my flesh and trust God.

Let me tell you how God rewarded this obedience. This is truly remarkable. I don't remember exactly when it was. It was sometime year-before-last. It would have been seven years later, I think, after I found out about it. It's when, in my story, I'm actually writing about being in the Baltimore, Washington, D.C. area, where I find out this man, who I know now my wife has had an affair with, I've caught him in an affair while we're working.

This lady comes to his hotel room, and she sees me, and the next day, he makes an announcement before everybody, "Oh, Michael, this woman came looking for you, and she had the hots . . .," and I knew that my employer, this guy that I'm . . . I'm 24 years old, and I think he is like the fourth person in the Trinity. Now, I know this guy is a complete fraud, and I'm devastated. I know he's having an affair on his wife, and I know that everything that comes out of his mouth when his lips are moving is a lie. I'm devastated by it.

Three days . . . I mean, get this. How unbelievable is this . . . three days after I started writing that, I get a phone call . . . unsolicited. I didn't go looking for it . . . I get a phone call from one of my children, and the phone call was specifically to say, "Dad, what did you say the name of that man was you worked for years ago that you thought, you know, blah-blah-blah-blah-blah?" And I gave him the name. And he goes, "No. No. No, Dad." And I said, "Yeah, what's going on?" And it was that day that my son revealed to me that he had seen that his mother was in a love-affair relationship still, at that very moment, with that man.

So, here it was, seven years later . . . it was 2017 . . . seven years later when this happens that it comes out, without me ever having to go find the evidence. The divorce had already gone through. I had already been victorious in the divorce. But I still didn't feel vindicated . . . and so here it was, seven years later, without me ever even having to ask, God vindicated me. And He'll do the same thing for anybody who trusts in Him. He's a God of justice.

I just feel like that was such a wonderful kiss on the cheek, that God validated and brought to the surface the lie, the sin that had been exposed, and I no longer needed to wonder. I no longer was like, "Wow, did this really happen? Was I making this up in my mind?" No. God brought it to the surface that all these years later, she was in a love-affair relationship with this man, and it had been going on for I don't know how long.

So, naturally, I got curious. I went online, I typed in some names, and here came up a website where both of them are together in a working relationship, in a business, and as I read the description that's written by him about her, it explains how they've had a non-stop working relationship for 20 years, and it's all in there. I was just amazed. I tell you, it was just such a relief to me to finally feel like . . . you know, it's like a person who loses their child to death, and they never know what happened to them, and they recover the body, that sense of (*there is no way to spell the sound he makes here, so words are inserted*) relief and gratitude. It was a praise to God. That's a reward for me having waited for God to vindicate.

A neat point I found about that, and I've never said anything about it, but take that insight, that information, and compare that to all of the people who love to come to my website and tell me what an adulterer I am, that I need to divorce Persis . . . wait until you hear the marriage story to Persis. Let me tell you something. If you are amazed at this story, your mind is going to be triple-blown when you hear my remarriage story. See, I know God has done this to trip up the legalists, because they can't handle that God would be this involved in my divorce, that He would bless me like this, and they cannot even remotely handle the remarriage story.

If you don't know that God did my remarriage story when you hear it, then you don't know God exists at all. I mean, it's that black and white. Nevertheless, no matter how many miracles Jesus Christ did, the Pharisees were all still standing there doubting Him, so I'm not going to think it'll be any different for me. But I like to think that all of these people who come in their spiritual ignorance, or blindness in their legalism, and they say, "You need to divorce Persis and get back with your ex," these people have no idea what they're talking about.

This woman is evil. This woman has been living a lie. This woman never repented, she never got better. She had chance after chance. She is living in an affair with the same man that she had an affair with 20 years ago. I mean, imagine that, that a person believes that I should get back with that person who, for 20 years, has lived a lie and lived completely unrepentant, and has continued to just get harder and harder in her heart. You see? People just . . . it's just incredible. But nonetheless, I just hold on to Father's story.

Let me also make this point, that when I felt it was too radical to follow Antonio's guidance, I was violating Proverbs 3:5 and 6. Now, that doesn't mean that you just take advice from anybody at the water cooler or some stranger. But I really discerned the spirit of love and wisdom from Antonio, but I just didn't feel what he was saying was right for me, and the reason is, I was still coming out of being carnal. The carnal Christian questions all these spiritual things. He doesn't understand them, and he leans on his own understanding in violation of Proverbs 3:5 and 6: "Trust in the Lord with all of your heart, do not lean on your own understanding, and in all your ways, acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." So, that's what was going on there.

I already mentioned that God creates seemingly impossible odds. And you know something, these are such exciting days for me to look back on, because these were when I was really learning how to jump off into the abyss of trusting God, leaving behind, you know, the cliff and the shelter of the natural life, having always depended upon myself to save the day or save the circumstances. And now, God's asking me to leap into the unknown, and it was not easy. God gave me the grace to do it. This is important for you to know, that it is God who gives us the grace to do this. God was helping me. He was giving me all the grace I needed to do this.

It's so important. I want to make that point so clear, that we cannot do the things that . . . many of the things we cannot do without the help of God. There are many things you can do apart from Him, you have self-control, but there are going to be certain things that are just too big for you. There again, the way to overcome that is the humility to know and admit that you cannot, the faith to believe that God can, and the patience to wait until He does. You cling to Scripture.

I, to get through this season of my life, clung to God's Word. This is what you can't see in the story. You can't see me, for hours, when everybody else is going out to the movies or to the Friday night concert in the park, Michael's going to the Bible, and I am clinging to Psalm 27, and I am clinging to Psalm 31, and I am clinging to Lamentations, Chapter 3, reading it over and over again, claiming the promises of God. And Psalm 32, and Psalm 64, and Psalm 91. I am immersing myself in God's Word, clinging and believing. I mean, it was just an incredible experience where I am clinging to God's Word through this.

I was not strong enough. Now, I look strong in this video (*pointing to the computer monitor, referring to the previous video clip we watched in his parent's house, speaking from the couch.*), but this is a guy who's had victory. Okay? Wait until you hear the victory. You're going to wonder why I wasn't more boastful than I am, when you hear what happens. But, you know, before this, I had so many times I was so feeble, and I was so weak, and I'm clinging to God's Word. That's what you have to do to get through whatever you're going through.

Speaking of that, I want to share with you my best spiritual friend in this house in the whole world. I want to share with you the most important resource, next to the Bible, I think I have ever had. You know . . . let me just go ahead and show it to you. (*He holds up a copy of STREAMS IN THE DESERT, MORNING & EVENING, by L. B. Cowman.*) Streams In The Desert. I cannot recommend to you highly enough to get . . . not just the regular Streams In The Desert. I was given the Streams In The Desert Devotional by my mother-in-law, my ex-mother-in-law, back in 2000, actually. She gave it to me. And when I went through the gym crisis, or the business crisis, many times Streams In The Desert was such a blessing to me.

It has never been more of a blessing to me than in the last few years, and there is the new version, this is "Morning & Evening." This is where we take L. B. Cowman's Streams In The Desert and combine them with Springs In The Valley. I am telling you, my friend, there is more of God and His truth and His ways and the depths of the Spirit in this book than in any other book I have ever read, anywhere, anytime,

under any circumstances. I continue to be absolutely mind-blown . . . now, listen. God has used this book, many times, to speak to me, as well as numbers.

By the way, let me also make the point: God does not just speak to me exclusively through numbers. He speaks to me, primarily, through His Word. But He also gives me insight in my heart. You're going to hear a story coming up soon where God spoke a Scripture verse at a time I desperately needed it, right to my heart. There are all kinds of ways God has spoken to me. In dreams. God has spoken to me many, many, many, many, many times through this book (*referring to the Streams In The Desert, Morning & Evening*). Please get this book. You will learn more about what a real authentic walk in life with Christ looks like, better from this book than you'll get out of any contemporary book written.

I am so embarrassed by all the stuff that's been written in the name of Christianity that I see on the shelves at a bookstore. Leave it alone, okay? Leave it alone. Get this. Read the classics. Go to the greats. What this is, she has compiled . . . she didn't write it . . . she has compiled some of the greatest principles and teachings, regarding suffering and growth and spiritual maturity, from some of the greatest God has ever used, all in one book. I mean, it is incredible. Amy Carmichael, Francis Havergal, Charles Spurgeon, Amy Simpson, Andrew Murray, Madame Guyon, I mean, all of my favorites are in this book at one point in time, and many that I had never even heard of . . . George McDonald. There is all kinds of unbelievable stuff in this book. Can you tell I'm excited? Please buy a copy of it.

If you start reading in that book, and you read it every year, you can never exhaust the principles in this. You're not going to be able to read this book one time. It's like saying you can read the Book of John one time and walk away. You can't. You're going to have to read this for life, and you'll continue to glean . . . you can't imagine how many times I'm praying about something, and the next day, I open it up, and there is the exact answer I am looking for, and that's what God is asking me to do. It's incredible.

I have a few other devotionals, but this is one of my favorites of all time. I hope you'll get it. I pray this has blessed you, in the name of Jesus Christ. Remember, if you have some questions, be sure to post them in the comments at the bottom. I'm trying to go through and screen capture them, and then we'll do that "Question and Answer" session at the end. May God bless you, and we'll see you on the next part.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE PERFECT FOR GOD TO BLESS YOU: PART 3

Hi, it's Michael. Welcome to Part 3 of Walking With God Through Crisis Seven Years Later. I hope you've watched Parts 1 and 2. Before I let you watch today's clip, I want to point out something that is a little bit humiliating for me, now, to look back on seven years later. And I'm showing this to you, and pointing it out, intentionally. It's something we all need to be aware of. The worst spiritual disease, the worst spiritual demon that you can be tormented by, and worse yet, possessed by, is the spiritual demon that we all have called "pride." Pride is originated, and is the offspring, of Satan. It comes right out of hell, and it destroys lives. And when I look at this, it's something that I have battled with, tremendously, for almost all of my adult life, even into being a minister of God.

Because pride is the offspring of insecurity, and we are all coming into this world with a spiritual umbilical cord cut off from the only source of life, hope, love and acceptance we were ever designed to really know in our spirits and in our souls – God - we come into this world born as a sinner, as a rebel, cut off enemies of God, the Bible says, and this creates tremendous insecurity. So, we look to people and to things. Everybody wants to measure up. There are over seven billion of us on this planet, and everything in your

instinct and in your nature says, “How can I make sure that I don’t get overlooked, that my needs get met, that I am paid attention to, that I am loved, that I am accepted, that I am protected, that I am taken care of?”

Pride, being the offspring of insecurity, is when a man or a woman begins to compare their strength against somebody else’s weakness. I have this in me. It is an insidious thing that I have fought for years, and I tell you the truth, I have hated it. Hated it with a bloody passion. I have cried about it; I have screamed about it. I have stomped my foot about it. It is . . . Andrew Murray blessed me to teach me that the most difficult of all the graces that God can give one . . . to attain . . . is humility, where you learn and know that God is ALL, and you are absolutely nothing. That is the true story of a Christian, from God’s perspective.

When I watch these videos of me seven years ago, I can see a pride that’s in me, okay? It’s horrible for me to look at. And after what Father has taken me through, through 2018, and given me much more clear eyes to see this, it is very difficult for me to see this. Okay? But nevertheless, it’s an important part of our journey, and let it be something that encourages you, that I am sitting here, telling you about my unstoppable “porno” addiction, if you will. Some guy is maybe trapped in porno, I have been trapped in pride. Okay? My pride addiction has been horrendous.

I have said, multiple times, that I, for my whole life and far into my adult years, was one of the most insecure human beings I have ever met. So, what happens here is this guy, coming out of carnal Christianity, he is . . . you’re going to hear a little bit of a sense of “I told you so,” and what you don’t know is that behind the scenes, I have been so brutally beat down by the naysayers, okay. Everybody. Not just my ex-wife, who thought I was cuck-coo. Everybody. My parents, and my friends, and the men at the Bible study, and you know, just people I knew. Everybody thought that I was wacked, and I had to hold on to God when nobody was with me.

I mean I had, maybe, two people, Gustavo and Carol Ann Dykes, that kind of were still hanging in there with me. Even my dearest friend, who you’ll hear me talk about, here in town . . . Bobby Junkin, who I mentioned in the last video . . . even he came this close, when another guy in the Bible study almost turned him against me, at one point. I mean, I was almost left with no one to believe me. It was horrible. So, what happens is, when we get to the end of this, I hope you’ll understand a little bit more, it’s a bit of an “I told you so.” Maybe you’ve felt that before, you know, the desire to be able to say, “Man, I was right. You know, you said I was wrong, but my God vindicated me.” Right?

If you read the Psalms, there is an awful lot of that in there, that “my enemies had me down, and now I gloat and boast over them.” That is an Old Covenant faith. In the New Covenant, we don’t gloat over our enemies. We do celebrate what God has done, and we do praise Him for His faithfulness. We praise Him for justice, but we don’t want and take delight in the defeat of our enemy, and we don’t want to run around and say, “I told you so.” We’ll let God be the one to say, “I told you so.”

I see a little bit of this in me, and it’s . . . I actually see quite a bit of it, and it’s hard for me to watch, but you know something, I want to praise God, Almighty, because He has worked that out of me. I am still working on my pride. I am still working on humility, and I tell you, I have so much to share with you on this subject, I wish I could do it now. 2018 was Michael Chriswell’s biggest year of humiliation. You see, when you come to serve the Lord, God may do some things with you that are exceptional, and that are incredible. Okay? So, I want to just challenge you; make sure you’re not comparing your humility to mine, and my pride to yours, because perhaps, you have not had to have your humility tested in the way mine has.

I recently tried to explain to a friend of mine, who . . . I kind of felt like he was comparing his humility to mine . . . and I wanted to say to him, "You know, my brother, have you had your faith, your humility, tested to the point where God has blessed you so much that thousands of people's lives have been touched by you? I mean, has your humility ever had to be tested in that way? And if it has not, the Bible says, ". . . silver for crucible, fire for the gold, but a man is tested by the praise he receives . . .," so if you're going to compare your humility to mine, it's pretty easy sometimes to be humble behind that end of the camera. Maybe God has not exalted you, at this point, to this level. Maybe He never will. I'm not sure. But if He did, you would discover that your humility required a tremendous amount of more strength, a tremendous amount of more testing. Okay?"

These are just a few thoughts. I'd like to go a lot deeper on this, but I'm going to have to save that for another video. I just want you to praise God with me. Father has been answering my prayers. I have been praying for years, "God, help me to stay humble. Help me to remember that I am absolutely nothing." My friends, I will tell you, God did that to me in 2018. He put my face in the dirt, Hallelujah, praise the Lord, God, Almighty, for the suffering that I went through. Unbelievably, painful suffering, humiliation, humiliation.

I'm going to tell one story . . . God help me, I don't want to get ahead on this . . . I'm going to just tell one story. One night, sitting at a kitchen table, with Jared and Kristin, Jared, unsolicited . . . I did not ask him for this . . . but unsolicited, he was talking about having lived with me, and he said, "I'm not sure people would ask questions, but if anybody ever asks me about Michael Chriswell," he goes, "this is what my answer would be: That I have never in my life seen anybody repent like Michael Chriswell does."

He could've said any number of things. He could've said "I've never seen anybody as faithful, I've never seen anybody as eloquent. I've never seen anybody as holy." He didn't say that. He said he's never seen anybody repent like me, and the reason is, because he lived with me in 2018, when everything in me was broken down before the Lord, humbled to where I would know John 15:5 and 6 in my everyday experience for an entire year: Apart from You, I can do nothing. I thank God for that. It's so important. This is something that I am wanting to teach on more and bless people more with.

But today, understand as you watch this video, (*pointing to the computer monitor*) whatever it is you are facing, whatever mountains are in your way . . . whether it is a pornography or sex addiction, a drug addiction, an addiction to self, an addiction to fear, whatever it is . . . alcohol, self, gossip, luke-warmness, pride . . . whatever it is, please be encouraged to know that God can and will slay all the giants in your life. He has given me such victory this year. I'm not going to even remotely say that I am there. I'm not going to remotely say I'll never go back. But it is God who keeps me. He is the One who can keep me low, and I want as much grace as I can possibly get, so I'm going to stay as low before my Father as I can.

I will tell you; my Father has done a tremendous work. My job has been to fight for humility, to in faith, believe Him for it. His job has been to give it to me and keep me in it. That's His job, to keep me firm until the end, and He is able to do it, the Bible says. So, remember, whatever giants you're facing, God can bless you. Okay? God can bless you. It is a reminder of how faithful Father is to take away even the most difficult . . . and look. Give God some time, you know. I couldn't even see this kind of pride in me seven years ago. Okay? I couldn't see it. I didn't have eyes, yet, to see it. I was aware of pride and all, but it was much more of an act. I had to act it out, and forcefully pretend to have it, and constantly try to put it down on my own.

It was not the humility of Christ, where you are nothing and God is everything. It doesn't mean that you condemn yourself as nothing. It means that you humble yourself in recognition of the fact that apart from Jesus Christ, you are absolutely nothing, and that He is everything. And it is true, my friend. It just takes

us a long time to learn this, some of us longer than others (*pointing fingers back at himself*). Zac Poonen said it best: What is the hardest thing in the world for God to do? The hardest thing in the world for God to do is to keep a man humble after He blesses him.

Pride can send Michael Chriswell to hell, so I am so thankful to see this (*pointing to the computer monitor referring to the video where he is speaking from his parent's house on the couch*). It is very humbling for me to see it, the "I told you so," and that sense of pride. But also, don't trip over that. Okay? There is a really awesome story. Please don't trip over it. Understand, God sees that in me, and He is going to deal with that. That's why He's going to lock me up in a prison, that's why He is going to drive me into some serious suffering. You know, there is a lot of suffering ahead of this guy. A lot. This is not, "Oh, okay, great. The Red Sea has parted, no more suffering." No. This is more like the parting of the Jordan River, and now it's into battle after battle after battle after battle. I'm in the wilderness, but I'm really just entering the wilderness here. It's important to remember that.

But trust God. Trust God. You know, listen, Father had these words come out of my mouth in a recording one day, and they have proven to be so powerfully anointed words. The truth. They are Biblical. Three principles. Three tenants of Christianity: The humility to know and admit that you cannot, the faith to know and believe that He can, and the patience to wait until He does. I tell you, my friend, if you will take all three of those things before God, no matter what you are facing, God will bless you. You will see victory over that giant, whatever it is you are facing.

The humility to know and admit, openly, "God, I cannot do this." Not "God, I'm a loser, I'm a dirtbag, or whatever." I mean, if you need to say that to God for a while, go for it. I mean, I actually told Father this past year that I am a wretched man, I deserve nothing but hell, I don't even deserve to take the name "Jesus Christ" on my lips . . . that I'm on a fast track to hell, in who I am, apart from Him. I literally told Father that. Okay? But it was an admission. It was not a condemnation. I just simply adjoined God in condemning the part of me that is not Him.

I stood with God, and I looked at me, and I said, "That guy is a dirty, rotten sinner. He's wretched. In him is no good thing that is in his sinful nature, and he deserves hell." Okay? I got in agreement with God about the part of me that is me. All right? But in the spirit, I did not condemn myself. I took this position of humility; "Father, I cannot do this without You." Listen, please do this. No matter what you are facing. It doesn't matter what level of Christianity you're in right now, okay. It doesn't matter how long you've been a Christian, 30 years or 30 days. It doesn't matter if you've got 30 obstacles ahead of you or 300 ahead of you. No matter what, when you come to these, you bring to God the humility . . . listen. This is the first thing that men will not do is, they will not humble themselves before God. This pride eats them alive from the inside.

Get on your knees. If not, in your heart, get on your knees before God. Humble yourself. "I cannot."

Faith. May it be to me according to my faith. "You can. You will. I know You will." Why do you know it? His Word says it. Find the passages in the Bible that will feed your faith. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing, by the Word of God.

Number three, patience. Hebrews 6:12, and 6:15. Hebrews 6:12 – "Do not be lazy." To not follow these three would be to be lazy. "But imitate those who, through faith and patience, have inherited what has been promised." Faith and patience. Hebrews 6:15 – "Abraham, after waiting a long time, patiently, received what was promised."

May it be that you grab ahold of these, and watch God knock down one giant after another. This was one of my biggest ones that I'm pointing out for you today. But enjoy the story. There are going to be some

unbelievable things that are going to happen when you see this, but perhaps, when you see it, you'll understand why it was so hard for me to stay humble after God did this. Let's take a look.

(The video in his parent's house sitting on the couch.) Now, the next thing that happened, spring break, my parents are down, they are watching the kids, and I drop my iPhone . . . I have hardly any money. My wife has taken all of the money from the business, she closed our personal accounts, and I'm having to start a new business to make some money. I drop my iPhone, while I'm playing with one of my kids, and I break the glass. The phone stops working. I spend five hours trying to fix it, because I don't have the money to buy a new one.

So, I asked my parents if they would watch the kids, and I took off to go to the Apple Store to see if they could fix it. While on the way to the Apple Store, I stop at a gas station, and I pump gas. As I go to hang up the gas pump handle, I've pumped 14.777 gallons of gas, and I'm like, "777?" I honestly said to the Lord, "Okay, Lord, so if I see "666," and something bad happens, does that mean that something good is going to happen when I see this "777"?" I mean, I was kind of joking, you know, but I was also being serious, because I knew "God's showing me these "666's," it could be, these "777's," there's something to this."

So, I go to the Mac Store. I'm there for an hour. The lady is trying to fix the phone. She says, "We can fix the glass for \$35." She tries to reset the software, it won't reset. And she says, "I'm sorry. This phone is dead. You're probably going to have to get a replacement." I said, "Oh, I can't. I can't do that right now; I just don't have the money." I didn't have any money, honestly. I didn't have the couple of hundred bucks to buy myself a phone, that's how bad it was. And I said to her, "I can't get it." She said, "Oh, no, I'm going to take care of this for you."

My phone wasn't even in warranty. She gives me a brand new, \$600 phone. I walked out of that store, praising God, thinking about that "777," realizing . . . "He just showed me the "777." Now, I got this brand-new phone. I know God wants me to pay attention to this." I was so excited. Okay. Now, I'm seeing "666," "555," "777." All three numbers begin to show up at random, all throughout this process, and I'm just continuing on in the divorce. *(Various pictures captured of the numbers "666," "555," "777" – on license plates, the identification numbers on semi-truck tractor trailers, the number of words in a document, topology of mountains, odometer mileage readings, billboard phone numbers, advertisements, identification numbers on police cars and taxi cabs, prices for food, slot machine winning numbers, number of views of a video, software versions, bank account amounts, receipts.)*

In May of 2011, May 28th, my parents called me on a Friday. They realize I am not making it. My roommate, my best friend, unfortunately, had gotten involved in some things he shouldn't have, I confronted him on it. It tore our relationship apart. He left, and now, I'm trying to carry the load of my rental house all by myself, my bills, he was also my business partner. I had to let him go. And now, everything is just falling apart again. I can't keep my life working. I'm just not making it.

My mom calls me on a Friday. She says, "Michael, I'm not going to hear anything different. We're coming to get you." They come down on Sunday, pack up everything. We leave, we go home . . . come to Alabama. I have to explain to my kids, I'm leaving.

Oh, by the way, in mediation, my ex-wife had said in front of everybody, "Michael, you need to make the child support the top priority. Why don't you do what I did and go live in your parent's house, so that you can make child support your top priority?" Well, that's exactly what I was having to do. I went to her door and told her about this, and she cried and gave me a hug. Three days later, my kids were told I left for no reason, that I abandoned them, and the Court was told that I abandoned them, to give you an idea of how this deal is playing out. Now, do you wonder why I'm seeing "666's" all the time?

So, now, I'm back here in Alabama at my parent's house. I'm sitting around trying to catch my breath, not doing anything for, like, the first 30 days. My mom's like, "You just need to take 6 to 8 weeks and do nothing. You've got to catch your breath." Well, that's really not me, that's not my personality. I'm a hard-working guy, and I like to be doing something. Sixty days has gone by, I'm starting to go berserk. I gotta make enough money . . . my parents are having to help pay my child support, I gotta start making money somehow. What do I do?

I started to think about getting back into sales and motivational speaking. I needed pain relief. I can go do sales training, and motivational speaking, make a good living, I can get myself some pain relief and start putting my life back together, get out of my parent's house, get my own car, start moving forward with life again. All of a sudden, as I'm thinking about this, I start seeing the number "222" all over the place (*showing examples of pictures captured – phone numbers, highway routes, book titles, Scripture verses*). My parents even notice I'm seeing it. So, one day, sitting on the front porch, I have decided, "That's it. I'm going to go back into speaking," but I said, "You know what, I need to pray about this. I need to ask the Father, what does He say about this?" So, I said my prayer to the Father about my work situation. I get up, go walk inside to get something to drink, and as I walk past the clock, what time is it? "2:22." I walk back outside, and I'm like, "Father, I need to know, what does this number mean? I get the "666." I get the "777," and the "555." What does "222" mean?" I'm praying, and all of a sudden, I hear, "It's a Scripture verse." I'm like, "Okay, which Scripture verse? Where do I go to find it?"

I just started in the New Testament. Matthew, Mark, I get to Mark 2:22, and the words I read, I knew instantly God is not only warning me now about bad things that are happening. He's not only trying to give me some good news with the "777." He's not only telling me with the "555's," He's going to deliver me. Now, He's giving me instructions about my career. Mark 2:22 says, "And no one pours new wine into old wineskins, for if he does, the skins will burst, and both the wine and the skins will be ruined. No. A man pours new wine into new wineskins," and just as quick as I could get my eyes off of that page, the Holy Spirit says, "Michael, We are not taking the work that We have been doing in your heart and in your character and turning around and pouring it right back into the old wineskins of motivational speaker and sales trainer." And I'm telling you, I was completely arrested. I was like, "oh, my goodness, this is amazing. God is directing my every step. He's now telling me what to do in my career. He's telling me to sit still." Okay.

So, the divorce just continues on for a long time. Meanwhile, God is showing me these numbers. Every single time something bad happens, He shows me in advance. And things just fall apart. I mean, there are things that you . . . I can't even begin to tell you how horrible some of these things were, just frustrating. Legal letters arriving at the door all the time. You know, driving down to Florida for a Hearing, and getting a phone call 127 miles into it that it's been cancelled, because the Judge has been objected to, because they don't want to hear my Motion for summertime visitation, et cetera, et cetera. They started playing games with me being able to see my kids, and I wasn't able to have over-night visitation with them. Our Judge retires. We were supposed to be divorced in August of 2011 . . . a year after . . . we had our trial dates set for, like, August 17th of 2011, and the Judge retires.

So, here comes summertime visitation, no summertime visitation for me. Taxes, they are asking me to help file a joint return. I put together all the paperwork. They make me wait until the last minute, and they change their mind, and they have her file separate at the last minute. They don't tell me, intentionally, so that I now have filed my taxes late and have to pay a penalty. (*shows an example of the notice amount of the penalty for failing to file – "6.66"*)

Just all kinds of stuff like this happening where she's clearly going out of her way to make my life a living hell. But, every single time, God warns me, and I mean every single time. He never didn't warn me a

single time. God, thank You for Your faithfulness, Father. Every single time. (*shows example of a picture captured with the numbers "777" on them – file sizes*).

(*Back to the present-day video where he is in front of the computer monitor at the computer desk.*) Isn't that "777" neat, when I first made this video? That is just such a neat thing (*referring to the file size of the video where he is sitting on the couch at his parent's house*) to see God do things like that, and just to confirm. I made a few notes I want to go over with you here. But hopefully, you did see a little bit of that pride. It's not arrogance, quite exactly, but it's really kind of an "I told you so."

And again, that's because of all the naysayers, and I'm trying to say, "Look, my God is big, my God is bad, my God is awesome. This is my God. You all were looking down your nose at me, and now look at what my God has done." But the Lord was going to work all of that out of me. I was still a bit like Peter, at this point, willing to rip off some ears with a sword, but Father was really going to work on me, and He was going to do a tremendous amount of suffering to bring about the character of Christ, as He will in your life, in accordance with whatever level of service that He is going to one day ask of you.

Look at the kind of grace that God is reaching through to little old me, and look at this; celebrate it. Even though, He can see the pride a whole lot better than I can, and He sees all the other ways that I'm not yet like Jesus Christ, this is incredible. Do you know how many videos I've mentioned I didn't have to be perfect before God began to bless me? Please see this. Okay? Please see this. Pride is the worst of all the things. I mean, look at what it says of the Day of the Lord, and of the Day of the vengeance of God, and he talks over and over about He is going to bring low the pride of men, right? God hates pride. I mean, it's detestable to Him. I understand why.

Look at how Father is looking past it, to a degree, because He knows I'm ignorant. You know, Father will look past your ignorance, too, for a time. Then, when He gives you light, you need to participate with Him. Call it "sin," and then jump into those three – humility, faith and patience – with Him and start working on it, and believe that God will help you slay these giants on the way into the promised land.

You know, I also, when I think of what I see God doing with me, I think of Psalm 32:10. It says, "Many are the woes of the wicked, but the Lord's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in Him." If you trust God, His love will surround you. Is that not what you're seeing in this? God's love is surrounding me, this little orphan heart of mine, all my life, looking for a father-figure, a mentor, somebody to love me, somebody to tell me I count, and I measure up. My Father in heaven is reaching through with extraordinary grace and His unfailing love, to lift me up, to heal that little orphan heart that I have, and that so many of us spiritually have, and He is blessing me. And He will do the same thing for you. Okay? Be encouraged.

But also let me say this: I'm not living in any known sin at this time. Okay? I'm not messing around with sex, and drinking, drugging, alcohol, cussing like a sailor, watching dirty movies. I'm trying to walk in righteousness. Jesus Christ said, in John 8, that He is the light of the world, and all who follow Him will never walk in darkness. So, I'm not walking in any known sin. I am forgiving the greatest enemy, at this point, I've ever had in my life. I'm trying to be kind to her, not return wrong for wrong. I'm being willing to lose things. I'm starting to obey the teachings of Christ. I'm humbling myself and apologizing to my mother when things get out of hand, and I disagree with her on things, or what have you. I'm trying to become more like Jesus Christ. Okay? I'm really making a solid effort.

I'm in God's Word. I'm not wasting my time. I'm doing everything He is asking me to do, and I'm suffering a lot for His name. I'm going to suffer a lot more than what I'm aware of at this point, but . . . George Muller said it best. He said, "You cannot live in sin and, at the same time, draw down from heaven the resources that you need for life or service for God. You cannot do it." So, keep in mind, I'm not living in

any known sin, and again . . . I have sinned, you can see, but what is “sin”? Romans 3:23? “All have fallen short of the glory of God.”

So, “falling short of the glory of God” is sin. As soon as you become aware of it, it’s sin, right, and the Bible even says there’s a thing called “unconscious sin”. You can read it up in your Old Covenant Bible study sometime and see that even if a man didn’t realize it, he was still guilty. Sin is sin to God, right? But in the New Covenant, when God brings something up and gives you light, understanding on something, now you know you have the sin, you deal with it – you rip out the eye, you cut off the hand - you do everything you can do in your power, and you trust God to bring you the grace to do the rest. I wanted to make that point.

Interesting little fact: the girl that helped me at the Genius Bar at the Apple Store with the iPhone, believe it or not, I had an employee named Justin Pew, who had worked at my video production, part-time, at the company that I owned called “Revelations Training.” And when I went there, I just happened to mention, I said, “Oh, yeah, I had an employee who used to work here, his name is Justin,” and she said, “Oh, I know Justin, I love Justin, I know him.” That’s no coincidence. You know, there’s a half-a-dozen to a dozen people back there, workers just behind the Genius Bar, and I got her, and I just thought, “Man, God, You worked out everything.” He connected me to the right people in order to bless me. Our Father is so sovereign and so awesome.

So, the “777” thing, the first siting was at the gas pump, and I have absolutely no idea how significant “777” is going to be. It’s just extra-ordinary what God is going to do with this. At the end, it has nothing to do with an iPhone, but God clearly got my attention to start paying attention to it. I also mention here that I am seeing some incredible supernatural things from God, but I still have so much ignorance, and I have so much to learn. I’ve kind of already mentioned this. My character was not like Jesus Christ. There is so much left for this guy to become like Jesus.

You know, this is something I remember Zac Poonen saying, that it takes 10 years, on average, for God to make a true man of God, and this is Biblical. When you look at some of the men that God used; 13 years before Paul receives his ministry to the Gentiles. I think it was 13 years for Joseph, between the time he gets the vision and the time he gets promoted. It was 20 years for Jacob, 40 years for Moses, 10 years for David on the run from Saul. So, it takes a long time . . . when God is going to develop a servant of the Lord, it takes a long time for Him to work that character. I’m no exception. I’m not any better than those guys are. Now, for those that are not in the New Covenant, I am better off, meaning the David’s and those guys that were in the Old Covenant. I’m better off, because I now have the opportunity to have Christ Jesus dwelling in me, helping me to live that which I cannot do on my own. Nobody can live up to the righteous requirements of the law.

But God is going to throw me into a spiritual prison. You know, this house that you see me doing this video in (*referring to the one where he is sitting on the couch speaking to us*) is my mom’s house, and that is very much going to become a spiritual prison to me. Now, if you notice in this video, I mention Satan a lot, and evil, and all this stuff. What I have yet to come to an understanding of is that, all of this is coming from God’s hand. All of it. Oh, I could do a two-hour teaching on this, and show you all of the Scriptures. I mean, goodness gracious, if you just go to Job, and you see that nothing happens in Job’s life apart from God’s permission. Yes, it’s the devil who is the immediate direct influencer and destroyer of his life and circumstances, but it is indirectly, and it is very much coming down from the hand of Father. Father is the one who is allowing this to happen, for His good reasons.

I haven’t yet realized that. I am still just thinking that God is kind of trying to help me out, like I just have to cling to Him, it’s all about God just helping me out. I have no idea Father is actually orchestrating all of these unbelievable difficult circumstances, and all for what? To conform me into the image of Jesus

Christ. The Bible says is it not He who wounds, His hands wound. It says, does not both calamity and blessing come from My mouth and from His hands? I could show you so many Scriptures that God is the one who afflicts. God is the one who disciplines. Now, He just doesn't have to do the dirty work. He uses the devil, and not even the devil has to always do the dirty work. He has plenty of disobedient people on his chessboard of which to chose from. I'm sure you know exactly what I'm talking about.

So, the pressure at this point, where I'm seeing the "222's" . . . the pressure is starting to build. I'm 60 days or so into my parent's house, and I'm ready to deliver myself. I'm uncomfortable, I'm not doing what I want to do. I don't have my freedom. I have no money. My dignity is going in the toilet. I can't see my children. I don't have any power in Court. I've lost everything. I'm in Psalm 66:10 through 12, and I'm going to try to save myself. I'm wanting desperately to deliver myself. My friends, this is such an important lesson not to do. You have to learn not to deliver yourself. Again, to defer to George Muller, who said it much better than I ever could. He said the propensity is that when you get yourself in a difficult situation, and God allows some difficulty in your life, your drive and your instinct is not to look to God. Your instinct is to deliver yourself. The flesh does not want to look to God. It wants to look to yourself or to people around you, warm bodies, five-senses-type help. Okay? You have to learn to resist that, and kill that part of you. That's the crucifying of the flesh, putting down the misdeeds of the body by the Spirit. You have to learn.

And so, what George would explain is, when some difficulty comes upon you or me, and then we try to deliver ourselves, he says once you do it one time, that will very likely become your default pattern every subsequent time something difficult happens to you. With me, now, I have the exact opposite. No matter what difficulty comes in, I never try to deliver myself to the great dismay of many people around me that still want me to deliver myself, do something about that, fix that, plan for it, arrange that, you know, get rid of that, whatever it is. Father does it all. He literally does it all, and I wait for Him. Okay? I wait for Him. My life is a life of entire obedience, waiting upon Father. I am learning much more about the humility of Jesus Christ, to not do or say or speak anything that the Father hasn't asked me to speak, or asked me to do. I only speak and do that which the Father has asked me to do and say, like John 5:19, John 5:30, things like that.

The point being, I am being tested. Will I deliver myself? And God is going to tell me, "Stay put." I don't have the peace to move forward, but I have a tremendous desire, and then God is, through grace, reaching through to me, through some of the writings of great dead men, to help me understand these principles, that sometimes God will put you in a cage, and He is testing you to see; will you stay in the fire? Will you stay put? God may be doing that to you, as well.

This guidance is truly remarkable, the "222" guidance and all that. I think I mentioned, now, there are many, many, many, many numbers . . . I think I've already mentioned that . . . Psalm 25:12. Psalm 25:12 says, "Who is the man or woman who fears the Lord, He will instruct them in the way chosen for them." It's a guarantee. It's a promise. Grab ahold of it. If you fear God, and you're not walking in any known sin . . . again, you cannot get this kind of guidance if you are living in known sin. You haven't decided, yet, to forgive that person or to forgive yourself, or you are holding on to a little dishonesty in your money, or you're still watching things you know you shouldn't be watching, whatever it is that you know is violating your conscience, that Father knows is violating your conscience, you cannot expect to get this kind of guidance. Okay?

If you do get any guidance, it'll be "Stop that. Set that down. Get away from that. Repent." That's the kind of guidance God will give you. You know, when John the Baptist comes, he comes yelling out, "Make straight paths for the Lord to travel." That is spiritual, that is not physical. He does not mean, get out sticks and shovels and start making straight paths for the Lord to travel all around Galilee and Nazareth, here and there. No. He means, spiritually, make straight paths in your heart, in your life, for the Lord to

travel in your life. So many Christians don't get this. They cry out for God's help, but they have not yet made a straight path for the Lord to travel.

You have to get that sin out of your life. You have to show God you fear Him. You have to obey Him. You have to get rid of that harboring unforgiveness that you have towards whoever, whatever, whenever. You have to set down that pornography. You've gotta set down that peace pipe. You've gotta set down the alcohol, the over-eating. You cannot be a glutton and run to Jesus, and go, "Oh, Lord, I don't understand why I don't feel Your love and You're not speaking to me." You have to make straight paths for the Lord to travel.

Is there disobedience in your life? Are you deciding, full well, to do your own will rather than God's? Have you ever even acknowledged that God has a will for your life, or are you just doing your will, and hoping all the time, He'll bless it? See, these were not the attitudes I had in order to get this kind of guidance that I still enjoy today. It's incredible what God will do for those who obey Him and bless Him, through faithful endurance, humility, patience, waiting upon God. You will be amazed. You will be amazed.

I think that's kind of all the notes I have from this one, so I'll end this one here . . . I'll try to keep these a little bit shorter, and we'll see you on the very next one. May God bless you and keep you in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. May He make His face, indeed, to shine upon you. May He speak volumes to your heart about His ways. May He extend His loving grace and His unfailing kindness to you. May He turn His face toward you and bless you. May He encourage you with His Word. May He please have your ears to hear. And pay attention to what God is trying to say to you, and when it's made clear to you, may you do it. Fight to do it! And if you cannot do it all the way, God will help you. I pray God will bless you richly, in the name of Jesus Christ, to know Him more. Everything that is good in the Christian life comes out of a personal relationship with Him, knowing Him. He is with me all the time.

And prayer. Prayer is so important. Prayer is so important. That's the final thing I want to tell you. I don't ever just sit down in front of this camera without praying. This is all Spirit-led, "Father, please help me." I don't even know what I'm going to say before I sit down and do this. I ask the Lord to give me bread, so if it ministers to you, listen, it's not me. It's God who did it. And if you are listening to this, and you know that I've just said something to you you need to hear, praise Father in heaven. It's because I prayed before I said these words, and I asked Father to bless me, to anoint me to speak His words, and to give a life-giving bread, through me, to you.

And then the Holy Spirit is at work in you to receive this bread, to understand this bread, to take the bread and to eat it, to be filled and nourished, to be strengthened by it, brother and sister in Christ. That's the way it works when Father is at work in both of our lives. So, by prayer, everything . . . Philippians 4:6 and 7 . . . everything by prayer. "Be anxious for nothing but in everything . . . in everything . . ." let me say it one more time ". . . in everything by prayer." Remember that. Pray about everything. I pray about everything. I love praying to Father. I love praying to Father.

So, I love you, and I just pray God pours out His blessings on you, and He will keep you, and continue to teach you. Hold onto Him with everything you have, because He is holding onto you. I'll see you on the next video. Bye-bye.

PARTIAL OBEDIENCE IS NOT OBEDIENCE: PART 4

(video where he is sitting on the couch at his parent's house) And check this out. What I began to notice was, almost always behind the "666" was a "555." It's like they started showing up together. I'd see a "666," I'd be like, "Ugh," and then I'd see the "555," "but I'm going to deliver you, through My grace. I'm going to deliver you."

(video of Michael sitting in front of his computer monitor – present day.) Let me pause the video here and explain this next picture . . . this is truly amazing . . . that you're going to see. I remember being in the moment when this happened. It is the morning of another Hearing before the Judge, and I am feeling nervous, and I said to the Father, as I am going to Staples . . . this happens at Staples in Colonial Plaza on Colonial Drive in Orlando, Florida . . . and I'm there to make copies of some papers in an effort to defend myself, once again, against a massive amount of false accusations that have come against me. So, I'm there making copies, and I'm just kind of whispering prayers, ". . . pray without ceasing." I'm praying to the Father, "Lord, I'm a little bit nervous. Father, you haven't shown me a "555" in a while, and I'm feeling a little insecure."

Let this be another reminder of just how pathetically weak that Michael Chriswell has been through these difficult trials, and how unbelievably awesome and faithful my sovereign, and your sovereign, heavenly Father is to help those who trust in Him. The Lord is near to those who fear Him. The Lord is near to those whose hope is in Him, to keep them alive in famine, and to deliver them. He is amazing. He delivers us from death. He keeps us alive in famine. He does these kinds of things.

So, here I am, saying, "Lord, I haven't seen a "555," and I need some encouragement," and watch what happens. As I walk out of the Staples, there is a UPS truck on the right, and I see the number, and just as I'm getting my camera out to take a picture of that, going "Oh, man, Lord, this isn't what I want to see," a vehicle right behind the UPS truck that, at this time, I could not see, begins to back out. Look at what I captured with my camera when I take a picture. I'm just like, "God, thank You so much. This is just incredible." The Lord's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in Him. Take a look.

(He shows us a picture of the UPS truck with "GCA-666" on the back, and the truck beside it with the phone number ending in "5555.") Let me explain to you the amazing thing that happened after I saw this picture. It'd be one thing to see this picture and go, "Oh, that's cute. That's a coincidence, Mike. Way to go." But what is the fruit? Remember Jesus said, "you will recognize a tree by its fruit," and "wisdom is proved right by her children." Her offspring. The results. Right? So, I walked into that Courtroom with all those papers that I had copied at Staples, prepared to defend myself against these evil lies that were being said against me. They naturally got the chance to go first, and as the lies began to come out, I began to squirm, and at one point, I said, "Your Honor, am I going to get a chance to address the fact that what they are saying is not true, that I have proof here?"

He said, "Yes, Michael. No problem at all. Once they get a chance to finish explaining this to me, and I have my conversation with them, I'm going to let you share what you have brought here today to share with us." And I said, "Thank you, your Honor." So, I went back to silently, quietly trusting in the Lord, being very quiet and allowing all of these lies to come out, just sitting there, knowing that I had to be silent, just as Jesus was before His accusers.

Here's what the most amazing thing about that day in Court was: at one point, I began to realize, "Wow, the Judge is defending me right now to them. He doesn't even know what I know. He's defending me." He finishes, shuts them down, they turn back white, he looks to me, and he says, "Mr. Chriswell, do you still feel the need to share anything, or are you okay with what I just said?"

I was like, "No, Your Honor, that's good. Thank you very much," and I completely shut myself down. I thought, "Wow, just as my Father told me, again, He would deliver me. All these papers I made were

useless.” This is how amazing our Father, God, in the heavens above . . . that sovereign hand of God . . . is in our lives for those who trust Him. “The Lord’s unfailing love surrounds the man or woman who trusts in Him.” Let’s keep going.

(video where he is speaking from the couch at his parent’s house.) Wow. Then, I would see the “777’s.” So, one time, I’d seen the “777” several times, and I’m like, “God, what does this mean? I get all of the other numbers. What does this mean?” Well, I’m studying in the Book of Revelation one morning, in the early explanation, introduction part of Revelation, and I notice that it says . . . in fact, in my Bible, it says right here in the introduction to the Book of Revelation . . . it says “There is a distinctive feature which is the frequent use of the number 7. The number 7 appears 52 times in the Book of Revelation.” And it says, “Symbolically, the number 7 stands for completeness.”

And as I read those words, I felt like God was saying to me, “This season is almost complete. Hang in there. We’re almost done.” It was like God was saying, “I know this has been rough. I know this is a long battle. I know this is ugly. But hang in there. It’s almost done. I am warning you every single time something bad happens. I am covering you in My grace, “555 – I will deliver you,” and this season is almost complete.” So, you can imagine, I’m going into this battle that lasts what feels like forever, my kids are caught in the middle, everything is falling apart, my whole . . . nothing is going my way. Nothing. But God’s grace is more than sufficient.

This brings me to skipping a lot of details. We’re coming into the day of divorce trial. Now, you already know the divorce trial story, okay. What you do not know, because it’s been so difficult for me to figure out how to tell this is, on February 16th of 2012, when I had the divorce trial, and I got that amazing victory when I walked out of that Courtroom completely shocked, because it looked like, you know, the Egyptians had been hot on my tail all day long, I’m standing at the edge of the Red Sea, and I’m doomed to die. But, in fact, in the last minute, the seas part, and I walk across on dry land. But it never stuck. And this is where the story gets amazing, because you don’t know this part yet.

What happened is, the Magistrate . . . see, we had to have our divorce in front of a General Magistrate, not a Domestic Relations Judge, because the Judge had retired, so we opted to have it tried in front of a Magistrate. Well, that morning, I had seen “555” five times on the way. Now, remember, that means “I am going to deliver you.” But I also saw “666” one time. I had been so excited, and that “666” brought me back down, so that I would walk in even-keeled. God didn’t want me going in there like a hot potato.

So, as you know, I went through the whole day feeling like, “Man, God, this isn’t going like the way you told me it would go. I’ve stuck everything on this.” Keep in mind, my mother and I got into fights where they . . . not yelling and screaming . . . but they almost wanted to kick me out. They almost thought about handing me a check and saying, “Get out.” This is true. The reason is because my mother and I had such an antagonistic relationship. My mother’s faith was not at a place where mine was, and she is watching her child self-destruct, she thinks. Right? You with me.

At the very end, before the divorce, she tried to get my stepdad to have a “talk” with me, to get me to do this. And I said, “Mom, would you ask me to go out and rape somebody? Would you ask me to go to a store and rob? Would you ask me to go and hurt somebody? Because that’s what you’re asking me to do. You’re asking me to violate what God has told me not to do,” and I had to trust God above my earthly parent. Above everybody, because people thought I was crazy.

As you saw, I got delivered. But check it out. It didn’t stick, because the Magistrate says to her attorney, “Will you take my recommendations and put them, draw them up, in the proposed final agreement?” See, an attorney . . . the Judge doesn’t do that, one of the attorneys does. Who’s my attorney? I don’t have one. Me. I can’t draw up the papers, so she gets to draw all the papers up. Guess what they do? They

throw the kitchen sink in those divorce papers. When I got the Proposed Judgment, I about fell out of my chair. I thought I was having an out-of-body experience.

They threw the \$125,000 impugned income in there. There threw in two, four-day visits during my eight weeks. She was supposed to have the first week and the last week in the summer, me the eight weeks in the middle. Well, they decided to throw two, four-day visits in the middle of my eight weeks with the kids, and two, four-hour visits during the half-day. They threw in me paying 75% of all extra-curricular expenses; any outside activities, school, baby-sitting, I had to pay 75%. \$200,000 life insurance. \$10,500 of her attorney's fees. You saw all of this stuff. Just crazy stuff.

So, I'm looking at all of this stuff, and I'm going "Great. This is unbelievable. God, You told me You were going to deliver me. You delivered me. But now the papers are here, and it didn't stick." So, I go online, and I try to contact the Magistrate's assistant. I'm like, "What do I do?" I looked online, researched what I needed to do, and found out I needed to file a Notice of Exceptions, which says you are not in agreement with what the Magistrate's recommendations were.

By the way, they had passed through. When they submitted this to the Magistrate, (*showing a copy of the "REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF GENERAL MAGISTRATE"* document) they looked over it and said, "with the exception of the one child being designated as a special-needs kid, everything else looks to be in line with the Judge's recommendations," and I'm going "What!?" They don't look at it. The Court System is so overwhelmed, they just pass this stuff through, and attorneys leverage this. This happens all the time. I have read about this online. I have seen multiple people complain: "Judge recommends this. Final Proposed Judgment, not in there. Totally different." What do they do?

So, I filed my Notice of Exceptions. I was able to get a Hearing, and they allowed me to appear over the telephone. The problem is, it's with a Domestic Relations Judge. So, watch how trickery this is. It's not going to be with the Magistrate who tried it. It's now with another Judge who doesn't have any idea what that Judge said. I have to produce a transcript. So, I order an audio copy of the program, and then I have to pay a court reporter to transcribe, and I have them transcribe the last 30 minutes, which was the Judge's recommendations. Okay? So, I turn this into the Court. I'm on the phone, and in the first two minutes, the attorney is trying to throw the whole thing out on a technicality.

The Judge ignores her technicality, but then says, "I'm sorry, Michael. I'm afraid I'm going to have to throw this out," and I'm like, "Why?" "You didn't provide the full transcript. You only provided the last part of it." And I said, "Your Honor, the matters in dispute are over the matter of the Final Judgment. The Judge made his recommendations for that the last 30 minutes. All the matters in dispute are covered in that last 30 minutes." "Sorry, Michael, you needed to have provided the entire thing." It was going to be \$2000. I didn't have the money to pay \$2000 to transcribe . . . I mean, how would you feel? The Judge favors you, gives you his word, puts it in the paper. Now, you've got to turn around and spend \$2000 to prove that the Judge said what he said, and that this (*referring to the Final Recommendations Proposed document his wife's attorney provided*) is not what the Judge said. I was like, "I cannot believe this."

So, I'm just continuing, "God, help me! What do I do? What do I do?" I keep seeing "555." But here's where I went wrong. And this is one of the only times I'm going to stop and share a lesson that I learned. I'm going to share more about this story in more lessons down the road, because it's important that people understand what real Biblical Christianity looks like, and it's important that people understand that God's Word is true. One hundred percent. There is nothing more true than what you will read in this book (*holding up his Bible*). I love this book. This is God's Holy Word. It is true, it is faithful, it is real. It is more real than the couch I am sitting on. Okay?

But I'm going to go back through and deconstruct all of the lessons from this along the way, but not right now . . . but here's one thing I want to share with you where God blind-sided me . . .

(video where Michael is in front of his computer monitor, present day) How neat to look back and see this desire in me to open up a path for other people to walk on. It's like I'm knowing, deep in my soul, even at this point, before there are any followers, before there is any audience: What God has done is going to be for the good of those who will follow behind. It is going to be some wonderful food and some wonderful steps for people to really have something solid to stand on in learning how to walk with God. That is so cool for me to look back and see, and now recognizing, that it's seven years later that I'm actually getting to the part where I'm deconstructing this story, and helping you to identify some of the Biblical principles that Father was operating under when I was learning to walk with Him through this terrible, terrible time in my life.

I believe it's Psalm 75:2 where God says, "It is I who choose the appointed time. Such it is." So, for now, I'm going to continue to let this guy, since he's so full of passion and conviction and truth right now . . . I'm going to let him continue to tell you the story, and deconstruct. This truly is an important lesson, what I'm getting ready to share. And I don't think anybody can say it better than the guy who was in the hot seat. So, I'm going to let him say it, and then continue on with a little more, and then at the end, I'll add some of Michael's big-brother commentary to kind of wrap up this day's lesson. May God continue to bless you, as you listen.

(back to the video where he is at his parent's house sitting on the couch). While I was looking at the transcript, and in listening to it, I came across the part of the transcript where I was asked to cross-examine my wife. Now, one of the things that God had asked me not to do, He asked me not to defend myself. See, I had recorded some very, very damning things about my wife. She had put me in a position where she was beginning to be so dishonest, I knew I needed to protect myself, and I needed to protect my children, because she was now waging a war where she was no longer playing by the rule. She knew she was being recorded; it didn't stop her.

I had these recordings the whole time, and at one point, trying to get her to have peace with me, I said, "Look . . ." In fact, you probably saw the video where I said, "All of these accusations, and I still kept my mouth shut." What I'm referring to is, I never told anybody about the recordings. I mean, bad stuff on these recordings, horrible. And I told her, "I have these recordings, and I have never showed them to anybody, and honestly, unless God asks me to, nobody is ever going to see them." I told her that, in an effort to try to make peace with her. Because God told me, "Don't use the recordings."

We get towards the end of the divorce. The other side gets clever. Her attorney finds out about the email that I sent that said I had these recordings; she demands that I produce these recordings. In front of the Judge, demands and requires me to produce them, because now, they think I have illegally recorded my wife, and that I'm guilty. So, the Judge asks, "Michael, is there a reason why . . ." – this is during the Pre-trial Hearing – ". . . is there are reason why you don't want to produce these recordings?" I said, "Your Honor, I've been asked not to defend myself, and quite honestly, I don't see how any of the things they are saying warrant me defending myself against them."

And he said, "Well, Michael, a case is being made against you, and typically, you want to produce witnesses and these recordings." I said, "Your Honor, if the Court asks me to produce these recordings, I'll do it." I ended up producing the recordings. *(He shows a copy of a document "TRIAL EXHIBITS: DIGITAL FILES AND RECORDINGS")*. I gave them to the Judge. Halfway through the day of trial, I go to lunch . . . my mentor and good friend of mine took me to lunch. I'm white as a ghost. I'm, like, getting beat up. I'm like, "Guys, they are killing me in there. It's bam, bam, bam, bam." You don't know where to turn. You don't know what to defend against. So, I'm white. I'm at lunch, and they're trying to put life back into

me. They're like, "Mike, you've got to tell them to listen to the recordings. You've got to tell them to listen to the recordings. You've got to defend yourself. You've got to prepare some things to tell him to defend yourself."

I caved in. Remember, God had told me not to defend myself. So, here I am back in there, and the Judge gives me the opportunity to cross-examine. After I had gone back from lunch, I said, "Your Honor, I believe that the Court should hear these recordings." And he ends up dismissing them. He says, "I don't think that they are necessary at this point, and that gets into some other issues," so he didn't feel the need to listen to the recordings. All right?

Well, God had told me that He was going to do this in an unusual way, remember? So, now I know why the recordings weren't played. Nevertheless, he says, "It's your turn to cross-examine your wife," and I had made a list of about 15 different things I wanted to knock her off her rocker with, and I went down this list of questions. As I was listening to the recording during the making of the transcript, God says to me, "Michael, this is why you're still not divorced." I was shocked. "You were not obedient, son. Partial obedience is not obedience." And I was just crushed. I defended myself. I turned around and returned wrong for wrong. I began to . . . out of desperation, I caved in, I lost my faith, and I began to retaliate against my wife.

I had permission to do so, but God had asked me not to. He had asked me not to, and I failed Him. And He was telling me, "Michael, this is why you're not divorced. Partial obedience is not obedience." And it broke my heart. I sat at my desk, and I just cried my eyes out. I said, "Father, I am so sorry. Please forgive me, Lord," and I just begged Him to forgive me. I said, "God, give me another chance. Lord, I promise I will trust you fully. Just please give me another chance," and I just caught my breath.

A couple of hours later, I'm like, "God, please, will you just show me a number, Lord? Would you just show me You're still with me? Show me that we're good again, Lord," because by this time, I had gotten so used to God showing me these numbers and letting me know that He was with me, I just wanted to know that we were back together again.

By God's grace, He started showing me the "555" again, and the "777," and I was just so excited. I was like, "Thank You, God." He was giving me another chance. This is God's grace. If we repent, He is faithful, and just, and will forgive us of all unrighteousness.

(back to present day where Michael is in front of his computer monitor.) A-men to that. A-men to that. Now, I want to share something with you that is incredibly remarkable. I had no way of knowing what I'm about to share with you today was going to happen. This is another just incredible instance of God's sovereignty.

I have not watched these videos in any great length or any detail at all previous to me sitting down to do this. This interview was shot seven years ago. I believe, probably, about three or four years ago, I broke up a long interview into multiple pieces, kind of like we're doing now, but just as little short tidbits. And I went through and started making titles, to do this deconstructing this story that I just mentioned I would do in the future here, but it wasn't God's timing, and that's why you have never seen it, and I never produced it.

I don't watch these videos until the morning I am doing this. Then, I kind of watch through. I know my story well enough, and I know the Bible well enough, to watch this, and then to instantly, with God's help . . . again through prayer, I ask Father to give me what you need to hear in the principles that He wants me to highlight. I've been doing this, trusting God to do this. This morning, something extra-ordinary has happened. I had no idea that today was going to be Part 4, which actually comes from a sequence

over here, Part 14 – there were multiple sequences from a previous story that I had to pull this out of. So, I now have just shown this clip to you where I'm talking about "partial obedience is not obedience." You heard those words come out of my mouth.

Now, I want you to hear what I wrote this morning in my journal entry, before I ever had any idea what the subject matter was going to be in today's video. It has absolutely nothing to do with it. This, my friend, is astonishing. I'm just going to read to you exactly what I wrote. So, here is today's message, and this is an important lesson. I want you to understand, you have to see how seven years later, I mean, like to the day here . . . I shot this seven years ago. Here, seven years to the day, later, I'm doing this video. This is incredible.

The title is "God Testing My Obedience Again." "Email received February 7th, 2019." That's yesterday. I'm not going to say the person's name, email address, subject. "A message from my heart to you." And incidentally, I've received a few of these emails, but just listen to this. You're going to see how amazing this is, this principle that you and I have got to be so careful to obey, so careful to obey. Even when it makes sense to nobody, even when other people who are sincere, who are loving, who are mature in Christ tell you otherwise, if you've heard differently from God, YOU OBEY GOD. You leave all the results to Him. Disaster can happen in your life if you do not.

God gave me another chance here. It's extra-ordinary, because He saw my ignorance, and He saw how much I wanted to obey Him. He saw that I obeyed Him right up to the point that I could, and that my lack of maturity and lack of understanding caves in to the pressure of the situation, and to an authority . . . Romans 13 says I am to be under the authority of the government, and I remember justifying, going, "You know, this Judge is telling me I need to defend myself. I am supposed to obey the law of the land." Even though Christ was silent before His accusers, I am not Jesus. My friends are all pleading with me, and honestly, there was a lot of pressure on me in this moment to not disappoint my friends. I loved these two men: Larry and Brent. They were two of the most respected people in my life, at the time. They loved me. I loved them.

I had tremendous trust for both of them, and they are sitting there across that lunch table, saying, "Mike, you've got to defend yourself. You've got to do your part in this." All the while, as you heard, Father has told me, "Don't defend yourself." You don't know how unbelievably difficult this moment was, okay? But God gave me another chance. Far be it for me to ever forget that lesson, and the one you're about to hear in my journal today, and repeat that mistake. I was on my face this morning before God, asking Him, after writing this journal entry, "Please, God, may I always tremble at this Word, and at this passage of Scripture, and God, may I never . . . please, God . . . may I never forget this lesson."

My friend, I tell you the truth: I could lose everything just like that, no different than Saul did in this passage, if I delay obedience, or I partially obey God when He asks me to do something. When you hear this journal entry, perhaps you, and several of you who need to hear this, will understand why I am so absolutely stubborn about obeying God, and telling and doing exactly what He tells me, no matter what you think. That's what I mean. I mean you, whoever you are. No matter how sincere you are. No matter how mature you are. No matter how long you've been following God longer than me. I will never listen to you, or anybody, tell me to do something that my Father has not.

Look. I care about you, I care about your feelings, but only up to a point. If it means caring about your feelings at the expense of obeying what I know God has clearly told me, you're out. Anybody is out. My wife is out. I have disobeyed what she has thought, many times, because I'm not called to listen to my wife. Adam made the very biggest mistake in the Bible by listening to what his wife told him; "Hey, you want to try some of this delicious fruit? It's amazing. Now, I can see good and evil. You ought to try it

out, too. We can both die here together.” Like Romeo and Juliet, they are essentially the first Romeo and Juliet, aren’t they?

But here’s my point: Don’t ever disobey God at the expense of what some well-meaning person . . . there are plenty of trolls on the internet, there are plenty of haters, there are plenty of people who are ignorant. There are plenty of people who have nothing to do with their time but to hate on other people who are ahead of them or stand for something that they don’t have. I’m not talking about those kinds of people. Those people, for me, are easy to ignore.

I’m talking about the people who are sincere, people who are loving, people who mean very well, people who have an insight into God. People who perhaps have spiritual maturity and may come along to you and say, “If I were you, and it were me. . .,” my friend, I tell you, you can lose every bit of God’s blessing in your life, and all that God has planned for you could go straight down the toilet, just as it did for King Saul, if you don’t learn to obey His voice above any and all other competing voices. Take a listen.

“Hi Michael. I just want to let you know how much I love what you do and what God has done in your life.” Notice this is sandwiched very well. It’s very kind, I believe this lady is very sincere. She’s not saying, “You’re an idiot. You’re an adulterer. You need to leave your current wife and go back to your ex-wife.” None of that garbage. “I watch your videos, and congratulate you and Persis on your new home. In watching your recent video, something struck me, and I wanted to share with you, with love . . .” See, I believe her heart is very sincere in this. “Is it good to still mention your past and what your wife did, and how she had an affair with that young employee . . .” Incidentally, he’s much older. “. . . seven years on? Shouldn’t we not let go and forget it?” Very legitimate question. “The more you mention it, the more it shows that something isn’t right. Cover her sins, brother, and let it go.”

Incidentally, the Bible teaches us to cover the sins of a believer, not of a hypocrite. It’s very important to notice this. If we take her “cover her sins, brother, and let it go,” and we look at Paul speaking to Elimass, Paul speaking to Simon, the Sorcerer . . . when you look at Stephen, looking at Acts 7, against all the teachers of the law, all the Pharisees, all the Jews, we need to go back and say the same thing to Jesus, “Jesus, Matthew 23, You need to cover their sins, Brother.”

But if you’ll notice, nowhere in Scripture, not one place, I challenge you to find, does God ever cover the sins of a hypocrite. He covers over the multitude of sins, and as are we of those who we are in fellowship with, those who sincerely love God, who have been born-again, and who have stumbled in a moment into sin, not those who, first, are Titus 1:16 – “. . . claim to know God, but by their actions deny Him, showing themselves to be hypocrites.” God has never asked that. On the contrary, it says to expose those things. Jesus, did He not say, there is nothing hidden that will not be made known, or concealed, that will not be brought out into the open? He says this. These are His teachings. Everything exposed by the light becomes visible.

She says, “Make no mention of your past, other than what God did for you and how He changed you. Hearing the comment that even your son called and asked what the guy’s name was didn’t seem to fit what you are doing. I am divorced also, and try not to raise my past, other than to say, I made a poor choice, as I was rebellious at that time when I married, so forth and so on. I pray that you understand where I’m coming from.” Very nice. “May the peace, love and joy of Jesus Christ . . .”

And Sister, if you’re watching this video, I want to tell you that I . . . and obviously, I’ve not made you known, in any way . . . but I want you to know, I dearly know that you are sincere, and I appreciate it, and I don’t doubt for a minute that perhaps God may have actually caused you to send this email. I have received several like this. Okay? I can also take you to 1st Kings 13 and show you where an older prophet and a younger prophet get into a tangle, and God uses the older prophet to test the younger prophet.

God, indeed, speaks a word intending to deceive the younger prophet, to see if the younger prophet will, in fact, obey the first word he heard from God, not the “Hey, I’m a prophet, too. I have heard from God, also, on your behalf. Here’s what you need to do.”

If you haven’t heard that story in 1st Kings 13, you need to go listen to it, because that young man, sincere as he was, absolutely stubborn on obeying God, was yielded . . . he yielded to the older prophet. He ends up losing his life and being devoured by a lion. God tested him and found him wanting. Far be it from you, far be it from me, to do it.

There may be some well-meaning people God might send in your life with a “word” that contradicts something you’ve been told earlier. Be very, very careful, my friend, very careful.

So, I thank you, Sister, whoever you are . . . I know who you are, but you know who you are . . . for sending this, but I want the rest of you to see what I have written. “I have now received a few emails like this to see if I will obey the “good” people, or God’s specific command for me to tell all. Mark 5:19, you’ve heard me mention it many times, but Jesus said, “No, go home to your family and tell them everything . . . tell them everything . . . tell them everything . . .” This is God’s call to me. “. . . tell them everything the Lord has done for you, and how He has been merciful to you.”

I write, “People are asking me to “spare” my ex or “spare” my children, or “spare” them. Did Jesus ever once teach to “spare” your children, to “spare” your mother and father, “spare” your wife and children, or to “spare” your life? No. On the contrary, all of Jesus’s teachings were about hating those and never loving them or anything more than you love Him, being willing to lose your life, not to spare it, even if it hurts somebody else. It used to be in the beginning that these emails and comments were hate-filled or harsh. But now, years later, the greater test is when they come from nice and sincere-meaning people, like you, Sister. They have no idea that God has spoken clearly to me about what I am to do, and that I would prefer not to talk about all of this stuff, even making myself look bad by doing so.”

Trust me, if you haven’t seen that I truly am the chief of all fools, keep listening to my story. You will discover it. I don’t like telling about these things. I don’t like telling things that bring up . . . I mean, is it in your nature to tell all of your foolish sins, your darkest sins, to show all of your weaknesses? No. Father has called me to do this, even though it involves a few other people along the way.

So, “it’s not my desire to do that, or that they are being used, but I also make myself known that they are being used to test me like God tested Saul and also the young prophet in 1st Kings, 13.” Now, listen to this. 1st Samuel, 15:3, 9 through 24. This applies to you and me, my friend, especially if you’re going to be a servant to the Lord.

1 Samuel 15:3 – “Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy everything that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.”

Skip to Verse 9

1 Samuel 15:9-24 – “But Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs – everything that was good. These they were unwilling to destroy completely, but everything that was despised and weak they totally destroyed. Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel: “I am grieved that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from Me and has not carried out My instructions.” Samuel was troubled, and he cried out to the Lord all that night. Early in the morning Samuel got up and went out to meet Saul, but he was told, “Saul has gone to Carmel. There he has set up a monument in his own honor and has turned and gone down to Gilgal.” When Samuel reached him,

Saul said, "The Lord bless you! I have carried out the Lord's instructions." But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears? What is this lowing of cattle that I hear?" Saul answered, "The soldiers brought them from the Amalekites; they spared the best of the sheep and cattle to sacrifice to the Lord your God, but we totally destroyed the rest."

You know, I see something interesting here. Don't you notice? He's saying "the soldiers" did the parts that are disobedient. "They" brought them from the Amalekites. "They" spared the best of the sheep. But then, he includes himself in saying, but "we" totally destroyed the rest.

Samuel says to him, "STOP!" Samuel said to Saul. "Let me tell you what the Lord said to me last night." "Tell me," Saul replied. Samuel said, "Although you were once small in your own eyes, did you not become the head of the tribes of Israel? The Lord anointed you king over Israel. And He sent you on a mission, saying, "Go and completely destroy those wicked people, the Amalekites; make war on them until you have wiped them out." Why did you not obey the Lord? Why did you pounce on the plunder and do evil in the eyes of the Lord?" "But I did obey the Lord," Saul said. "I went on the mission the Lord assigned me. I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king. The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the Lord your God at Gilgal."

"But Samuel replied: "Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He has rejected you as king." Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned. I violated the Lord's command and your instructions. I was afraid of the people and so I gave in to them."

"I was afraid of the people . . . I was concerned about what the people said . . . I wanted to make sure the people were pleased . . . I wanted to earn the praise of the people and I was afraid." What an absolute devastating blow to a man, the Bible says, was given a new heart with which to serve and love God, a spiritual heart from his heart of flesh. And now, after this second fatal blow to his obedience, he comes to nothing. My friend, this story is in the Bible for us to learn from it. When I read this this morning, a fear and trembling came upon me again, and I asked God, "Please don't ever let me disobey You like this, no matter what the cost is to anybody." The people in my family, my wife, my friends, they all know that Michael Chriswell stubbornly obeys God, no matter what.

People have been trying to change what I say in this ministry, people have been trying to redirect me, people have been trying to get me to focus on other things they want me to focus on. But let it be known that in all that I have, clinging to all that He has, I have stubbornly resisted any distractions away from what Father has asked of me, and anytime He has allowed me, by His own sovereign hand to get off, He reminds me. He brings me right back, and I have remained steadfast. I am committed more now, than ever, to doing only that which my Father has asked me to do.

As you probably can tell, if you haven't followed the story long enough yet, the Father has no problem speaking to Michael. I'm going to tell you something that is really bizarre: In the seven years of me doing this ministry, I don't believe there has ever been a single time where God has used another person to speak to me. Why would He? When God has my ear, when God has no problem getting His voice, why would Father, all of a sudden, stop speaking to me directly and instead, mediate through somebody else? That's Old Covenant faith. We don't need Samuel's in the New Covenant. Okay? We all can go, one-on-one, to Jesus Christ, the mediator between God and heaven, and the Holy Spirit living inside of me. How foolish would it be?

Now, if I were young in my faith, just getting along, perhaps I might expect God to use somebody, and He did, as you know, several times, to tell me and guide me in things, right? But God has never once used another person, in the seven years I've been in this ministry, to correct me, to change me, to stop me from doing anything. Now, He's allowed other people to get in the way. He's allowed people to sue me. One time, I lost my entire YouTube ministry, all my videos, from a person who falsely sued me. You'll hear about that story.

He's allowed other people to get in my way, and allowed me to yield to temptation, which caused me to have to get out for a little while, in the very beginning of my ministry . . . you'll hear more about that story . . . but God, to my knowledge, has never used another person. In fact, everything that people have said has been wrong. Can I just say this, again, for your benefit? Every single person that has ever sent me a "God told me," . . . I can't tell you how many emails . . . I'm saying this to you with the greatest humility before my heavenly Father, okay, . . . but I have never once received a "God told me to tell you" email that was not completely wrong. Not a single one have I ever read and said, "Oh, Father, thank You so much for speaking to me through that person." It's not necessary.

God has my ear. You understand? God has my ear. Now, God may use another person in some way to confirm something He has already told me, but God has already spoken to me, just like He did with Paul and the early church, when the Holy Spirit has already told them to go, and the people come and say, "Don't go, don't go," and they say "the Holy Spirit told us this." But you can see, Paul still went. I can see in there, there is some testing going on, to see if Paul will obey what he first heard from God, or will he now obey all these people who say, "The Holy Spirit clearly told us to warn you, and that this is going to happen to the man who goes, this is what is going to happen to you." But nevertheless, Paul went. He obeyed what the Spirit of God told him. Right?

It's so important to understand this. Once you get to a place in your walk with God where you can hear from God directly, please tell me that it doesn't make any sense to you at all why God would, all of a sudden, need to speak to you through a bag of dust. Honestly. Does the Bible not . . . is it not replete with warnings about going to man, trusting in flesh, running to Egypt, trusting in those who trust in idols? "Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his refuge, who does not look to those who trust in false gods. Woe to those who go down to Egypt who do not look to the holy one of Israel and call on the name of the Lord."

Isaiah 2:22 – "Stop regarding and trusting in man who has but a breath in his nostrils, of what account is he." You can know and have a relationship with God. I have really delighted in all of these emails where people, in a moment of passion . . . they may really sincerely believe what they are saying, "God told me, God spoke to me." Many times, it's just delusions of their own imaginations. But sometimes it really could be God giving somebody a word, intentionally to test me where God has already spoken to me. So, I was just kind of like, "Oh, okay, all right," and I sometimes thank the person for being sincere. But God's already spoken to me so clearly about it, that for me to now obey somebody else would be to disobey God.

My friend, you've got to recognize this principle, if you're ever going to serve God. I can't tell you how many times I've been tested in this way. People have always thought that they know better about my life than God does, and it's not going to be any different for any of you who God calls into full-time ministry ever. There will be dozens of people who are convinced, men and women of God, ahead of you, behind you, below you, beneath you, beside you, who at some point become convinced they know better about God's will and plan for your life than you do, and these will be moments for you to be tested, just as Saul.

Saul failed miserably. Saul failed fatally. And Saul failed eternally. May it not be that this happens to us, and thank God, Almighty, for these incredible lessons.

“Partial obedience,” I write in my journal entry, “is not obedience. Like the older prophet sent by God to the younger prophet, they are sent to test me. 1st Kings, 13. This morning while listening to the School of Obedience, by Andrew Murray, the Lord blessed me with the connection between this story of Saul and the principle of obedience, and those who are now commenting or emailing me to “spare” my ex-wife.”

My friend, do you see the connection? Do you see it? See, we come with our own human understanding, and you cannot see this story, or your story, from a human understanding. You have to be able to see it from God’s perspective, walking in accordance with the Spirit, understanding His wisdom. I write, “This is surely part of the reason I’ve been seeing the Scriptures “Be very careful to obey Me” recently. There is always a temptation to side with the people, and a desire to accommodate their Godly and seemingly loving requests for insights. Nevertheless, seven years later, I continue to be very careful to obey the Lord and not shrink back into “sparing” anyone in this story, lest I be found guilty of disobedience, and rejected just as Saul was.”

“Even when my own wife, Persis” . . . it’s a story that you’ll hear down the road . . . “when she began speaking against my . . . speaking about my ex in this story . . . I held my ground, and God eventually gave her light to not stand against the work He asked me to do.” Do you know how hard it was for me to have such an adorable, humble, quiet wife who, at one point, God allowed to turn against me in this way and question “I don’t understand why you’re doing this. It doesn’t make sense.” And I had to continue. I had to decide, “Am I going to take this fruit that my wife is offering me to eat, that makes sense, that has all kinds of Scripture we can justify, or am I going to continue to obey what I know God has asked me to do, no matter the cost, even the person closest to me getting hurt or not understanding or totally disagreeing with me?” What am I going to do?

I obeyed God, and God soon gave Persis light, where she would admit to me, “You know something, I know God has called you to do this, and I now accept it, and I understand it.” But in the beginning, she didn’t. God used her, and used that situation, to test me and try me. If I will not obey my own wife, who I love and adore, how much less will I obey you, those of you who want to send me the “God told me to tell you” emails? Don’t waste your time.

“Acts 4:19 through 20 – “But Peter and John replied, “Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than Him? We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard.” My friend, if you have that kind of commitment to God, that is a life, that is an obedience, that God can build an amazing servant on, an amazing ministry that God can do amazing things. But see, you’ll have to be tested. God will have to put you in very, very costly experiences where in order for you to obey Him, it is going to cost you, because it is going to cost those who love you. It is going to cost other people because of your obedience to God.

I write in my journal, “I am willing to be misunderstood. I’m willing to be looked down-upon, willing to be thought of as unloving and unChristlike, as opposed to disobeying my Father.” You have to be willing to be misunderstood by people, if you’re going to follow Jesus Christ. Look at that Scripture, Mark 3:21 – “When His family . . .” – this is after Jesus calls the disciples to Himself – “When His family heard about this, they went to take charge of Him, for they said “He is out of His mind.” Can you believe that? Even Jesus’s family thought He was out of His mind.

So, “I am willing to be misunderstood. I am willing to be looked down-upon, willing to be thought of as unloving or unChristlike, as opposed to disobeying my Father. Obedience is costly,” I write, “but disobedience is far more costly. Please help me to remember this, Father, all the days of my life.” And then I wrote, “I started writing this paragraph at 5:33.” That’s another one of my numbers. 5:33 is about obedience. I took a screen capture of it, Deuteronomy 5:33 – “Walk in all the way that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess.” My friend, what did God do to these people after He gave them all of these commands to obey,

but to test them ruthlessly . . . Deuteronomy, Chapter 8 . . . to find out and know what was in their hearts, to see if they would actually obey Him.

I write, "I used to get quite irritated when people would send these kinds of "God told me to tell you" or "God put a word on my heart" emails. Now, I think to myself, perhaps the Lord did send them and give them those words, exactly like He did the older prophet in 1st Kings, 13, in order to test me and know whether or not I would steadfastly obey the Lord. Again, A. B. Simpson's sailing illustration is perfect: I'm at the helm, fighting to keep her in God's rest, as these rogue waves and cross winds attempt to blow me off course and out of His rest. I hold steadfastly to the helm, and it's God's job to keep me in the peace, under full power."

I write, "Words I never want to be said about me by God, to Himself or anybody else: "I am grieved that I have made Michael Chriswell My servant, because he has turned away from Me and has not carried out My instructions."" My friend, it's hard for me to take that message and go back and look at the rest of the notes that I made, because this is the pressing message that we all need to hear. This is the message the Holy Spirit would have us understand, how important it is, and how much partial obedience is not obedience. God help us to obey more.

But let me just quickly run through the other notes that I made. Perhaps you can go back and listen to this part again. I talk about my parents really struggling with all of this. They thought I was nuts. I just quoted you Mark 3:21 where even Jesus Christ's parents thought He was nuts, and remember John 15:20? "Remember the words I spoke to you; no servant is greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed My teaching, they will obey yours also." Also, I put on there, "Notice how when the final judgment seems to have been corrupted, all of my attempts to fix that corruption failed." Nothing was working out for me. God, again, teaching me that I will not be able to deliver myself, but for me to learn how to totally abandon my self-sufficiency unto God's deliverance. Very difficult lesson to learn, but so important."

And then I wrote, "Obeying my heavenly Father meant disobeying my earthly parents." I kind of covered that a little bit in this past message I just made, but trust me, when you go to obey God, God will ask you to do some things in accordance with His already-revealed Word, and will in His Word, and then His personal will for your life, as He sees you obeying His written will. It's going to cost you, and it's going to cost many of those around you. You have to be willing . . . my friend, are you willing to lose your parents for Jesus Christ? Are you willing to lose your wife, your spouse, your aunts, your uncles, your best friend, your children?

If there is anybody on this earth more important to you than Jesus Christ, you cannot expect Jesus to be able to trust you in order to do anything. My life is one that has been proven, time and time again, okay. Not by my strength, but by God's grace and my desire to obey Him. My life has been proven in heaven that I am willing to surrender anything and anyone in order to obey God. I'm willing to lose anybody in order to obey God. Even my own children know this, okay? My wife knows this. God is my first love.

Love the Lord, your God, with all of your heart, mind, soul and strength. Now, not many people are willing to love God like this, and that means not many people are going to experience God like this. You cannot have one without the other. You cannot have life to the full in Christ without absolutely abandoning your entire will into His hands, to do with as He sees fit, at the cost of any and everything you may have, and perhaps at the cost of others around you. You can't do it. There is no other way. Christian history for 2000 years has proven there is no way.

Now, this obedience that I'm walking in is all empowered by the grace of God. I have brought God the humility to tell Him I cannot, the faith to believe He can, and the patience to wait until He does, and Father

has continued to operate with me on these three principles. He equips me to obey them. And as the bar, or the weight, as you will, gets higher and higher, so does His grace. Where difficulty and sin and temptation abound, the grace of God abounds even more. I believe it's 2nd Corinthians, 9:8 that God is able to make all grace abound to me, so that in all things, at all times, having all that I need, I will abound in every good work. That is a Scripture for you. That is a Scripture for all of us.

That is God's Word to all of us, but I claim it. I take it like a check, and I write it out. I say it before I sit down in front of this camera, no matter what I'm going through – stomachache, headache, whatever, you name it, whatever issues, whatever devils. I mean, man, my friend, I tell you, if you could see what the devil does to try to stop me from telling you this information, from sharing this story. If you could see the kind of stuff my poor computer has to go through. It's unbelievable the kind of attacks where while I'm working on a video, the computer just completely locks up for three hours, I have to restart it. No matter what I do, it won't do.

This same thing happened when I went to tell the main story, Trusting God In The Storm. The devil has power. He can touch electronics, your body. He can touch things. He is the god of this world. He tells Jesus that all the kingdoms in the world have been given to him, and that he has the power to give them to whoever he wants. He is a powerful, formidable foe. But greater is He that is in me than he who is in the world, and we are more than conquerors in Christ Jesus.

What you see now is me giving you back the wealth. I'm giving you the "booty" as the pirates call it. Even the Bible calls it . . . I'm giving back, not just the battle that has been won, but . . . I'm taking all the loot, the spiritual loot, that I have warranted, that's been given to me, that I collected, as the devil was fighting me, and I was fighting back . . . God not only gave me victory, but He gave me all that loot, that spiritual treasure, to keep as mine, which makes me more than a conqueror in Christ Jesus.

Now, here years later, I'm able to pass this on to you. Isn't that incredible? Isn't that extra-ordinary? My friend, that's all the notes I have for today. It's a little bit of a long message. May God help you and I both to tremble at His Word, to be humble and contrite in our heart, for this is the one that God delights in. This is the one that God honors, and may we tremble at His Word. His Word is to be trembled at. He is a fearsome, mighty, awesome, terribly amazing God.

Father, we want to always obey You. Father, please help us, and continue to be merciful to us, God. Have mercy on those of us, Lord, who are still trying to learn how to obey You perfectly. Remember, Father, Psalm 103. God, these are Your Words, that as a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him, for You remember we are but dust. You remember how we are formed. Father, thank You for being so merciful to my ignorance, to my dust, to my foolishness. God, do this also for Your children who are listening to this message, in the name of the Lord, Christ Jesus. Father, strengthen them, help them, encourage them.

The final thing I want to remind you is, the mercy that God gave me. Don't be stuck on this, "Oh, man, I've done the same thing, Michael." Okay. I did it. You just saw it. I disobeyed, I failed. And now, look at today, look at what God was able to do. Okay? I'm not sure what God could have done if I would have obeyed Him perfectly, but I'm not Joseph. I failed. I failed in another way you are going to hear in the story, in a big way. You're going to hear it, okay? You're going to see it in my story, if you stick along with it. But you're going to see how amazing and merciful God has been. And if I am eating the scraps that fall from the Master's table, they are good scraps indeed, and I am pleased to have these scraps, of God's blessings, of God's providence, of God's guidance, of God's grace in my life. These scraps are enough for me. Okay?

Who knows what I could've done if I would have gotten this right the first time? Who knows what you could do? If you are a young person watching this, and you don't make the same mistakes Brother Michael will. But for those of us who have messed up, those of us who have lived years and squandered it, what the locusts have devoured, God can restore. God can take all of this oil of gladness that you see in me, He can bring this about in your life, no matter how big the pile of ashes is in your life. God . . . no matter how much you messed up, no matter how much you failed, no matter how much you disobeyed, no matter how much you doubted, God can turn it all around, if you come to Him humbly, and you ask His mercy. Does the Word not say His mercies are new every single day?

This is who God is. His mercies are new, every single day. If you need His mercy, cry out to Him, but my friend, when you receive it, don't turn around the next day and stomp it. When you receive God's grace, don't trample it. Live in the fear of God. Respect Him. What does it say in Romans 12:1? In view of God's mercy, he says . . . "I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, wholly and pleasing to God, for this is your spiritual act of worship."

What you see me do on camera now doesn't even matter. My spiritual act of worship is what I did back then, when you weren't here, when nobody could see. It's the things I'm doing right now behind the scenes that nobody can see. I'm surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, as are you, Hebrews 12. This is the glory of God, people seeing this done in secret. It is in secret that my life brings glory to God, that my life is a living sacrifice. Not in front of this camera. In front of this camera, all I'm doing is relating to you, in obedience.

I will tell you, there is some sacrifice. There is some sacrifice in working for God. There is a lot for me. This is hard for me to do for all kinds of reasons. But the sacrifice of my life, a life that is holy and pleasing to God, has been in this obedience that I have walked out along the way, in private. That is what is important, my friend. That's what you have to do, is when nobody is looking but God, when nobody can see . . . this is something nobody can take away from me. No Pharisee. No internet troll. Not the most stubborn atheist in the world can take away what I've walked out in private before my God.

In view of His mercy, I have presented my body as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to my Lord. This is my spiritual act of worship to my Father. Not what I do singing to a song. Not what I do to praise Him on this camera. It has been what I have done in private, before my Father who loves me, who has given me this mercy, to live as a living sacrifice.

Give Him that same thing. Romans 12:1 is not just for Michael. It's for you. It's for all of us. May God bless you and keep you, in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ, and I'll see you on the next part.

THE TEMPTATION TO DELIVER YOURSELF: PART 5

(Speaking from the couch in his parent's house.) So, now I'm beginning to wonder: How am I going to get justice? Because the Judge, that day in Court, ends up denying my Motion. I ask the Judge, "Judge, what do I do to get justice? All I'm asking is that the words that the Magistrate recommended actually be represented in the Final Divorce Decree?" She said, "Michael, you'll have to hire an attorney and take it to the next level."

Well, God had already told me, what? "Don't hire an attorney, don't defend yourself." So, now, I'm like, "Great, what do I do now?" *(Speaking from in front of the computer monitor – present day.)* Okay, so

the pressure is building on me to deliver myself. Biblically, the first example that comes to my mind, when I watch this clip, is in regard to David. I've already spoken about this first instance, which occurs in 1st Samuel, Chapter 24, where David spares Saul's life in the cave. If you remember, the backstory is, Saul is running around lying to everybody, saying that David is trying to steal his kingdom, and that David is trying to kill him, that he's a rebel against the King of Israel. Right?

In fact, it's the other way around. The one doing the accusing is the one who's actually guilty. David is on the run from him, trying to do what's right, trying to stay out of this guy's way until he no longer is a monster. Two times, David is presented with an incredible opportunity to defend himself and relieve himself of this enemy. This is about what's starting to happen with me. I got this incredible opportunity . . . and you're going to hear a little bit more about it in a clip coming up . . . to essentially deliver myself. Let me show you this unbelievable temptation that David must have been through.

It's really easy for us to read this passage in the Bible, or to hear this story even as I tell it, and not realize the intense amount of effort it takes to withhold yourself, when everything in you, all your five senses, are saying, "This is your moment, God has blessed you with this. Do this!" In fact, you'll even hear where friends of mine thought for sure, "Yes, this is what you should do. You should full-on go into this," exactly as they tell David to do here with Abishai. Listen to this, 1st Samuel 26:7 through 12. This is the second time David spares Saul's life.

1 Samuel 26:7-12 – "So David and Abishai went to the army by night, and there was Saul, lying asleep inside the camp with his spear stuck in the ground near his head. Abner and the soldiers were lying around him. Abishai said to David, "Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of my spear; I won't strike him twice." But David said to Abishai, "Don't destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the Lord's anointed and be guiltless? . . ."

Look at how David denies himself. And to me, this isn't just a principle about the fact that Saul is one of the Lord's "anointed," because clearly, Saul is no longer anointed. Right? The Spirit of God has been removed. But at a much deeper level, this is about David trusting God for deliverance. These are the types of things that add up to the point where God can look at a man like David, and say, "You are a man after My own heart." David stands against, if you will, an Old Covenant taking up of the cross . . . he stands against everything in him, everything in those around him, that is screaming for justice, that is screaming for deliverance.

I mean, can you imagine? We're talking about a guy who, ultimately, ends up being on the run from this devil-possessed man for a period of about 10 years, essentially running from town to town, from cave to cave, from exploit to exploit, all trying to keep and preserve his life from this king who is dead-set on destroying him. So, you might imagine the frustration. David is a human. He wants peace, he wants comfort. He has been anointed. I mean, how much more severe . . . how much more like God and like Jesus Christ is David being, despite the fact that he has been anointed by God, selected to be the next King of Israel. David has already been anointed.

Wow, what a contradictory set of circumstances. Here the future King of Israel is on the run from a tyrant who doesn't deserve to be king for another five minutes, who is running around, lying about him to everybody. Can you imagine? Look at the injustice of this, right? This is kind of, to me, like a small picture of some of the injustices we are going to see with the coming King of Kings. David is just a small picture. It's why we can look at some of the Psalms, and say, "Wow, that's awfully prophetic. That sounds an awful lot like Jesus Christ."

I think Psalm 22 might be a perfect example of that, where clearly it is, I believe, both – and. I believe it's something David actually experienced. And then, at the same time, I believe it's something that is a

foreshadowing of the coming of Jesus Christ. So, this is another reason why David is truly a man after God's own heart. He's denying himself and taking up a cross hard against himself in these ways that are just extra-ordinary. Look at what he says.

He says, “. . .As surely as the Lord lives, . . .” – This is David speaking to Abishai – “. . .he said, “the Lord Himself will strike him; . . .” – who is his deliverer? The Lord, Himself. He's like, “I'm not going to do this.” This is a man who's already shed a good deal of blood, and he's going to shed a great deal more amount of blood. And yet, he's now realizing – “. . .the Lord Himself will strike him; either his time will come, and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish. . .” - Well, that's a prophetic truth, because that's exactly what happens to Saul, as we know, we've read the rest of the story. “. . .But the Lord forbid that I should lay a hand on the Lord's anointed. Now get the spear and water jug that are near his head, and lets go.” So, David took the spear and water jug near Saul's head, and they left. No one saw or knew about it, nor did anyone wake up. . .” – And watch this. Here is the sovereign hand of God in all of this – “. . .They were all sleeping, because the Lord had put them into a deep sleep.”

Oh, you might imagine the kind of reasons God had for doing this, right? First of all, they're in a deep sleep, so that David is protected. I mean, clearly, God is watching after and protecting him, His eyes are on David to protect him. But I see another opportunity here. I see where it was very clear this could have been an amazingly high amount of temptation, at his enemy's weakest point. You're never at your weakest until you're sleeping.

It's one thing coming into a cave where David is to relieve yourself. It's a whole other level of weakness for him to be asleep. Look at what David could've done to Saul while Saul was sleeping, in a deep sleep that it became clear he was not going to come out of. David had full access, totally unencumbered, unrestrained, to vent all of his wrath, rightfully so. Saul is a devil-possessed tyrant, wicked man, who's already been disobedient to God in two ways. God has pulled His anointing from him. David had rights. In his mind, he had all kinds of things he could've done, and look at this. He's denying himself. This is incredible.

This kind of same thing, on a much smaller scale, is now happening to me, where I'm having to deny myself. But notice, I go to the Father. I go to Him and say, “Lord, what do You want me to do? This looks like kind of a soft-pitch, right?” If ever there was a soft-pitch, right there, in 1st Samuel 26:7 through 12, that is a soft-pitch against your enemy. I'm going to get one, but not as good as this, but I'm going to get one. Let's continue on and see what happens.

(Speaking from the couch in his parent's house.) But God kept showing me “555.” That morning, I wanted to immediately get off the phone and call my mentor. Normally, what I would do when I had to face something big and challenging, I'd call and get Larry's input on stuff like this. This day, God said, “Don't call Larry. Don't talk to anybody until you talk to Me. Come up and meet with Me on the mountain in the secret place.” So, I went to my what I call the “secret place” where I went to meet with the Father, and I just began to pray. I said, “God, I need You to give me direction. I need You to lead me and guide me and tell me what You want me to do, Father. What are the next steps?”

And He just began to tell me, “Trust Me. I will deliver you. Trust Me.” No circumstances had changed yet.

(Speaking from in front of the computer monitor – present day.) Okay, what you're going to begin to see is that the Lord is closing doors around me, and opportunities, and resources, and people, that I can use to help deliver myself. The Father is beginning to isolate me, both in choice and in proximity, from other people, in order to teach me how to depend on God alone. Okay? And you're going to see this develop more in this story, as the story goes forward.

If you, like me, are ever called into a full-time position of vocational ministry, where your daily work is to do the work that the Lord has asked you to do, then you should expect some of these same principles to come to you. Those who are called into a full-time vocational ministry, they are not better than other Christians, but they're not living a normal Christian life. This is something that God has helped me to really understand in the last few years. When you read the life of David, this is not a normal Christian life David is living. When you read the life of Joseph, that is not a normal Christian life or experience. Okay? When you read the life of Paul, that is not a normal Christian life or experience. When you watch my life, as you probably have already concluded, this is not a normal Christian experience.

When you read two-thousand-years-worth of amazing Christian autobiographies, many of which I have named throughout my recordings, these are not normal Christian experiences. If the Father calls you to serve Him, in a full-time vocational position, and you are to be called as a special servant to the Lord, you are going to encounter special seasons of suffering, special testing and special trials that others will not have to go through. The umbrella principle of this is "to whom much is given, much will be required." Anyone given a trust, Paul says, must be proven worthy of that trust.

So, before God can give you a ministry, before God can give you power, before God can give you an anointing, before God can give you wisdom and insight, and before God can trust you to speak into the lives of other eternal creatures . . . think of the responsibility of that, when God gives me a message for one of His children who is a spiritual entity who is going to exist and live forever, either in hell, eternally apart from Him, or in heaven, eternally wrapped in the bliss of knowing Him . . . think of the responsibility that comes with ministering the Word of God to another child of God. Wow. Before you can do that, you have to be proven.

Now, if you look out through the internet here, and YouTube, I have no doubt there are probably tens of thousands of people who have taken it upon themselves, out of a very good desire to want to serve the Lord, a very good desire to want to be useful . . . they have taken it upon themselves to begin serving the Lord, when in fact, God has never once told them to do it. They have begun to go out and build a "ministry" to teach people things, just simply, "I'm supposed to go do this. I want to serve the Lord. I'm going to go do it."

The call of the Lord is not something you take upon yourself. Now, all of us are to be full-time, if you will, "ministers" for the Lord. You are to always be prepared to give a reason for the hope that is in your heart, in season and out of season. You are to always testify, at every given opportunity, to what God has done for you. You are to always be a light in the world, salt of the earth, right. Everywhere you go, you are to be an example. Everywhere you go, you are to live like Christ, as He enables you by His grace, aided by your self-control and your spiritual disciplines. We all have this responsibility.

But most of us have to work a day-job, and most of us have to live in the secular, and . . . we are a spiritual being having a spiritual experience in the secular . . . and God occasionally hops up these unique opportunities for us to minister on His behalf to somebody else, or simply, to be an example. Right? That's for all of us, including me, no matter what. When I go through a drive-thru somewhere, I'm not in full-time vocational ministry there. When I go out shopping, I'm not in full-time vocational ministry. Father does not call me to go to the mall and stand up in the food court, take a microphone and tell everybody about Jesus Christ. That's not what God has called me to do.

But He has called me to have Jesus Christ be in my smile to that person behind the counter, to look for some way to care about them, as a human being, and to take note of them, and to recognize that they are a human being, regardless of skin color, race, language, how they look, social status . . . for me to

look for a reason to be a blessing to that person. That has nothing to do with me being in full-time vocational ministry. Zero. Nada. Make sense?

But since I am in full-time vocational ministry, there comes greater testing, more severe trials, longer seasons of really testing your faith to see if God can bless you and give you the anointing. Can God trust you with deeper levels of wisdom? Can God trust you with power from His Spirit, words of knowledge, insight into His Word? Can God give you the tools and resources He needs, and can He trust you with them, such that you will not squander them, do wrong with them, or begin, perhaps, looking down on other people, as a result? There are all kinds of things God has to prepare a servant for, in order for God to give that person, that man or woman, the heavenly resources by His Spirit that they need in order to do the work.

So, one of the things that you see happening here is, God is beginning to isolate me from the typical ways that I received help. Years ago, I saw an article in a devotion I was reading called "When God Removes Your Elijah." That means, if you are Elisha, the day may come where God will remove that person who has mentored you, that person who was your head, your spiritual leader, who taught you how to walk with God. So, if you are an Elisha, you may lose your Elijah one day, and it's very likely . . . this is a very well-known principle that many of the greats have even talked about . . . and if you are a Joshua, you may lose your Moses where the day comes, you have to stand on your own two feet before God and walk with Him.

I have seen this happen many times, in my own ministry, where God has allowed me to have closer relationship with an individual, for me to pour into them more consistently than just a message or two, here or there. And then after a time . . . I remember the first time this happened, it happened with a young lady who is currently living as a medical student down in Argentina. She contacted me about some real struggles that she was having on . . . "Hey, I really, really want to serve God with everything I have, but I'm really having to give my whole life to this medical student . . . being a doctor . . . and I'm having all these pressures and all these things" . . . she came to me with some questions, and I knew as soon as I got this lady's first recording that I was supposed to minister to her, on an ongoing basis, for a time.

She was coming out of a Seventh Day Adventist Church, and she had all of this pressure from her church back home, and from her family, and she had all kinds of questions . . . things that she had been taught that . . . when she would listen to my recordings, they sounded like truth to her, but they contradicted many of the things that she had been taught. I watched the Spirit of God pursue this woman. It was just incredible to watch. And she would put into practice . . . and she would listen humbly, to all of the information and the Biblical counsel that I gave to her, and she would apply it. Then she would come back with some more information, and want to know more. We did this for a period of, I don't know . . . it was many, many months, perhaps even . . . actually, it was over a year. It was just over a year that this happened.

She humbled herself. I watched this young lady take this information and grow, and in the process, I watched God begin to bless her. She would go away for a time, and then she would come back, and then she would go away for a time, and then she would come back. Well, one time, when she came back, the Lord had me release her. I had to do this message for her where I said, "Dear Sister, God is graduating you today. It's time for you to stand on your own two feet and walk the rest of this out with God," and I said, "I know you're not going to want to hear this. I know this is going to be painful, it's going to be frustrating, but God is wanting to graduate you. He wants you to know that you can have what I have, where you walk "mano a mano," hand-in-hand with God, and you can begin to draw from the Spirit of Christ yourself, and you can begin to have wisdom. You can begin to enjoy His presence, and you can begin to receive all of His guidance, apart from me."

God used me, very much like He does other ministers . . . what He does with me in my ministry, He primarily uses me as a temporary mediator between Jesus Christ and that individual who doesn't yet understand. Imagine two people: Jesus, here, and another person, here (*Showing one hand representing Jesus, and the other hand representing the individual who doesn't yet understand*). (*In the one hand*) This person has heard a lot about Jesus, they are aware that He exists, but they don't know Him. And what they've been told is, that in order to be friends with Jesus, they have to approach Jesus on His terms, (*Showing the hand representing Jesus*) because He's kind of like the boss, you know what I mean. He's the Lord, the King of Kings, the Great, I Am. He's gentle, He's loving, He's meek, but He's also stern, He's also strict, Romans 11:20 through 22. He demands that we come to Him on His terms. (*Showing the hand representing the individual who doesn't yet understand*.) This person doesn't understand that. If you just throw them a Bible, it's easy for that person to get overwhelmed and lost. So, for a time, that person needs the counsel of somebody who already knows this friend, Jesus (*Showing the hand representing Jesus*.)

So, here's Michael, (*Twirling a finger between the two people represented*) standing in the middle between Jesus and this person. (*Showing the hand representing the individual who doesn't yet understand*) And this person has all kinds of questions: Why does Jesus make me do this? Why does He ask about this? Why won't He do this? And Michael comes along and says, "Let me help you understand how Jesus feels about that situation. Here's what I know Jesus said in His Word, and here's what I've seen Jesus do in my life, from experience." A person who is ministering on behalf of the Lord, particularly in my calling, is designed to help people see, primarily, "This Jesus that you've been following, He's not the real Jesus. The One you've heard about behind the pulpit at your church, the comfortable Jesus, He's not the real Jesus. There's a different Jesus (*Showing the hand representing Jesus*). Let me mediate this relationship for a time, and help you to understand God's ways, so that I can say to you, John Smith, meet Jesus. Jesus, meet John Smith."

Jesus has called me to help John Smith understand, "Let me tell you, John, about Jesus, and what He thinks about that situation, and how He expects you to respond to that situation the next time," so forth and so on. As John Smith begins to take the insight that I give him about Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ begins to respond and validate what John has heard is true. And then, all of a sudden, John's confidence begins to get built-up, and he begins to realize, "Man, I can go to Jesus now direct, myself. I can now take that question I have, and ask."

Sometimes, God will do this by breaking a relationship. He'll use a person in your life, or use you in another person's life, for a time. And then when He sees that that person now has enough . . . I like to think of it like a lion, a teenage lion. I don't know if you know this or not, but when a lion, a male lion, is two years old, he is finished. There is no more family business, no more family comfort, no more lionesses running out and bringing him all of his food, no more cuddles, hugs and kisses with dad.

In fact, what happens is, dad comes over one day, unannounced, totally catches the teenager off-guard, and will absolutely terrify that teenager, smack at him, growl at him, push him around, bite him, and bully him around until he gets the idea, "It is time for you to go." This is something that is happening instinctively. It's the way the lion kingdom works. That young lion gets two years under dad's tutelage, and under mom's tutelage, and that's it. After that, he's kicked, in a moment . . . it's like one day he's in the family, the next day he's not. Now he has to go out and become a male lion. He has to learn, and put into practice, the things that he has learned, to begin to have understanding of what it means to be a lion, so that one day he can go out and defeat another male lion, and have a family of his own. It gets kind of weird, at that point, but nevertheless, it serves as a really neat analogy.

I've seen this happen repeatedly. So, this young lady, God told me to cut her lose, and it was hard, because she was a very tender young woman, very sensitive, but she also was very brave and courageous. She had been a wonderful disciple, if you will, of Jesus Christ through me, following my example as I

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followed Christ. That day came where God told me I had to say, "It's time for you to go learn on your own." And she did. And let me tell you . . . I'm in contact with her, to this day. I'm keeping her anonymous because of her request, and because of the pressure that she gets from her church . . . but I want you to know, this young lady has continued to swell under the Lord's blessing.

Oh, she's had plenty of suffering. She's had plenty of difficult things to figure out and move through, but I'm telling you, I've watched her through the last few years, and I get updates from her. She wants to always let me know she remembers how much God used me to get her going, and how thankful she is that now, she is walking on her own two feet before God. He continues to minister to her deep truths, teaching her things, and she is growing and maturing. I have no doubt that God is going to call this woman into a wonderful calling where He is going to use her, because she is obeying Him. Again, she's not perfect. Who is, besides the Lord, Jesus Christ? But she is growing in spiritual maturity. It's just an amazing example.

One other example that is kind of an interesting personal update: You probably saw a video . . . perhaps you may have seen a video . . . where my friend Jared and Kristin and I sat down on the couch, several months ago, I guess it's been . . . we kind of introduced them and told the little story about how they came to live with us, and how I had spent a good bit of time ministering to Jared and discipling him. Jared was also another one, just like this young lady (in Argentina), where I got his first recording, and I knew I was supposed to minister to this guy. God had a plan for his life, and I was supposed to give him some extra time, and I did.

On that couch, from the year 2018, we both began to believe that God was calling us to Austin, Texas. This is an interesting update for those of you who saw that video. The reason that video is no longer on the internet is because God has redirected and changed plans, and unfortunately, I couldn't figure out how to edit the video through YouTube. It was having an "error," where I couldn't take this part out. But in that video, I explained that God had let us both know we were both going to Austin, but after that . . . and there is so much more I'm going to share about that, about this story where God guided me in a different direction . . . it's an incredible story . . . but, believe it or not, Jared and Kristin left . . . they are no longer living with us . . . they left, to set out on a great Abrahamic adventure, all alone with God.

(Shows a video clip here of Jared and Kristin loaded up, their vehicles – heading out. Michael speaking – It's Friday, January 25th. Jared and Kristin are leaving, after living with us for eight months. I didn't think I was going to cry, but I did . . . sad. They are following God's lead. I'm so proud of them. They are headed to Austin, Texas, and at the last minute, a few weeks ago, God kind of pulled a mysterious surprise on us: I realized the Lord was going to separate us. He's got a special mission for them, and they're being called to go and be isolated and alone with God. We've all just stepped into it by faith, and they are on their way out there. They are running, as Abraham before the Lord, in obedience and faith. God has called them. Hebrews 11:8 has been the number one Scripture that He has showed them, over and over. And now, it's time for them to walk in it. Not knowing where they are going, they are going. They've packed up everything they have, everything they own. The tiny house is going to be leaving this morning, as well, and they are on their way. And there they go. Wow, what an adventure we had. What an adventure we had. There they go. Austin, Texas. And what is so cool, what's such an amazing blessing for them, is when we put out the video that we were moving to Austin, a subscriber who had been praying for Persis and me to move to Austin, who felt so lonely, contacted us, named Isabella. Jared and Kristin are going to be going directly to their house to stay with them until they find a place to put the tiny house. May God bless them and keep them, in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. God only knows what adventures lie ahead for them.)

(Speaking from in front of the computer monitor, in the present video.) Now, this is something God told me, in advance, was going to happen. It's really, really neat. There are so many details I could share

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with you about it. But when Jared and Kristin came to live with us, I couldn't understand why God allowed this, because He was having me in this very weird season, where He'd withdrawn His favor and grace from me. And I also had known, back on January 5th of 2018, God was graduating Jared into this same thing that I just told you about with this lady (in Argentina), where I had had my time in his life, I had given him everything that I knew to help him to learn how to walk in faith with God. And one day, God said, "That's enough. Pull back, and now allow him to walk with Me on his own."

I sent Jared that message on January 5th of 2018, and I said, "Brother, I'm going to have to get out of your life a little bit. I'm sorry to tell you this. I love you, God bless you, but the Lord wants you to walk this out now on your own." This is the removing of the Elijah, the removing of a Moses, from somebody's life, okay. So, when he came to live with us, it didn't meet with what I thought God was doing at all. It didn't make sense to me at all. But it turns out, God had some amazing reasons for doing this.

Shortly after we made that message about going to Austin, God blessed me by returning His grace and His Spirit, and when He did, things in my heart began to totally change. I began to get off-course . . . again, I don't want to open up this bag yet . . . there are so many things I want to tell you about, but the timing is not right for me to share about 2018 . . . yet . . . but you can know this. What happened was, God changed, in my heart, all kinds of things. The dynamic in Jared and my relationship began to change in my heart.

One day, I told Persis, "Jared and I are not going together. We are not supposed to be together anymore." You know how you have these natural desires, when you're kind of chummy-chummy, buddy-buddy, with somebody? Jared and I were working on the tiny house together, and we were like, "Man, this is so . . ." – this is 2018, when I'm much more in the flesh – so I'm saying to Jared, "Wow, wouldn't that be awesome if God put us together, and we could minister together?" God was not going to do that. But that's what, in my mind . . . you know, "best friend and all, this is going to be great. We could have some fun together, go on an adventure together, and maybe God will send us out together." Sometimes, God does. But in this instance, He was not going to do that.

I began to know this, in my heart, and on January 14th at 7:40 in the morning, I made a recording in our tiny house, after prayer . . . after visiting this in my heart for a few weeks, two weeks . . . the first two weeks of the first of the year . . . I began to know, "Something is not right. We are going to be going in a different direction," and I made a recording that said, "God will Separate Jared and I Soon," 7:40 in the morning, January 14th.

I had not said anything to Jared about this, because again, God had already let me know, "Let him walk this out." So, Jared was walking this faith walk out all on his own. He was hearing from God. He was getting guidance from God about Austin, and when to go, and how to go, and all of these things, and making sure they were still supposed to go. I was really proud of him. I was watching him, but God kept telling me, "Stay away. Stay away. Let him do his thing."

It got kind of weird for Jared and me. We didn't really know what to think about our relationship. It was like we were together, but we weren't allowed to be buddies anymore. It was just a really bizarre thing that began to happen, very confusing for both of us, for a time. But this is when God finally gave me light, and gave me just the blessing of understanding this, that God was going to separate us. So, I made this message, and I said, "It's going to happen soon."

Five hours later, at 12:30, on that January 14th, Jared and I were standing in the kitchen, and he said, "My friend, I think we're going to be heading out next week. I think God is really calling us to move forward and head out next week." I said, "Brother, this is wonderful. I'm so happy to hear this. I've not been able to say anything to you, I didn't want to influence your decision, in any way. I'm so happy." But I said, "Look at this recording I made five hours ago, that God is going to separate us soon."

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And he said to me, "I assume you're not coming with us, right? We've kind of been getting the picture you're not coming with us?" And I said, "No, Brother, I'm not. God is calling us in a different direction." And I said, "I don't even now know where Persis and I are going, but I know we're not going with you to Austin. God changed it." . . . Oh, and I could tell you so many amazing things about this story . . . but right there in that moment, the Lord gave me utterance to speak a few things to Jared, to give him some understanding, a lot of which I'm sharing with you now, about the time comes when you have to be all alone, where you depend on God alone.

What I explained to Jared is that even though we had separated ourselves proximally, and we weren't sharing with each other anymore what God was doing in each other's lives until after the fact, so that we weren't influencing each other . . . I didn't want to influence him at all, and he didn't want me to be influencing him. He wanted to learn how to walk with God alone, which is what my whole ministry is about . . . but we still were too close to one another. You cannot live together and not know what's going on with the other person, him hearing me and Persis talking about what God's doing with me, and me hearing him and them around the corner, we share the same kitchen and all that stuff.

So, what I explained to him is, I said, "Brother, even though you and I are not talking about this anymore, God is calling you to walk in faith, you're still watching my example. Even me being here, knowing all of the things that I've told you over these last two years, and then some, seeing my example will be an influence that you can lean on when God is going to require you to walk this out alone." You can see times where, in a moment, a Moses or an Elijah is snatched away, and that new person now has to learn to walk with God on their own. There is no greater school of learning how to walk with God than being forced . . . so, God will put us in the situation, sometimes, where we are totally isolated. You don't have any family members. You don't have any friends. You don't have any spiritual mentors. God will completely isolate that person to let them learn from Him alone.

This has been such an amazing truth. It happened to me. And now, it has happened to several people that God has allowed me to minister to. I think this is important. Somebody needs to hear this. I don't know who you are. Somebody needs to hear this. That's why the Father is having me share it with you. But in these moments, whether you are the one who has to release, or the one who is being released, you trust God no matter what. You trust God, no matter what.

There are levels of humility and levels of suffering, levels of dependence upon God, and levels of wisdom and levels of understanding that you cannot get, walking with somebody else. God will have to isolate you. And by the way, I know I've just let a huge cat out of the bag. You realize, we're not going to Austin, Texas. It's very exciting. I am telling you, what the Lord does behind the scenes in my life is so exciting, I say, "Father, how am I ever going to be able to tell people all the stuff that You do, if You don't slow down a little bit. I can't keep up," and me being a details guy, I'm drowning in my own walk with God. It's incredible.

But I will tell you, when the Lord leads me to, once we know. We do not know, yet, but it may be that it's very close. I'll just go ahead and tell you, I think God has shown me, and now I'm waiting for Him to give me the final confirmation, and it could be any minute now. This whole thing has been exciting. I cannot wait until one day, in this story, to tell you more about all the things that have been going on behind the scenes, and how I've walked this out with God. It's amazing. It's amazing.

Jared and Kristin are in Austin, and we both came to agreement, in our spirit, that we need to distance and allow that . . . because we've gotten so close, now we need to let the distance happen, so God can have them, and they can learn to walk this thing out. I'm sure you'll be hearing from them again down

the road. Perhaps, like me, after a few years of testing and walking with God, you never can tell, God may call him into a full-time ministry, as well.

So, you can see how the Romans 8:28 God works all things together for the good to those who love Him and to those who are called, according to His purpose. Let me see if I can share with you one more clip. Sorry about all of this, but hopefully, it is good stuff for you to grow with.

(Speaking from the couch in his parent's house.) So, now, fast forward, this has been June. Now we're getting closer and closer to the end. All of a sudden, I receive an email from her attorney, sent to the General Magistrate, asking; "Where is the Final Judgment? It's been approved. Where is it? Is there anything you are waiting on us for?" she was asking. She sends the email, and copies the General Magistrate. I see this as a soft-pitch that's just been thrown at me. I'm going, "Wait a second. She copied me. She copied the Judge. Why don't I just hit "Reply All"?" So, I hit "Reply All," knowing that it would go back to the original Magistrate, and said, "So that a great injustice does not occur, how can we get a Final Judgment that accurately reflects your words as recommended on February 16th of 2012? Because currently, they are being disrespected, and they are not being represented."

Immediately, an email comes back, "Reply All" from the Judge. It says, "Please do not send any correspondence directly to me. For any questions regarding the case, please send to my assistant. Thank you, in advance, for your co-operation." What do you think happened in my heart? My heart sank. I thought for sure, "Oh, here's my opportunity. This is going to work out." It didn't work. I'm praying, I'm like, "God, what do I do? I remember the story of the parable of the . . ."

Oh! By the way. God had been showing me the parable of the persistent widow . . . I believe it's Luke 18 . . . and He was telling me, "Ask Me for justice. Ask Me for justice. Ask." So, I had been praying every single day, "God grant me justice against my enemy. Lord, You see the wrongs being committed against me. Lord, You see people who think I'm a fool. Lord, You see how bad I'm hurt, and You see how bad I'm out-gunned. Help me, God. Grant me justice, Lord." I just kept asking Him, over and over and over again. Every day. Multiple times a day.

And Oh! By the way. He would keep showing me to ask Him for justice, so I'm just doing what He asked me to do.

So, now, I'm like, "Lord, in the parable of the persistent widow, she kept going after the judge. Does that mean, Lord, like I should keep badgering this Judge, or do I just wait upon You? What do I do?" I was at Larry and Trish's house, and I said, "Guys, let's please pray. What do you guys think I should do about this?" We all agreed that I should not send an email back to the Judge. I should respect his decision. They said, "Do what he said, send one to his assistant, because he said right in there to send the correspondence to his assistant." So, I typed up this email that said, "Dear Marcy, I am a single-parent father. I am out of money. I have done everything I can. I am pro-se, defending myself. I just need help. I'm not asking for any new considerations. I'm not asking for any other help, other than for you to just help me get your boss's words to be respected in the Final Judgment."

And I'm thinking, "Surely, she'll help a guy out, you know, who's down on his luck." I get an email back . . . I'm anxiously waiting . . . an email comes back about two hours later: "Dear Mr. Chriswell, Cease and desist from sending any communication like this. This is highly inappropriate. If you need help, hire an attorney. If you cannot afford an attorney, do the legal research yourself. Thank you in advance for your co-operation." I'm like, "Okay, I'm denied in my Motion for Notice of Exceptions, by the one Judge. I'm denied by the General Magistrate who actually made the recommendations. Now, I am denied by the Administrative Assistant. I am fresh out of options. All doors are closed. There is nothing left for me to do."

That night, I got on my knees, and I prayed, "Father, I need You to tell me what You want me to do, Lord. Am I supposed to continue to badger and keep pressing, or do You want me to just stand and wait? Are You just going to deliver me?" I wanted to know, what was He going to do? I am on my knees in the guest room at Larry and Trish's house, I'm praying, and I'm like, "Lord, I'm desperate. I need a Word." All of a sudden, I hear, "1st Peter 5:12." And I'm like, "Okay, what is that?" I quickly get my Bible out. I look it up, and it says, "I have briefly testified to you that this is, in fact, the grace of God. Stand fast in it." Instantly, I knew the answer. The Holy Spirit had said, "Stand. Just stand, Michael, and I will deliver you." So, I'm standing there, and I'm going, "Okay. I'm not doing anything else."

Shortly after this, another Hearing is set to violate me of the Parenting Agreement, okay. Don't want to tell you about the crazy accusations. There are amazing, good juicy details for a story another day. Just know that they are throwing the kitchen sink at me again, and they're trying to hold me in violation of "their proposed parenting agreement," which is not anything to do with what the Judge recommended. I mean, they're saying some crazy stuff.

So, there's a Hearing now set for September 24th, for me to appear. The recording that you hear in the story video where the sun is going down, and I'm crying, that was actually two different recordings: One lasted about 30 minutes, and another one lasted about 15 minutes. The one that lasted about 15 minutes, I began to tell God how mad at Him I was. My world was falling apart. My mother was persecuting me, to no end. I had been dating a girl I had just broken up with. My ex-wife is going crazy on me. I am out of money. God has told me I can have no job, and it's now four months after the divorce trial, I still don't have a Final Divorce Decree. I still can't get justice. I am at the end of myself. And I begin to lament to God, and tell that Him I'm angry in the moment. I just . . . I lost it.

I want you to hear a little bit of this recording, because I want you to pay attention to what happens while I'm in the middle of telling God how mad I am. Watch what happens. Listen to this. You can't watch it, just listen to it.

(Father's Day 2012 – Cape Canaveral, FL. FYI: I didn't intentionally record myself crying. This happened twice where I broke down in the middle of journaling my thoughts. It sounds dramatic . . . keep in mind . . . I HAD LOST EVERYTHING!!

In tears . . . "I am trying so hard to obey Your commands, Lord. I am trying so hard. You are making me mad at You. I'm mad at You, God! I am mad. I am mad at You, Lord. I want You to protect me and give me peace, and I don't have any peace, and I'm NOT LIVING A LIFE THAT DESERVES TO FEEL LIKE THIS, GOD!!"

Minutes later . . . I have to pull off the side of the road. "You're making me want to give up, God, that's what You're making me want to do. You're making me want to just give up, because I don't feel that I'm responsible for this, Lord. I don't see how I'm the one who did this to myself."

Several minutes later . . . "God, I am angry, and I am sorry that I'm mad at You, God, I am sorry, but Lord, I am desperate for You to tell me what is going on. I'm desperate for You to teach me. God, what does this mean?" Notice . . . even in my darkest moment, where I'm honest about my anger towards God, I am still running TO Him, not away from Him.

Now, listen to this . . . and keep in mind, I still have NO idea what the full meaning of Him showing me the "777" is. This is a "real time" capture of God's grace . . . "Why is this happening? And there I see a "777." God, You've been showing me "777" for months, and I don't feel like I'm . . . I don't feel like I'm at the end of this. You told me for me to hang in there, because we were almost at the end of this season,

God, and it feels like it's lasted so long, I don't know how much longer I can make it. (weeping) I don't know how much longer I can make it, God! You've deprived me of everything, Lord. Why? Why?")

(Speaking from in front of the computer monitor, present day.) Boy, that poor kid had a rough go at it, didn't he? You see, the Lord is really working to afflict me in all of my circumstances. You can see how He has removed my human support. He has now, three times, denied me, closing the doors to my attempts at getting justice. Three times my efforts to self-deliver have failed. Now, I end up trying to journal record all of this on that June . . . whatever day it was . . . Father's Day. I'm supposed to have received my children. This is another thing that I didn't share in this recording. I was supposed to get my kids, so I come down from Alabama to Court, I'm there to see my children, and she's once again come up with some ridiculous reason why I cannot have time-sharing with my kids.

Finally, all of this just builds and builds and builds. I'm driving all the way over to Cape Canaveral, Florida, just to go to the beach to get away by myself, and I just became so mad. And I even said "Father, is this what You call a Father's Day present? Is this what I get for Father's Day?" What the Lord was going to teach me, and why I'm so frustrated in this, is another reason why a lot of people get overwhelmed and frustrated until we learn three principles that I was not walking in at this time.

I had not yet understood the importance of waiting on God. Waiting on God is one of the most important principles, one of the most active principles of God, that you will have in your walk with Christ. I hadn't yet gone through the Bible and compiled all of the "waiting on God" Scriptures, learned about it, and seen what an important principle it was so that I was not freaking out when God was not showing up all the time when I thought He was supposed to. I've taught a lot about this subject through my recordings. I'm sure you've heard a lot of them.

Another principle that I was not paying attention to, that was causing me a lot of grief is, I was not yet understanding the Hebrews 12:1 and 2 position of fixing my eyes on Jesus Christ rather than on my circumstances. Remember, even the great Peter, when he takes his eyes off of Jesus, and looks over here at all the wind and waves kicking up, he begins to sink and collapse, and the Lord has to reach in at the last minute and save him, right, saying, "Oh, you of little faith. Why did you doubt?"

So, here I am, filled full of doubt, filled full of not understanding "why You're telling me You're going to deliver me, and it's not happening. I don't understand what's going on. All of my circumstances are collapsing. You know, You claim to be a good God. Why are You not helping me? Why are You not showing me some of this goodness?" Right?

It's because I am not waiting on God. I have no idea how good God is to be working all of this self-sufficiency and pride and old religion out of me, lukewarmness. I have no idea the heart surgery God is doing on me. I don't know the importance of waiting on God. I don't understand that I need to keep my eyes on Him, for only He will release my feet from the snare . . . I believe that's Psalm 25:15 . . . and finally, I don't understand the principle of persevering until God delivers.

Persevering is more than just waiting, right. Like, you could just lay on the couch, and that could be called "waiting." Sleeping could be considered waiting. But persevering is an intentional running to God, in faith, clinging to His Word, and putting yourself in a position of denying yourself the instant gratification of forcefully reminding yourself "My God is faithful, my God will come through." It is doing all of the things you need to do. It's the gritting of your teeth spiritually, in order to get through it.

Remember, Jesus said in Revelation, ". . .this calls for great perseverance on the part of the Saints." Well, there are lots of things that call for great perseverance on the part of the Saints, especially when you are walking with God through crisis. This is long before I understood and was clinging to James 5:11, "We consider blessed those who have persevered for you have heard of Job's perseverance and seen what the

Lord finally brought about.” Look at what the Lord finally brought about. Praise the Lord, right! I mean, I’ve lived it, so it’s not all of this moment-by-moment excitement any more like it was. But I mean, think about what the Lord brought about.

Look at this guy (*pointing to the computer monitor*). If I could just say, “You-who, quit your crying, Babyboy. Everything’s going to be okay. Come on. James 5:11. Come on. Hebrews 10:35. Come on, wake up. Your God is not dead.” But this is the reality that we all have to go through. We all have to . . . if we’re going to learn to trust God, you’re gonna have to go through sometimes where it feels like God has forsaken you. Right? If they look at Jesus and say He was smitten of God, and He’s the Master, and no servant is greater than his Master, if He has been called Beelzebub, if He has suffered, if He has been persecuted, if He was rejected by the world, how much more the members of His household.

So, we have to look like we have been forsaken of God, but I hadn’t been forsaken. And look at this. Here I am, crying out, telling God . . . this is the most mad I’ve ever been at God. I’ve never come close to anything like this before. There were two times it happened, and I just was so angry, and you can hear me. But then you can hear, I catch my breath . . . and it didn’t happen that quick. There was some time that passed . . . a few minutes, I caught my breath, and then I realized, in my fear of God, “Man, I need to apologize to Him for getting mad. When the Israelites got mad, they died.”

You go read Psalm 78:18 through 22, you see them grumbling against God . . . they did it a lot . . . God was so displeased, that He basically ends up killing them. He lets them die off in the desert. He turns many of them over to snake death, and all kinds of horrible things, because they grumbled against Him. And the Bible says, “His fire broke out, His wrath rose up against them, because they did not believe in God or trust in His deliverance.” Boy, that’s a totally different kind of believing in God than what we think about today, in church, and what’s preached behind the pulpits, this intellectual idea that Jesus exists. Big whoop. You’re no better off than the devils, at that point.

Believing in God is believing His Words and obeying Him. It’s a total commitment to Him, as Lord. You don’t just believe that He exists. You don’t just believe in His person. You believe in His Words. How can you say you believe in Michael Chriswell, if you don’t believe in what I am saying? The people who believe in me are the people who are hearing what I am saying, and they are putting the words into practice, because they believe them.

The same is true for Christ. More so for Christ. “Why do you call Me, “Lord, Lord,” and not do what I say?” Right? So, we have to learn these things over time with the Lord. But again, look at this. Here I am on the verge of grumbling, and thanks be to God, I didn’t stay so long. And look at what God does with me. He reaches right through, in the moment of my desperation, and has a “777” come by. A car with a “777” pulls right in front of me at that moment, while I’m telling Him, “Lord, I don’t understand about all of this. You keep telling me “777.” What am I missing?”

Waiting on God.

Keeping my eyes on Him, His Word, my heart constantly redirecting my focus that He is there, He’s in control, He’s working.

Remembering the things He’s already done. Keeping my eyes on Him and not the circumstances.

And persevering, until He delivers me.

I’m not doing those things. What am I doing? But towards the end, I’m going right back to that. I’m saying, “Lord, I’m going to man-up, and I’m going to continue to persevere, and I’m going to continue to endure.” Oh, my goodness gracious, are you going to hear some stories about how I wanted to quit, even

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more after this. There are more stories, lots more testing. You know, we're talking about 2012 here, so this is seven years ago that God is putting me in this vat of suffering. But now He's going to begin to . . . in a few years, He's going to begin to really, really test me in some ways, and really begin to teach me His Biblical principles, and help me learn to walk with Him. It's so amazing!

This is the most amazing story I've ever heard, honestly, what I'm telling you, and I know I'm saying this about my own story, but I think what you're going to hear . . . and let me go ahead and let the cat out of the bag. Father is moving me to share the recordings. I've mentioned them in countless other recordings I have made, about 2000 recordings over this six-year period. I started going through them yesterday, and I'm going to pull out all of the ones that are irrelevant. But Father is asking me to tell everything, to create a library, God willing, and perhaps . . . it'll most likely be on my website, not on YouTube. It's probably too hard to make this many videos, and it blows up the file size when you make it a video . . . but to make it where you can download them for free. Perhaps I'll put them on the podcast.

My friends, let me just tell you something, you are going to be absolutely amazed, amazed at what this is like. I really believe that what Father helped me to capture . . . and I didn't realize this at the time . . . is unprecedented. I don't believe it's ever been done before, where . . . if you look at John Wesley's autobiography . . . I never read it. I just kind of skimmed through it. It's one of the most detailed biographies of any Christian Saint. Madame Guyon, she talks several times about how the Lord had her not hold anything back. She wanted to be very careful not to hold anything back. So, she gave great, great detail.

George Muller gave great detail. Those are a couple of the ones that I've read that have amazing detail. There is another one, I can't remember the guy's name. But . . . okay. It's one thing for you to read what somebody else wrote about what happened to them. It is another thing for you to be able to go back in time, like in a time capsule, to the exact moment, like you just heard. Do you know how priceless that is, that I caught that on audio? How much praise results when I go back, and I remember what that felt like, how hopeless it was. And now look. God has blessed me so much, He's given me so much more than I ever had, that I now give it to thousands of other people, right, and check this out: For three-and-a-half years before this video camera was ever turned on, I'm giving it to the people that I'm sitting next to at the local restaurants, or meeting at Barnes and Noble, or meeting at Starbucks.

I was doing local, or like to Kay, that you hear about when I was homeless, or you hear me tell you the story about Mary, sitting outside of Starbucks. I was starting to give away that which God had given to me. I didn't have any idea Father was going to blow it up into this. But nonetheless, behind the scenes, before anybody ever heard of Michael Chriswell, I am living and having this incredible experience with God, okay, and He's moving me to capture all of it, and there is this sense that one day, perhaps, this is going to be made available for other people.

I always knew I wanted it for my children, but I thought, "You know, one day Father may have me turn these inside-out and share them with other people." What it will do is, it turns the walk of God completely inside-out, and shows what it looks like to really walk with God through a various number of situations and what it felt like, in the moment. Here's my final point.

I remember when I was going through this, when my ex-wife really turned against me, and the whole bottom of my life was starting to fall out . . . I remember going to Barnes and Noble to the Christian book section and going, "Man, I would give anything if I could find a book in here where somebody has been through what I've been through, and that they could actually not just tell me, "Atta boy, keep it steady, you're going to get through this, you're going to be okay, once I was lost but now I'm found." That's great. I've heard that song many times. No. I want to know, when you lost everything, what did it feel like in that moment? When God didn't answer your prayers, how did you handle that? When you prayed,

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what did you pray? When God answered, how long did it take Him to answer? When you heard back, what did you hear back? What did you struggle with? What did you learn? What did you have to unlearn?"

I wanted to know what it felt like to walk with God. I wanted a spiritual mentor. See, I really didn't have anybody that could take me deep. I had a lot of people around me that had shallow Christianity, that had some verses here and there, some principles that they'd read in another guy's book. But I didn't have anybody who had really gone deep and walked alone, walking like Enoch, with God. I wanted that. I was going to do it. I've done it, and I'm still doing it. God willing, I'll do it all the way to my grave. I'm telling you, it's the most unbelievable adventure ever, the most unbelievable adventure.

I had journaled, just this morning, three answered prayers. By the time Persis woke up, I was already telling her: "Honey, remember last night when I got up at 6:40, and I said I needed to go pray? Honey, it was answered this morning at 4:08 in the morning." I have hundreds and hundreds of answered prayers. Okay? I can't wait to share this with you.

Now, listen. It's a lot of hard work. Please pray for me. You have no idea. Two-thousand-some-odd recordings, they all have to be listened to, I have to edit them and take out perhaps people's names, cut out the part where I'm doing my constant sinus drainage. I have all kinds of work that I have to do. It's going to be a tremendous amount of work, okay. I mean, it may take me a year or two to do this. I don't know. It may take me longer than two years. It's taken me two years so far to do this book.

But I'm going to do this, with God's help. He's calling me to do it, and I know it's going to bless and feed many. It is feeding of the sheep. There is some real food, things you will be able to hang on to, for such a time as this, when the world is falling apart around us, when people's love is growing cold by the thousands around us, when the whole earth is beginning to shake. We need all the evidence of God, we need all the light, all the testimony, all the encouragement we can . . . and not just testimony. Not just "I went to hell, I saw the devil, he scared the heck out of me, I don't sin anymore now I saw that Jesus is real." That's great. I don't want to discount that.

But I'm talking about "Okay, what about after that? What did you do when you didn't have money for your car payment? Tell me about that. I don't need to know what the devil looks like. That's not going to help me when I can't pay my car payment. That's not going to help me when I get married, and that person falls out of the faith. That's not going to help me when God calls me into a ministry, and somebody falsely sues me and takes away my YouTube Channel for six months. I want to know; how did you walk with God? It doesn't help me to know what color the devil is wearing in hell when your parents turn against you and think your belief in God is insanity, and they want to either get you on medicine, or take you down to the jail, where they can show you, you're going to have a jailhouse ministry."

"I want to know, practically, what does it look like? What does it feel like? What is the Biblical principle? How did you endure? How long did you have to endure? That's what I want to know. Help me understand that." Okay? That's what the Bible is about. Now, we don't get a lot of details, but the Bible is all about people who persevered. The testimonies of men and women who have been used of God are all about them persevering, clinging to faith, obeying God. You're never going to know God like this without obeying Him. I want to just make it clear. It is going to cost you, big-time. I've tried to explain it to many people, and many people don't know it and won't get it, until they actually get there, that it's going to cost them. It's going to cost you. You're going to have to suffer. You're going to have to look like a fool. You're going to have to look and sound forsaken of God, in order to find Him.

But man, when you find Him, praise be to the heavenly Father, and the Lord, Jesus Christ, who was and is to come. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

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Consider Him, who endured such sinful opposition, such terrible opposition from men, so that you will not grow weary. For in your battle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. We have to keep our eyes on Jesus. We have to learn from the mistake of Peter, and move our eyes back onto God and on His Word, and on His promises, not on all the things that are falling apart, like that guy (*pointing to the computer monitor*) was doing.

To my credit, I didn't stay there long. I couldn't be here, if I did. Jesus probably looked down at me in that moment, sent me the "777," and said, "Oh, ye of little faith. Why did you doubt?" He picked me up, right there, just like Peter. So, I'm no better than Peter. All right. But I learned the lesson of Peter, and I learned to keep my eyes on Jesus next time, and I've been doing it ever since. I'm telling you, all the suffering that I've been through, from this day forward (*pointing to the computer monitor*) has been much more palatable, has yielded much greater spiritual result and fruit in my heart, because I have learned the habit of fixing my eyes on Jesus. I don't need another person. God has never once used another person to help me in my moment of desperation.

I don't go to humans. I never tell you, or anybody, what happens in my life until God has already delivered me. Why? I am absolutely bent and absolutely determined to let my life be a living proof that you can have a real walk with God. The grace of God is not trapped in a book. The person of God is not trapped in a book. You can have a real experience with Him, that He is really available. He is a real and present help in times of trouble. He is a strong tower, and the righteous run into Him and are saved. He is real. His grace is real. You can trust Him.

Suppose everybody turned away from the faith tomorrow, except for you. Who are you going to trust then? Is God not able to have a one-on-one with you? Can you not trust God? No, I'm telling you, you can trust God, and you better find out now, because more and more people are going to be falling away. I know a lot of you are isolated, and there is a reason why. We are in those terrible end-days. We are. They're going to last a lot longer, by the way. Things are going to have to get way, way, way worse than what you can even imagine.

That's why I'm telling you, this stuff is so important, for such a time as this. You better know how to walk with God now, because the days are coming when you won't be able to walk with Him. When the flood waters and the cesspool of filth and evil and rebellion and cold-heartedness and wickedness and sin continues to pile up around this world, what are you going to do to learn to follow God, when you're barely able to keep your head above water? Learn it now, my friends. Take God seriously now. Learn how to walk with Him. Listen to these recordings.

Stop watching so many movies, listening to music, making excuses. Listen to this stuff. This is life-giving bread. This is proof that God is real, Okay? Let me tell you something: More real to me than the world falling apart is my experience with God. God, in me, is greater than anything that happens in this world. There is no suffering, there are no circumstances, there is no genocide, there are no wacked-out presidents, there are no countries going bankrupt . . . there is nothing . . . there is no Muslim taking over, there is no . . . anything . . . that is greater reality to me than my God.

He is my greatest reality, and He must be your greatest reality in this time, my friend, or you will not make it. I'm telling you, you will not make it. If you don't have oil in your lamp when Jesus Christ comes back, you are in trouble. It will be too late for you. You better start taking God seriously. Don't watch this stuff and say, "Oh, that's great, that's entertaining." No. Take it seriously. Apply it in your life. Let the fear of God wash over you, because I'm telling you, before God comes, the darkness is going to rule and rein in this life. It's going to get much, much darker.

People are going to continue to fall away from the faith, I'm telling you. You haven't seen anything yet. There are things coming in this world . . . you are going to have to be seen as an absolute idiot, in order to believe in Jesus Christ. The days are coming. You need to have evidence that God is real NOW. You need to have so much evidence, that you can look at all the men on the ship who are dying with you . . . and they are saying to themselves, "My goodness, what is going on? We are going to die. The ship is going down, even though we've thrown all of our loot overboard, even though we've wrapped it up with ropes. We are destined to die. This is over for us" . . . you've got to be able to look at that crew who are shaking at the knees when their world is falling apart . . . because our world is going to fall apart . . . and you've got to have that faith that Paul had.

Paul knew better. He said, "Be of good courage, men, for I have faith that it will happen, just as God promised." Are you going to be one of those? As the world continues to fall apart, will you be one of those who can look to other people, when their knees start knocking . . . because I can't be everywhere at one time. Neither can anybody who's got this kind of faith. You're going to need to be . . . the internet will go down. We won't have internet. What are you going to do then? How are you going to watch my videos, or Zac Poonen's videos, or anybody's videos? You better learn how to get ahold of this God now. I'm telling you, my friend, you better get after Him. You better know Him. You better set down the silly stuff in your life. You don't know how much time you have.

You don't know how much time you have, and I'm telling you, you don't know what day your ticker is going to tick and stop ticking. You don't know what day that is for you. Take God seriously. Okay? Take God seriously. You know that I love you and I care about you. I speak this to you, because it's important.

I hope that you will continue to watch, and you will be blessed by all that God has done, because He's having me share it. Not for my benefit. I've already benefitted from all of this. He's having me share this for your benefit. Thank you for letting this be so long, and I'll see you on the next video.

MORGAN FREEMAN HERE IS THE MIRACLE YOU MISSED IN THE STORY OF GOD – PART 6:

You know, you've traveled all around the world, Morgan Freeman . . . if you ever get a chance to see this . . . and you've seen and looked and heard all the world has to say about this Divine God. I want to show you the miracle that you missed.

(Michael's mother, Cindy Huntley). I'm in the shower, and all of a sudden, I hear this sound. I get out of the shower, and I realize that it's my son, wailing again. It's only the second time I've heard this, in my whole life. I hurry into his room to find him laying on the floor, on his stomach, rigid, just wailing and wailing. And again, I hear, "Nobody is going to believe what You have done for me. Nobody will ever believe what You have done for me. I have to spend the rest of my life telling people, because it is a miracle. Everybody told me there was no way this could happen. You told me it would, God, and You did it."

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Hi. I am Michael Chriswell, and welcome to Part 6 of Walking With God Through Crisis, Seven Years Later. Now, the reason I titled this video on YouTube, "The Miracle Which Morgan Freeman Missed," is because of a clip that I'm going to be showing you in today's video, which came from a series, I believe, that he did back in 2015, a wonderful documentary series, I felt, called "The Story Of God." And it's Morgan Freeman in a partnership with, I believe, National Geographic, flying all over the world, attempting to dissect and understand what it is that people, from various backgrounds and religions, call God. Who is God to them? What are their proofs of God? How do they worship God, in all of their different ways? In this particular clip, he talks about miracles. He flies all around to investigate the Divine power that people claim they have seen in their life. Okay?

So, I'm going to show this clip, I'm going to pull it apart and explain a few things, because I think it goes fantastic with the most amazing miracle I have ever seen in my life. I can say this without fear of over-hyping this. What you're about to see, I have never shown to anybody. Nobody has ever publicly seen these clips, these documents, these pictures and this video before. Now, I have shared a little bit, bits and pieces of this story, throughout some of my recordings, some 330-odd recordings, that I have on my YouTube Channel. But nobody has ever seen this story told in this color, with the actual images that happened and took place when this miracle took place.

I really believe, in all humility before the God of the Bible and the Lord, Jesus Christ, whom I serve and have a great deal of faith in, that I have never seen any kind of miracle that even comes close to what you're about to see. And the reason is, because of how unbelievably complicated this miracle was for God to do. I have said, many times, that I believe somebody being raised from the dead is a piece of cake to God compared to what He will do, and what you will see, in this story. I believe somebody being freed from dozens of tumors is not nearly as complicated and as difficult as what God has done in this. No financial miracle is nearly as complicated as what Father has done in this.

There are times throughout history, when God does things that are extra-ordinary, to reach through, as an evidence, to a believing child of His, to then bring Himself and His name glory and to make Himself known to others. The Bible is full of miracle stories, and every single one of them, we can know God's explanation has always been to make Himself known to others. Throughout human history, men have had the desire for eternity. The Bible says that God has planted eternity in the hearts of men, but men cannot really understand it. Men have always believed, throughout all of human history, that there is a greater higher power that exists beyond us, and many men have put hope in it, and many men have built religions entirely . . . huge religious systems . . . all around the idea that there is a Divine.

Those who have worshipped the stars, those who have worshipped the earth, those who have worshipped everything in between. There are those who believe in one God. There are those who believe in millions of gods. Throughout history, there has always been this question: Who is the right God? How can we prove who the right God is?

You know, I have really taken delight in seeing the number of atheists who have come to my YouTube Channel who want to point out my delusion for believing in God, and I really understand, and I have compassion on them. I understand they believe it's a delusion, because when I look at religion, what I see is insanity. I see billions of people all around the world, all absolutely believing they are 100% right, just as I do. Okay? Everybody believes they are right, and everybody believes their god is the right God. I understand those atheists, because I have an atheist in me.

I have a part of me that has never lost the ability to look at something like this and say, "How is that possible? How can I possibly reconcile what I am seeing here with that invisible person who I worship called God, Almighty, the Father of the Lord, Jesus Christ? How can this be?" I have never lost the capacity to doubt that what I have seen, and what I've personally experienced, is just a matter of co-

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incidence or delusion. And guys, I have experienced many things. Wait until you hear my remarriage story in India. I'm telling you; it is extra-ordinary. I cannot wait to tell you, because God took it to a whole other level of complicated.

But this, probably, is one of the tightest, most specific, sharpest, most amazing miracles I have ever seen in my life.

For thousands of years, men have debated, "My God is the right God. Your God is the right God." From one human being to another, with the love of Jesus Christ in me who has transformed my entire life and heart, I would challenge anybody of a separate faith, not to an obnoxious, arrogant battle where we can prove who is a greater wordsmith and who knows more of their particular area of study, or the particular history of their religion, or who can have more facts for theological debates as to why they are wrong or right. No. I would want to just peacefully make one single challenge. There is a challenge that's made in the Holy Bible, amongst a group of people who were debating about who the right God was: This god called "Baal," or Elijah saying that the God of Israel, the God of the Holy Bible, was the real God.

There is this debate in our Bible – 1 Kings 18:21-39 – our Holy Bible, about which God is the right God. God leads this man, Elijah, to do something that is absolutely extra-ordinary. He basically says, "Here's what we're going to do. You prepare a sacrifice. I'm going to prepare a sacrifice. We're going to put all these pieces of meat . . . you pick your very best cattle, you build an altar, you build a ditch. You put yours here, (*Showing one pile with his hand*) I'll put mine here (*Showing another pile with his hand*). We're going to call upon our gods, and the God that answers by fire is the one true God."

And they said to him, "This is good. We agree this is a good thing." So, 450 prophets of Baal did all their work, they set up their altar. They began dancing and calling on their god, to the point of cutting themselves. And at one point, Elijah, realizing they are calling on a god that's not there, and if he is there, he's a bunch of demonic spirits . . . which is what our Bible teaches us is behind idols and false gods . . . they are actually devil spirits that are trying to court the worship of human beings for Satan, rather than the one true God . . . 1 Corinthians 10:18-22, Deuteronomy 32:17, Psalm 106:37

. . . And so, he says to them, "Oh, perhaps he has gone on vacation, perhaps he is sleeping, perhaps he is busy. You should cry out louder." Because what's happening is, as these people are calling on their god, nothing is happening. And then in accordance with the will of God . . . this man did not put his God to the test. He did not show up on a mountain and say, "Hey, everybody, who wants to see whose god is God, and let's call fire down from heaven, and whoever. . ." No. He did not put God to the test. The Bible says, "Let it be known. . ." – he says, as he prays, "Oh, God, Almighty, God of Israel, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, let it be known today that I am doing all that You have commanded." This is what Elijah says.

And then he calls upon the name of the Lord. And fire, the Bible says, comes down from heaven and consumes the sacrifice that not only was made there with the same meat and the same wood and the same stones, but he also poured out three gigantic jars of water all over this sacrifice, such that it was running all around in a trough around the sacrifice. The holy God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob sends fire down and laps up all of the water and consumes the entire sacrifice.

And in that moment from that miracle, wrought by that one man of faith up against 450 prophets of a false god, He proved who the one true God was. Throughout human history, God has been pleased to do this a few times. And I'm here to challenge anybody who really has a heart to know the truth . . . I'm here to challenge any Muslim . . . I say this again in all due respect . . . I would challenge any Muslim on the planet . . . I would love for you to personally contact me. And this is going to go for Muslims, this is going to go for Buddhists. This goes for Zoroastrianism's. This goes for Catholics. This goes for Mormons. This goes for New Agers. This goes for anybody.

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This goes for Hindu's who have, at their discretion, they believe, millions of gods. I want to challenge any and everybody who has the capacity for the spiritual, who has a desire to know and believe in God: Has your god, as you have called upon him, ever been able to do anything for you like what you're getting ready to see?

The Bible says that the God who brings fire from heaven is the one true God, and I'm going to tell you something; there is another way you can know. I would have loved to have answered this for Morgan Freeman, who says, very, very poignantly . . . he says, "How can we distinguish between that which is just random chance, and that which many people believe is the Hand of the Divine? How can we know this, whether or not?" You're going to see this in this clip coming up.

(He plays a video clip from the documentary. Morgan Freeman speaking – "Most of us have a turning point in our lives, a pivotal moment where you wondered, "How did this happen?" Mine was 1989. I made three films: Lean On Me, Driving Miss Daisy, and Glory. Did I make it happen? Was someone up there calling the shots? Or was I lucky? To try to understand this, I've arranged to meet a psychology professor who thinks we often mistake random chance for miracles."

Mr. Freeman: "Danny Oppenheimer."

Mr. Oppenheimer: "Nice to see you."

Mr. Freeman: "How are you today?"

Mr. Oppenheimer: "I'm good, and you?"

Mr. Freeman: "I'm good. What are you doing?"

Mr. Oppenheimer: "I'm flipping coins."

Mr. Freeman: "Why?"

Mr. Oppenheimer: "I'm looking for streaks."

Mr. Freeman: "Streaks?"

Mr. Oppenheimer: "Yeah, if you flip a coin enough times, you're going to get a streak."

Mr. Freeman: "Really?" (Mr. Oppenheimer keeps flipping the coin onto his hand, and then recording the results.) "That's a lot of tails."

Mr. Oppenheimer: "Well, if I flip a coin twice, and I get "heads" both times, is that miraculous?"

Mr. Freeman: "No, but if you do it 50 times, and you get 60, that's a miracle."

Mr. Oppenheimer: "Well, yeah, if you get more than you flip, certainly. But how rare does an event have to be before we call it "miraculous"? One in a million? One in a billion?"

Mr. Freeman: "I choose "billion.""

Mr. Oppenheimer: "All right, one in a billion. Well, let's try something. (He pulls out a deck of cards and shuffles them. Then he turns over several cards.) Jack of Diamonds. Six of Spades. King of Spades. Two of Hearts. Seven of Diamonds, and Ace of Spades. Is it "miraculous" to have gotten this sequence?"

Mr. Freeman: "No. I mean, it's just a random selection of cards off the deck."

Mr. Oppenheimer: "Well, right, but this particular sequence, starting with the Jack, and then getting the Six of Spades, and then the King of Spades, that only happens one in about 14-billion times you draw six cards. So, it's pretty miraculous, by your one-in-a-billion standard."

Mr. Freeman: "So, you're telling me that this is miraculous?"

Mr. Oppenheimer: "Well, no, as you said before, it's just a random set of cards. What if it was the first six digits of your social security number? What if it were the last six digits of your social security number? The first six digits of your phone number? Sometimes, it's not actually "miraculous." Sometimes, it's just probability playing its tricks on you."

Mr. Freeman: "All right, so, how do we include the Divine, because there are people who really do think that there is Divine intervention in these kinds of interplays."

Mr. Oppenheimer: "Absolutely, and nothing I'm saying here rules out the possibility of the Divine. The fact that probability predicts certain things doesn't mean that there can't be Divine intervention. But

miraculous things that are so unlikely that you think it can't happen by chance alone, they do happen, and they have to happen. It would be odd if they didn't. Because with six billion people in the world, there are so many opportunities for something really unusual to happen, we would expect it to happen to some of them. ↴

(Michael speaking from in front of his computer monitor, present day.) There are religions all around the world that claim to have miracles. I believe there is a supernatural force that is willing and able to help many other religions to be deceived away from the one true God and experience the supernatural. I believe in stigmata, I believe in crying statues of Mary, and I believe they are all a terrible delusion of Satan. They are a counterfeit designed to lead people away from the God of the Bible, the one true God.

So, there again, what is the distinguishing factor of the one true God from all others? I will tell you: The one true God can tell the future. The one true God can tell a miracle in advance of it actually happening. *(This eliminates ALL chance of it being just random chance.)* In John 14:29, Jesus Christ says . . . as He does multiple other places just through His words and His actions, predicting the future . . . in John 14:29, Jesus Christ, the living Son of God, said to His disciples and those listening, "I have told you these things before they happen, so that when they happen, you will believe."

Morgan Freeman, I say this to you with great respect of who you are as a human being, and of your amazing career . . . I would say to you, my friend, you walked away from the one true faith that you clearly were taught in church. I understand walking away from religion and walking to Hollywood. I get it. Religion is horrible, in my opinion. But I do not understand walking away from a heavenly Father who loves you, and who made you to be a little boy who climbs up in His lap, the delight of His Father, who grows up to be a friend, like Abraham, of God . . . to walk away from the living God who made you and created you.

I would just encourage you . . . you know, you've traveled all around the world, Morgan Freeman . . . if you ever get a chance to see this . . . and you've seen and looked and heard all the world has to say about this Divine God. I want to show you the miracle that you missed. I want to show you the John 14:29 God that I worship of the Bible; the Lord, Jesus Christ, who indeed answered by fire in my life. When I cried out to Him as a person who loved money and who was afraid of men, and who lived my whole life in insecurity and the fear for other people to see, this God, the living Lord, Jesus Christ, answered by fire in my heart, and burned off all that was in me that was not of the Divine, all that was in me that was nothing like the Lord, Jesus Christ, radically completely changing me.

I want you to know that God answered by fire, in my life. I live by faith, believing that God will provide. I have seven years, now, of living in total faith, never asking man for a single dollar of support, never asking man to help me or support me in anything in the building of the ministry. Morgan Freeman, my story has been watched a million-and-a-half times on YouTube. It's called "Trusting God In The Storm." I pray you'll watch it. It's a beautiful work of what God did for some little weakling, who came to Him in faith, who didn't come to Him . . . I didn't come to God with a telescope. I didn't come to God with a microscope. I didn't come to God with anything fancy.

I didn't come to God with a bunch of history books. I came to God as a little child. Matthew 18:3 through 4: Jesus Christ said to all of His hearers, "Unless you change and become like a little child, you will never enter the kingdom of God. But all who come unto Him will receive rest for their weary souls."

"All who keep His words," John 8:51, "will never see death." Jesus Christ proved, over and over again, that He is the one true living God, and I tell you, 2,000 years later, there are little bitty nobody's just like me . . . I'm just a nobody. I gave my whole life to this world in trying to chase after success, and having

everything that everybody told me would delight my heart, give me purpose, give me fulfillment, it fell flat. The steak I chased tasted like water.

God gave me a chance, reached through and spoke to my heart, "I didn't create you for you to give your very best to the world. Come unto Me. Come unto Me, and I will give you light. I will give you purpose. I will give you peace. I will give you rest, contentment." I tell you the truth, I'm one of the richest people I know, Morgan Freeman. You could outspend me a million-to-one, millions-to-one. You've traveled around the world. You've eaten the best steaks. You've had the best wine. You've been on the best boats. You've been in the very best movies. You've experienced the best that life has to offer.

My friend, I tell you Thomas a Kempis, 500 years ago, said, "The wealthiest man in the world is not the man who has the most. He is the man who needs the least." And by what God did through the Lord, Jesus Christ, in my heart . . . the same Lord, Jesus Christ, who wrought the miracle that you are getting ready to see it in this unbelievable story . . . changed my heart, answered by fire. Mark 9:49 – "Everyone will be salted by fire" – He completely radically changed my life, and He made me a beloved son. I was no longer running around like a scared little man, trying to find my identity and my love and acceptance in the world. I found it from an invisible God, who writes this story of reconciliation in the Book called the Holy Bible.

I found a peace and a joy and a rest and a contentment, I found an abundance of answered prayers. Morgan Freeman, if you ever see this, I challenge you to subscribe to my channel, if you are really curious, if you really went out into the world to find God. If what you said around every other airplane trip was sincere, that you wanted to know, I tell you, stick around and watch the life of one little guy, one little man, who has experienced his God in extra-ordinary ways, the God who has told me of the future in my life, repeatedly.

My friend, if I stood here today, and I told you that God healed my broken heart, or healed me from a heart attack, or He healed me from cancer, like the story that you even saw in your documentary . . . you know, you can see how people quickly want to go, "But was it the miracle of God, or was it the chemotherapy?" My friend, you will not be able to say that when you watch this story. You will not be able to ask that question any more than you could ask the question: "Was that a co-incidence that fire just came down from heaven in Elijah's presence, and burned up all that sacrifice, and burned up all that water, and 450 people around fall to their face on the ground to worship the God of the Bible, saying, "It is the Lord who is God. It is the Lord who is God?"

My friend, I tell you, I have seen this in my life. I have experienced it. God has answered by fire, in my life, and God has told me in advance. Yes, Morgan Freeman, this is how you know who the one true God is. He can change a person completely, without them having any ability to do it themselves. He can change them completely.

Oh, there are lots of Buddhists who have been changed. There are lots of people in your videos who've been changed. There are all kinds of changes happening all the time. But, this change I'm talking about testifies to itself 2,000 years ago in the Words of Jesus Christ, where when somebody puts faith in Christ, as Jesus Christ taught in John 7:17 . . . incidentally, I wrote a book about it . . . John 7:17, Jesus Christ says to the whole world: "If anyone wants to know, essentially, is He really the Son of God. . ."

Everybody wants to go to a microscope or a telescope to find out who God is, but Jesus Christ came and said, "If you really want to know who God is, if you really want to know if I am of God, or if I am some great teacher, or if I'm just a prophet, or if I'm a lunatic," He said, "If anyone chooses to do God's will, that person will find out, they will know by experience, the Word of God will become alive in them. They will see manifestations of Jesus Christ, His presence."

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I don't mean physically seeing God. I mean the Word of God, the Words of Christ, Jesus, becoming true, becoming real, becoming actual fact in their life. Jesus said, "If anyone chooses to do. . ." – it's of your own free will. "If anyone chooses to do God's will. . ."

Verse 16 of John 7 says, "The teaching you hear, My words, they are not My own. They come from Him who sent me."

And then Jesus said, "Here's the proof that you will know He sent Me. If you put My Words into practice, you will experience God." Morgan Freeman, I want to tell you one Scripture that I sure know you must've heard in some church in Mississippi when you were growing up: John 14:21 through 23 – Jesus Christ pivots the entire love and existence and knowing God on this one command. He says, "Whoever has My commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves Me. He who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I, too, will love him and show Myself to him."

The King James says, "manifest." Jesus Christ's promise to any person of faith on this earth, who wants to know who the true God is, He says, "If you will put My teachings into practice. . ." – and incidentally, Morgan, most Christians don't even know all the teachings of Christ. For 19 years, I had no clue. I could've named about five of them. I never took the time to actually look at what the teachings were of Jesus Christ.

When I began to put the teachings of Christ into practice, I began to experience exactly what He promised. In that Scripture, He says, "Shall manifest." In Verse 23, He says that He and the Father will actually make Their home with the person who loves Him enough . . . for having been forgiven of their sins, the work that Jesus Christ did to redeem us, to atone our sins, shedding His blood on the cross . . . Jesus Christ said, "If you believe I have been sent of the Father, and you believe My Words, and you put My Words into practice. . ."

In other words, you receive Me into your life as Lord – ". . .I'll not only manifest myself to you, but My Father and I, by the Holy Spirit, will make Our home with you." Now, this is an experience that Christians all over the world can testify to, that nobody can take away. No amount of atheistic reasoning, no amount of rhetoric, no amount of persecution or name-calling, no amount of theological reasoning and understanding, nothing can take away from the person who is truly walking with God by experience.

Little green spaceships landing in my backyard will not remove the reality of God in my heart, having put His Words into practice, experiencing something like this. Now, before I show this to you, let me just give you a quick little background. October 30th of 2009, I'm living in a million-dollar house. I'm being called the next Zig Ziglar. I'm a motivational sales training speaker, got a lot of clients, making a lot of success, but my heart is absolutely gripped with tension. There is no peace. Yet, I'm calling myself a Christian. Nineteen (19) years, I'm going to church, I'm trying to do a bunch of good deeds. I'm a leader in the men's ministry. I'm washing the single-parent-mom's cars on Mother's Day. I'm feeding the homeless on Sunday nights. I'm doing all these good deeds, but I'm still racked with tension, and I'm still knowing, deep in my heart, something's missing.

I'm calling myself a "Christian," but the New Covenant, the New Testament reality of being a Christian is not mine. It's left the building. October 30th, 2009, I have a crisis in my life. God is allowing my circumstances to fall apart. He's starting to shake up all the things I've been building my life on, and I cry out to God in a weekend of fasting and prayer. I came to a place where many Saints that have gone before me have called the white funeral day, where I decided that I was going to give up my whole life to the One who made me, where I was going to call upon the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ, and have Him

save me, Acts 2:32, that I was going to not only surrender my will, but I was going to actually abandon my will.

I was going to stop treating Jesus Christ like a good luck rabbit's foot, hanging Him and His Words, like a bumper sticker, on everything in my life, and hoping and praying that His name would bless all of my plans and my goals and my dreams. Instead, I got real with God, and I said, "The Bible says, if I am in Christ, I have been bought with a price. I am no longer my own. I should no longer live for myself, but for the One who died for me and gave Himself for me. I made that decision. I drew a line in the sand.

From that day forward, the real suffering started to come into my life. It was not this great blessing; the sky did not open up, the sun did not shine, and I did not hear, "This is My Son, whom I love and in whom I am well pleased." My life began to fall apart, but I had a peace inside myself in spite of the storm, in spite of the circumstances. I had a knowing that I was now right with God. I had a knowing that in my humility, God had heard my prayer.

And from that point forward, God begins to move through my circumstances, move through the Word of God. He begins to supernaturally guide me and give me amazing guidance. Okay? He begins to manifest Himself, just as He promised. And by the way, this happens long before I became perfect, long before I knew all of the teachings of Jesus Christ, and could recite them and obey them and teach them.

God began to get involved in my life. Nine months to the day of that October 30th, 2009, on July 30th, 2010 . . . which you are going to see in this . . . my now ex-wife leaves; she turns evil on me in way that's only describable to those who have heard a lot of the story. Everything falls apart. She takes all of my money, she takes all of my children, she takes virtually all of our possessions. She leaves, totally turns against me, and in the end spends close to \$80,000 to destroy me in Divorce Court.

When you see this, what'll you see . . . and what you've missed, if you haven't watched this clip . . . is, God began to warn me, this little kid who was so scared and so humble to go through this. I began to, as a child, trust in this heavenly Father of mine (*Showing a collage of various "666" numbers represented on different items – receipts, bank statements, phone numbers, odometer readings, calculator calculations, weather ("66 degrees at 6 mph"), file sizes, book covers, automobile identification numbers, license plate numbers, advertisements.*), and God began to warn me with all of these "666" sightings that I've talked about. And then the "555" sightings, which showed me a page in the Holy Bible that I have that I would be delivered, telling me in advance.

And then, I began to see this number "777." (*Showing a collage of various "777" numbers represented on different items – receipts, billboard advertisements, vehicle license plates, lottery tickets, addresses, dates, times on the clock, phone numbers.*) It would show up literally over a hundred times throughout the worst crisis of my life. And out of all of this, I was getting the sense that God was warning me, every time something difficult was going to happen, and that God was promising me, in advance, He would deliver me.

One day, God had spoken to my heart, and He said, "If you'll fire your attorney and trust Me in this divorce, I will deliver you, and I will do it in a highly unusual way that will bring Me much glory." Not "me," (referring to Michael), but will bring "Him" (referring to God) much glory. That is the story we've done to this point. There were many temptations for me to save myself. It's been a real struggle of faith. There has been a lot of pain and difficulty, as I've lost everything in my life so far, and now, this long-awaited promise is about to come true.

I challenge anybody of any faith who believes in any other different god to ask this question: Has your god ever been able to do anything for you like this? Again, I say this with deep respect for your faith. But

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I just challenge you, because the Bible says, "There is One way, One name under heaven, by which men must give an account and be saved. It is the name of Jesus Christ." Jesus Christ said, "I am the way. I am the truth. I am the life. No one comes to God, the Father, but by Me."

So, I would challenge you, has the god that you have been believing in, has he ever been able to do anything like this for you? In our Bible, we have a teaching about what's called "common grace." Common grace, the Bible says, our God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, He gives "rain to the righteous and the unrighteous." Matthew 5:45. "He gives the sun to shine on the evil and the good." So, our Bible teaches that God is graceful and still provides food, He still provides water, He still provides sustenance, even for those who reject Him. That's how merciful and kind He is.

But we also know that God does not listen to the prayers of those who reject Him, and those who live in sin, and those who worship false gods. And we know that God does not pour out blessings, telling people in advance of His amazing and miraculous ability and power to deliver them from their circumstances. We know that there is a false power at work, that does false miracles, false wonders and false signs, and the Bible says God allows this. It says in the Book of 2nd Thessalonians, God allows this all around the world, for people to be deceived, for those who do not love the truth, and those who do not obey the Gospel of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

So, this is my humble challenge to all of you who have a faith, but it's not in the God of the Bible, the Holy Bible; not in the Son, the Lord, Jesus Christ. Has your god ever been able to do anything like this for you, and has he ever been able to tell you in advance what was going to happen? Take a look.

(Back to the video where Michael is speaking from the couch in his parent's house. Continued from Part 5. . .) Okay, so you can God is reaching through to me, right there in that moment of desperation where I am angry at Him, I'm at the end of myself, and He still, even though I'm telling Him how angry I am . . . He's actually reaching through, by His grace, trying to comfort me. You're going to understand how powerful that moment is that I caught on audio recording, at the end of this story. We're getting close. Hang in there.

So, that happened in June, but God continues to encourage me, He gives me enough strength to keep going, and I keep moving forward. Now, this puts us into September, there is this Hearing set . . . there is a Hearing, a Trial being set now . . . and even though I'm still not . . . technically . . . finalized in my divorce, now there is a Hearing to violate me in the Parenting Agreement that they put together, saying I'm in violation of all this stuff. That's set for like September 24th. So, on September 15th, we get a piece of mail, I open it up, and it turns out, it's my Final Divorce Decree. I am elated. I don't even read the papers, because I've seen the Proposed Final Judgment a hundred times. I know that it's filled with things that are garbage, but there's a part of me that after almost two-and-a-half years, I don't even care.

I had told the Lord, for the weeks previous, I surrendered to the possibility that this was going to end in disaster. In spite of all the warnings of everybody else, I just said, "Lord, if I am to participate in Your sufferings, I consider it an honor." I surrendered to it. And I said, "Lord, I will receive from You whatever is coming, because You have told me that You will deliver me. I don't know how; I don't know when. It may not be today, it may not be this year, but I'm going to choose to continue to trust You, and I'm going to believe that You will deliver me in the storm."

So, now on that September 15th day, I'm rolling through these pages, not really looking at them, because I'd seen them forever, and I get to the back, and I realize that it's been signed . . . my Divorce is final, "9/11," "September 11th." (*Showing a copy of the Final Judgment of Dissolution of Marriage Page 8 of 8.*) I instantly know, "That is not by coincidence. This is the Scripture Psalm 91:1. This is the spiritual 911."

This is the Scripture that Larry had driven me to, countless times, when I would call him, just at the end of my rope.

He would help me, pray with me, get me to get my Bible out and read through Psalm 91:1. So, now I'm looking at this, going "This was dated "9/11." How cool is this?" I had no idea. I leave, I'm having a conversation, "Guys, I'm divorced. I'm excited," and I kind of let out a big "Woo-hoo!" I was excited. But my mom goes, "Well . . ." And by the way, I forgot to tell you that for weeks leading up to all of this, my mother has been making all of these comments about me having a jailhouse ministry, because I didn't get an attorney, and I'm getting all of this impugned income put in there, and having all this financial stuff put in there, and since I'm not going to be able to pay it, I'm going to end up in jail . . . "so, we're going to come see you in jail." This was the joke around the house. My mom would say this all the time, out of her own fear to try to manipulate me into getting an attorney.

So, now, that morning, I am leading with the divorce papers, and she says, "Well, yeah, that's good, but you still have all that stuff in there you have to deal with." I'm like, "Well, you know what? I have to be in Court on the 24th to defend myself against the Parenting Agreement that I'm in "violation" of, maybe God is setting this up, so that I'll have an opportunity to get in front of that Judge and reiterate the fact that I'm being wronged."

I leave and go to work that day. I'm at work, I'm checking my email . . . when I say "work," that means Starbucks. I go there and I work on my little computer at the Starbucks . . . so I'm there, and I check my email, and the Hearing has been cancelled, and I'm like, "What?" I immediately am thinking, "Is the devil playing some kind of new joke here? What are they doing?" I had just told my parents I'm excited about being in front of the Court, so that I can defend myself. Now, the Hearing is done.

So, I leave the Starbucks all upset. I'm like, "God, I don't know what You want me to do? Am I supposed to call them? Help me out here. Why didn't You show me a "666" on this deal? Why do I feel like the devil is playing games? What's going on?" A few minutes later, I pull up to a stoplight, the car in front of me "555." I'm like, "Hhhmmmm, that wasn't enough." I'm still thinking, "God, why didn't You warn me? I didn't see a "666." What is this about? What do You want me to do?"

The very next stoplight, a different car: "555." Instantly, I'm like, "God, are You telling me that You cancelled this Hearing, that this is Your deliverance? (*Showing vehicle license plate numbers, taken 3 minutes apart.*) "Yes, Michael." And I'm like, "Wow." I pull into the house. I'm like, "Guys, you're not going to believe this, the Hearing has been cancelled." The first thing I hear out of my mother's mouth: "But I thought you wanted to be in Court, because how else are you going to help defend yourself and get all of this garbage taken out of the Final Divorce Decree?"

"Mom, I have no idea. I don't know how, I don't know when, but my God is going to deliver me." My mom has an ex-NASA friend over. "Michael, do you want to tell them what happened about your divorce?" "Yeah," and I began to tell them about the "777's," God showing me this season is almost over, He is going to deliver me, I'm telling them just a little brief version of it . . . "Yeah, but Michael's still probably going to end up in jail, because there is all this stuff in there that he can't pay, and so he's probably going to end up in jail." And I said, "Well, that's alright. Jerry and Doris will probably come see me in jail. You guys will come and bring me a cookie or two, won't you?" I said, "Guys, I'm just going to be honest with you, that's not even funny to joke about." I said this in front of all of them.

And I said, "I am prophesying to you guys right now; my God will deliver me. He has told me He will deliver me. I have done everything I could to be a fool for Him, to put it all on the line for Him, and to trust Him completely. I don't know how, I don't know when, but my God will deliver me." Two days goes by. I'm standing in the kitchen, washing some dishes. My mom yells from the other room, "Michael, I have a confession to make to you." I said, "What, mom?" "I read your Divorce papers. I went into your

room with something, I saw them there, I couldn't resist. I read them, but I skimmed them, because I was afraid you'd come in and see me doing it."

She brings them out to the kitchen, and says, "Now that you know about it, I'm going to go back through them slowly." I said, "Go for it." She gets into it. She starts to share what's in it. I said, "Mom, I don't mind you reading my Divorce papers, but I'm not interested in rolling around in the mud with you. You want to roll around in the mud, you go right ahead. I know what it says. I don't need to hear it anymore." My stepdad agreed and said, "Yeah, Cindy, keep it to yourself."

The next day . . . this will be the third day, this is September 18th now . . . she says to me something about something in the Divorce papers. And I said, "Oh, that's not in there, Mom." Or maybe I said, "That was in there." I think it was something about an insurance requirement, or something. She goes, "No, I'm telling you, that's not in there." And I said, "No, you didn't read the papers right. I have read these things, forwards, backwards, 25 times. I know they're in there."

"Michael, I'm telling you, you should get it and read it." I went and got my Divorce papers. Keep in mind, they had been in my house for three days, I never read the Divorce papers. I come and sit on this couch in this very spot right here (*Pointing to the spot next to him on the couch*). My step-father was sitting right there (*Pointing to a separate spot in the room*). I began to read through the Divorce papers, and I'm going to tell you, it was the most unbelievable experience of my . . . it was like an out-of-body experience. I'm reading the Divorce papers, and I'm going "There are only a couple of pages left. There are only two pages left. There's only one page left."

Everything was gone. EVERYTHING WAS GONE from my Divorce papers. The impugned income was gone. The \$10,000 in attorney's fees, gone. The \$10,000 equalizing payment, gone. The \$200,000 life insurance, gone. The me having to pay to get my kids and pick them up, gone. Eight weeks of visitation, two four-day visits, gone. The 75% expenses, gone. All of it. Me having to check and get permission with particular babysitters, or sending my kids to the Y, gone. Everything was gone. And I began to cry my eyes out.

I jumped up from this couch, and I ran into my room, because I knew I was getting ready to have a meltdown, and then this is what my mother finds: (*Cindy Huntley speaking*.) I'm in the shower, and all of a sudden, I hear this sound. I get out of the shower, and I realize that it's my son wailing again. This is only the second time I've heard this in my whole life. I hurry into his room only to find him laying on the floor, on his stomach, rigid, just wailing and wailing. And again, I hear, "Nobody is going to believe what You have done for me. Nobody will ever believe what You have done for me. I have to spend the rest of my life telling people, because it is a miracle. Everybody told me there is no way this could happen. You told me it would, God, and You did it."

(*Michael speaking from the couch in his parent's house*.) I couldn't believe my eyes. Even though God had told me, all this time, He would deliver me, this was the most amazing evidence of God I had ever seen in my life. God supernaturally removed it. You say, "Well, Mike, how do you it wasn't there?" The first person I called said, "Mike, how do you know they weren't in the papers to begin with," and I said, "Todd, I have every single copy of the Divorce papers since Day One. I can show you all of this stuff in it," but God would cover even those tracks.

(*Speaking about his ex-wife's side*.) Days later, from the shock, if you can imagine, when they had spent all that money to get this Divorce paper, and everything they had fought for is gone, everything they had lied about and put in the Agreement is gone . . . can you imagine what they felt? So, they had to file a "Motion For Clarification" – (*Showing a copy of the MOTION FOR CLARIFICATION OF FINAL JUDGMENT and PARENTING PLAN*.) – I'm going to make it scroll down the screen right now, so you can see where it

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shows "This was in the Proposed Final Judgment, it was missing or removed from the Final." (*Showing the Motion For Clarification sections e. through h., and j. through m., and n. through o.*) Take a look. You'll see. All of these things were in the Proposed Final Judgment, and now they have been removed, miraculously.

Keep in mind, I never told anybody what the things were that needed to be removed. I made mention of four things to the Magistrate, and said, "This is in there, this is in there, this is in there," but he replied, "Can't help you. You need to get somebody else to help you." Remember? So, I was denied all of that. There were over 15 things that were removed.

Who would have known what to take out? It was done by a Judge who didn't do the Final Judgment. Are you following me on this? This is where it gets amazing, okay. God miraculously removed . . . and you're going, "Oh, Mike come on, I don't want to hear this." Listen, the story is not done yet. Don't doubt, O ye of little faith. As doubting Thomas says to Jesus Christ, "Unless I touch with my hands, I do not believe. Unless I see Him with my eyes, I do not believe." And Jesus says, "O ye of little faith. Come put your hand right here in My side."

So, that day I went for a run, and I was so excited, I was sitting down with my papers on the back porch, sitting right there (*Pointing to a different space*), and I said, "God, there is something awesome about the date, Lord. Help me know." I'm sorry I'm so emotional about this, but this was the most amazing thing. I said, "God, I know that You're telling me something is unique about the timing of this, the date. What is it? I know there is something about these dates. Lord, help me understand. What is it?" I'm sitting there, and all of a sudden, God says, "Count the days." And I'm like, "Count what days?" All of a sudden, I realize that God is telling me to count the number of days between the date that my ex-wife filed for divorce, which was July 30th of 2010, and the date that I received my Divorce papers on September 15th, 2012. It is 777 days, and I just cried my eyes out.

I'm like, "God, Thank You, Lord. You did everything You said. You validated me. God, nobody is ever going to believe this. This is incredible." Do the math yourself. July 30th of 2010 to September 15th of 2012 (*Showing a picture of the "Certificate Of Divorce" envelope that arrived in the mail on 9/15/2012, and the Divorce was filed on 7/30/2010 – "777" days – Praise God!*) is seven-hundred-and-seven days.

Do you remember hearing me say, "God, there's another "777."? On the way home from Court, God would show me "777" sixteen times in one day. So, you can now see, God was setting this whole thing up to show me He was going to deliver me. It gets better.

I am wiped out. I am absolutely just blown away by what my God has done for me, and I get on my knees that night, and I'm praying, "Lord" . . . I'm right next to my bed . . . and I'm thanking Him. I said, "God, thank You for September 11th. Thank You for ending it on September 11th, 9/11. "He who dwells in the shelter of the most-high God will rest in the shadow of His wings." Psalm 91:1." And then I said, "God, thank You for the "777." Thank You for doing this in 777 days, God, to validate all of the numbers, to validate all Your work." And while I'm on my knees, God says, "Read page 777 in your Bible." And I said, "God, I would've already read page 777. I would've already read it, Lord, when You showed me the number all those times. I would have gone and read that."

But I literally said, "Okay, Lord, nevertheless, You told me to do it, I'm gonna to do it." I opened up page 777 in my Bible, and immediately, when I looked, I said, "God, I now know why I wouldn't have read page 777, because it's not even Scriptures. It's the Introduction to the Psalms." (*Opening his Bible to the Scripture reference.*) And I'm going to show you this on the screen. I read these words, and I knew the God of the universe had delivered me, and had done it in such an amazing way that the promise that He

had said to me, 18 months earlier, "Michael, if you will trust Me, I will deliver you, and I will do this in a way that is highly unusual that will bring Me much glory."

Listen to these words . . . "Oh, God, help me read these words, Lord. Thank You, Father." The second paragraph says, "Because God is the Great King, He is the ultimate Executor of justice among men (to avenge oneself is an act of the "proud.") God is the court of appeal when persons are threatened or wronged – especially when no earthly court that He has established has jurisdiction (as in the case of international conflicts) or is able to judge (as when one is wronged by public slander) or is willing to act (out of fear or corruption). He is the mighty and faithful Defender of the defenseless and the wronged. He knows every deed and the secrets of every heart. There is no escaping His scrutiny. No false testimony will mislead Him in judgment. And He hears the pleas brought to Him. As the good and faithful Judge, He delivers those who are oppressed or wrongfully attacked and redresses the wrongs committed against them. This is the unwavering conviction that accounts for the psalmists' impatient complaints when they boldly, yet as "poor and needy," cry to Him, "Why have You not yet delivered me?" "How long, O Lord, before You act?"

Can you imagine what I felt in that moment, my friend, when I realize that this whole thing, where I had played the fool and believed these numbers, and believed that God was on my side, and believed this speaking was through the Holy Spirit, and the confirmation that God would deliver me, that He would do this without an attorney, that I could forgive my ex-wife, that I could not have to defend myself, that I could have no resources to help myself, and that God, Himself, would deliver me, and that I could trust Him . . . can you imagine how I felt? Can you imagine what this has done to my faith?

Now do you see why God has asked me to tell this story? Because this is not a Mike Chriswell story. This is a child of God story. This is a story about you, and about your heavenly Father, and about the enemy of your soul who wishes to steal, to kill and destroy. This is about you understanding that there is a devil who wants to wipe you off the face of the earth, who wants to destroy your family. This is about a devil who is behind a whole lot more things going on in your life, in your marriage, in your business, in your relationships, and in your finances than what you may be willing to understand, at this point. It's about a God who is mighty and who is faithful.

He wants to be more involved in your life, but He is a gentleman, and He will not force His way in there. He wants you to take Him more seriously. He wants you to believe Him in a deeper way. He wants you to seek Him in a bigger way. He wants you to trust Him more than you've ever trusted Him in your entire life. Now, here's the most exciting thing . . . and I just thank you so much for watching this. I get so emotional every time I tell this story. You would too, if you'd had this experience. God is so good!! God is so good, He's so amazing.

What could He do in your life, if you trusted Him with everything you had? What could He do in your family? What could He do with your children? What could He do with your business? What could He do in your heart, if you trusted Him with everything you had?

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6.

(Sitting in front of the computer monitor – present day.) Seven years later, all I can say, when I see this story again, is "Wow! Wow! Wow! Is the Holy God of the Holy Bible, the great God, Almighty, the Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ . . . is He not unbelievably amazing? Is it not He who chooses the appointed time? Is it not He who is sovereign over all men, over all times, over all circumstances? Is it not He who tells the beginning from the end? Is it not He who can tell the future in advance and bring those things which are not into the reality in which they are? Our God is an awesome God.

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I have learned so much more about what Father has done in this story, and I've learned so much more about our Father in heaven, the God of the Bible, over the last seven years since this story happened. But I want to tell you two quick things: I was so amazed with what God had done on my behalf, bringing Him my weakness, and simply obedience and trust, and I couldn't see that this story would be trapped inside of a video file on a hard drive somewhere. So I took the time to assemble all of the pictures, the "666's," and the "555's," and the "777's," and the picture out of my Bible, and the amazing picture of that "777" day Divorce Certificate, and I blew them up into a collage of gigantic . . . like a 3 foot by 4 foot collage . . . that I have here on my wall in the house, so that no matter what I was going to go through in the future (*Showing a picture of the collage on his wall.*), no matter what difficulties and darkness's I faced, I've created an altar in remembrance of all of God's amazing faithfulness to me in my life.

"The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, And His sovereignty rules over all. Dominion and awe belong to God; He establishes order in the heights of heaven. "I choose the appointed time . . . Surely, as I have planned, so it will be, and as I have purposed, so it will stand." Psalm 103:19, Job 25:2, Psalm 75:2, Isaiah 14:24."

I've looked upon it many times in prayer, simply walking past it, and thanking God and bursting into praise, for the gratitude of remembering all of the wonderful things God has done in my life. It's also served as an opportunity for me to tell other people who want to hear about my story in a quick way, and see it with their own eyes. There's something so powerful about seeing this with your own eyes.

But I want to tell you one other amazing insight that God gave me about this story. Two years later, when I'm deep in the study of the teachings of Jesus Christ, I come upon John 14:12 through 14. This is where Jesus Christ taught that if those, like me, who had faith in Him would do what He has been doing, we would do even greater things than Him, because He is leaving and going to the Father. He said, "I will do whatever you ask, in My name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father."

Now, do you remember God telling me in advance, "If you will trust Me, I will do this in a highly unusual way that will bring Me much glory."? This is what Jesus's first top priority was; "Bringing glory to Your name, God," He says, and God says, "I have brought glory to My name, and I will do it again." I became a little discouraged really trying to understand what Jesus meant by . . . is it really possible that people would do greater things than what Jesus did? I mean, I had never walked on water. I had never fed 20,000 people with a sack lunch before. And while I was praying that one day, I really had a deep sorrow and a lament in my heart, and I said, "Father, I've never done anything as great as Jesus. I've certainly never done anything greater than Jesus."

Then, all of a sudden, it's like God said to me, "Michael, what about the "777"-day divorce?," and in that moment, God somehow or another gave me this insight by essentially asking me this question: "What do you think is more difficult, for Me to raise somebody from the dead in the blink of the eye, or for Me to arrange thousands of details over two years to have the result be a "777"-day divorce, which I had told you about in advance?"

As I began to meditate on this, I began to realize the staggering power of God's sovereign hand to be sovereign over all circumstances and all people in all situations and all times in life. I began to realize that in order for God to tell me in advance that He was going to end my divorce on the 777th day, God had to look through the future and anticipate and know and see, by His omniscience, the thousands of details involved in hitting a "777"-day divorce. Think about my schedule. Think about the times that I couldn't make Court. Think about my ex-wife's schedule. Think about her two different attorneys that she changed, their schedules. Think about the fact that God had to anticipate in advance that our Divorce Judge was going to retire in the middle of our trial.

Think about the Court day closings, weather closings, national emergencies, holidays, the thousands of details over two years that God had to orchestrate, and it's like God was asking me, "Michael, do you not see that that is much greater than raising someone from the dead," and it was like I shrunk, and I said, "Yes, God, I see it." But then I said to Him, "But Father, I didn't do this. It says I will do greater things than Jesus," and I said, "Lord, I didn't do this." And it's like God said to me, "Read Verse 13." Verse 13 says, "I will do whatever you ask in My name."

So, look at what happens. Jesus says that those who will believe in Him will do even greater things than Him, right, but then He says, it's not really you doing it. You are participating by your faith, but God is saying, through Christ, "I will do whatever you ask in My name." Do you know what I had asked in the name of Jesus Christ? Behind the scenes, my prayer had always been, "God, my Father, please give me a story that brings You glory, God. Please, God, bring me a story that brings You glory, God. Please, God, bring glory to Your name. Let my life have evidence that You are the real God."

I prayed for this, over and over and over again, and here God was telling me some two years later: "I will do whatever you ask in My name, that I may bring glory to My Father in heaven." Our God is indescribable. Never let anybody cause you to doubt. If you want to know this God, do what I said in the passage earlier where I said to you, "John 7:17, when Jesus makes a promise, if you want to know, go do His will. Go learn the teachings of Christ. Bow yourself in deep humility before this God. Be sure of what you hope for and certain of what you cannot see."

The Bible says in Hebrews 11:6 that without faith, it is impossible to please God. That means you have to go to Him even though you can't see Him. Begin to put His teachings into practice, and the God of the universe, the One true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Israel, the Father of the Lord, Jesus Christ, my Father, can become your Father. And He can use your life, and do whatever you ask in His name, to bring glory to the Father.

I hope you've been blessed. May the Lord, Jesus Christ, bless you and keep you, and may He help you to know Him more and more, as you continue to seek Him in faithful obedience. I'll leave this recording by simply saying, "WOW! Our God is an awesome God." I'll see you on the next video.



GOD'S MYSTERIOUS AND PAINFUL REVERSALS – TRUSTING GOD IN CRISIS – PART 7

If you've been following along with the story in the "Walking With God Through Crisis" series, I've just finished telling the astonishing story of my miraculous "777"-day divorce which occurred back in 2012. To this day, it stands as one of the most miraculous and difficult miracles that I have ever seen God do. The power of God was clearly displayed in His ability to show me the numbers "777" over 100 times throughout the divorce, warning me with the number "666" over 150 times, with each new attack, and then being able to arrange over two-years-worth of personal and Court schedules in order to hit the "777"-day mark. That showed me that He is the sovereign God who says, "I choose the appointed time. Dominion and all belong to Me."

There is another part of this story, however, which I have never told publicly until now. My friends do not know it, my parents do not know it. In fact, my own wife, Persis, didn't know this part of the story until just three days ago. There is only one person that I ever trusted enough to tell it. His name is Bobby Junkin, one of my dearest friends to this day, who you will hear more about later in my story, if you are following along in my autobiography, called "Astonishing Grace To The Chief Of All Fools."

There were several reasons I didn't share this story with others, but primarily, I didn't want anyone who was weak in faith to have their faith in God injured. I'm going to let you hear that story in an audio journal recording, which I made five years ago, when it actually happened. But first, let me show you some

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Biblical and personal examples of God's painful reversals, and then share a few insights, so you can be encouraged if you have experienced one before, or when you do so in the future.

Examples of God's Reversals:

- God blesses Adam and gives a great wife and helper to him, but then she leads him to his death. Not to mention, she led all of us to our death. Genesis 3:1, Romans 5:12, 1 Timothy 2:14, 2 Corinthians 11:3.
- God blessed Adam and Eve with a second son, Abel, but then God allows Cain to murder Able. Genesis 4:8.
- God delivered Joseph from the hands of his brothers who wanted to kill him, and then blessed him to be in charge of Potiphar's house, but then God lets him be falsely accused and thrown into prison. Genesis, Chapters 37 through 39.
- God has mercy on Lot and his family, as he escapes fire and judgment in Sodom with his wife, but then she is immediately turned into a pillar of salt. Genesis 19:26.
- Elijah was given glorious power from God and victory against 450 prophets of Baal, bringing fire from the sky, but then he feels so powerless that he runs from a single woman who wants to kill him. 1 Kings 19:3.
- God gives Samson his dream wife, but then God allows her to be murdered. Judges, Chapters 14 and 15.
- God blesses Job's entire life, but then allows Satan to strip him of all those blessings. Job, Chapters 1 and 2.
- The Apostle John, the one whom the Bible points out was the one whom Jesus loved, ended up in prison, in exile, all alone on the Isle of Patmos. The Book of Revelation.
- John Bunyan was freed after six years in prison for teaching out of the Bible, but then was soon after thrown back in jail for another six years
- God told Madame Guyon to go to Geneva, that she would be used to bring many spiritual children to Him, but then she gets thrown into a dungeon for seven years, falsely accused by one of her mentors, and is poisoned, which leaves irreversible damage.

Here are a few personal examples of God's reversals in my own life:

- In 2001, the Lord blessed me with \$70,000-worth of financial miracles at the last minute, to open the Lord's Gym, and then He let it collapse in total disaster, nine months to the day later.
- God blessed me with five adorable children who loved me dearly, and then allowed them to be taken from my life, and allowed four of the five to be turned against me.
- God blessed me with parents to help me after the divorce, but then He allowed my mom to turn against me after only a few weeks, and she then persecuted me for several years.
- God blessed me with a wonderful opportunity to lead a Catholic man to the Lord, and into freedom from his decades of sexual addiction and into a wonderful friendship with myself, only to then sever the friendship and allow him to go right back to the Catholic church and worldliness.
- God brought my blood father back into my life in a seemingly impossible chance meeting, got him to go to church with me, finally receiving Christ, and then He allowed the relationship to break again, permanently.
- God told me to put my story up on the internet, and then He allowed it to be taken right back down, shortly thereafter, by a false accusation and legal threats, which caused me to lose my Vimeo account forever, and my YouTube account for six months.
- God blessed me with life to the full in Jesus Christ, anointed me for work, gave me a very fruitful ministry, and then in 2018, took it all away from me.
- Most recently, God led me to believe Persis and I were going to live in Austin, Texas, in our newly built tiny house, but then suddenly called a halt, and left us directionless.

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As mysterious and strange as many of God's miracles are, often more mysterious are His reversals, where He undoes what He previously did, or when He gives a good gift only to allow it to turn bad. Perhaps it's a much-needed job, a loving spouse, a healed medical condition, a much-desired baby, or an unanswered prayer to a spiritual need, and then suddenly, God allows it to be reversed, or the once-delightful gift to turn sour.

This experience can be so perplexing and so painful to Christians that if not properly understood, it can cause a person to fall from their faith in God. Hebrews 11:6 tells us that without faith it is impossible to please God, but what really is faith, and how does God see faith verses how we see faith? It is easy to have faith and love God in the face of an answered prayer. But what about when there is no answer, or worse, when He answers but then reverses it and lets it go bad? I think most of us would agree that it is easier to endure the pain of an unanswered prayer than to endure the pain of an answered prayer which was then reversed. Having no baby is much better than a miscarriage or having a stillborn.

God's reversals require a much higher kind of faith. Little faith believes God only when prayers are answered, but perfect faith trusts God even when there is no visible good, or the good has been taken away. Habakkuk 3:17 through 18 describes a faith that has no good thing as its reward except the God who is the object of that faith. It is a passage of Scripture that describes what faith looks like when it has been perfected. This is how God defines perfected faith: "Though the fig tree does not bud, and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will be joyful in God, my Savior." This is the kind of faith which God wants all of us, who are following Christ, to have.

Yet, this is a kind of faith that is exceptionally rare. So very few will ever achieve this kind of faith. But it is what we should all be trusting Him for, because He is the only one who can give it to us. Today, when I read that Jesus Christ is the author and perfecter of our faith, in Hebrews, Chapter 12, I see it differently than I used to. I used to see it that Christ was my example of perfect faith. But now I see clearly that He is the one who is actually doing the work in me to perfect my faith.

2 Thessalonians 3:5 – "May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance."

Philippians 1:6 – "Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion."

1 Corinthians 1:8 – "He will keep you strong to the end so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord, Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 3:16 through 17, and Verse 20 – "I pray that out of His glorious riches, He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. Now, to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us."

Beyond developing our faith, God has many other good reasons behind His mysterious reversals. In many of my reversals, I can see clearly how God was protecting me from the terrible pride that might have resulted after the blessing was mine. Perhaps I might have begun looking down on others who didn't have quite as much favor in their life as me. The primary reason God allows these reversals is to discipline us and to teach us obedience through what we suffer. We are not above our Master. Hebrews 5:8. Although He, Jesus, was a Son, He learned obedience from what He suffered.

God can only permanently save the lowly and the humble, so I thank Him for doing whatever it takes to keep my hellish pride down, that I may be saved. Let us remember how much God tried to warn the Israelites about this very thing. Deuteronomy 8:12 through 14, and 17 and 18. "Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large, and your silver and gold increase, and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud, and you will forget the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me," but remember the Lord, your God. For it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth and so confirms His covenant, which He swore to your forefathers as it is today."

Many of us cannot even see the deep down subconscious pride inside of us that is so quick to conclude "My diligence and my self-control and my prayers and my Bible reading and my obedience and my faithfulness have produced this spiritual wealth, or this blessing, or this deliverance, for me."

Verse 18 – "But remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability."

Psalms 62:7 NLT – "My victory and honor come from God alone."

The question may be asked, "Do I understand all of the reversals I've seen in my life, or in the lives of others?" The answer is, "No," but I am not to walk with God by my own understanding. And what has been the result, the fruit, of all of these reversals in my life? I love and desire Him alone. Not His gifts. I have no preference for anything but His will. I trust Him implicitly, and long for His final and coming redemption. I no longer have little faith, which depends on good answers to my prayers that stick, but a perfect faith which exclaims like Job, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. May the name of the Lord be praised." In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrong-doing. Job 1:21 through 22.

It takes God a great deal of disciplining to get us to this kind of perfect faith, a faith where like George Muller, Madame Guyon, or Hudson Taylor can all have children die, and not even shed a tear. Not because they didn't love their children as much, perhaps, as you do yours, but because they trusted their God so implicitly.

The greatest reversal in human history. Let's talk about the greatest of all reversals in human history, the reversals which Jesus Christ experienced in His life. Jesus comes to us as the much-anticipated Savior, born by the miraculous wonder-working power of God, who is then subsequently slaughtered by that same sovereign power at work through the hearts of evil men. What a reversal.

God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit, and publicly honored Him and glorified Him, even speaking from a cloud so that all can hear that this is His Son whom He loves and with Him, He is well pleased. But then, directly thereafter, God sends this Son, whom He is so proud of, into a dreadful wilderness to be ruthlessly tested and tempted by Satan for 40 brutal days.

Another example of a sharp reversal in Jesus's life comes to us from the Book of Luke. In Luke 4:22 it says, "All spoke well of Him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from His lips." This was wonderful proof of God's call and God's blessing on His life. Imagine how Jesus felt in those early moments of His ministry, to be received like this, but then imagine how He felt just six verses later when there came a total reversal of that blessing. Luke 4:28 through 30 – "All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove Him out of the town, and took Him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw Him down the cliff."

In such a short time, Jesus went from receiving great respect from the people to being seen as a criminal worthy of death. Imagine how Christ felt. He was going to learn obedience through these reversals and through this suffering. Another example of a reversal in our Lord's life can be seen when thousands begin following Jesus from the blessings that flowed from God through His life and mouth. God was going to be pleased to reverse those results, as well, such that even His own disciples would eventually ask, "Lord, will only a few be saved?" Luke 13:23.

More poignantly, John 6:66 – "From this time, many of His disciples turned back and no longer followed Him. "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the twelve. Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that You are the Holy One of God." The most blessed, the most loving, the most righteous, the most powerful life that has ever lived, and God was even going to reverse that, by crushing Him to death. Isaiah 53:10. Acts 2:23 through 24. Revelation 13:8.

If Jesus Christ was required to learn obedience by what He suffered, Hebrews 5:8, if Jesus was required to be obedient unto death, Philippians 2:8, who can then turn and call Him "Master," and yet say or think he or she is above His Master? Let us, by faith, embrace God's temporary reversals in this life, and put all our hope in the final and greatest reversal of all, the great reversal of the corrupted creation.

The day is coming when God will reverse completely our having been cut off from Him by our sin. We know and see now in part, but then we shall see and know and be known fully. God will reverse death through resurrection, and God will reverse wickedness through justice.

God will also reverse all of the seemingly unanswered prayers, the streams of tears, the seasons of darkness, all the evil which we currently see all around us. These things are coming, but we can see clearly in passages, like 2 Thessalonians 1:7, John 18:1 through 8, 1 Peter 1:13, and Romans 8:18 that these will come primarily in the life to come, not in this life.

This glorious reversal was prophesied to come to us, just like Jesus was prophesied to come to us. Jesus, indeed, came. And so will it. Let us now wait for it in perfect faith. Here is the climax of that great and glorious reversal, which is coming as it is prophesied in Revelation 21:3 through 7 – "And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and He will live with them. They will be His people, and God, Himself, will be with them and be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who is seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new." Then, He said, "write this down for these words are trustworthy and true." He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty, I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. He who overcomes will inherit all of this, and I will be his God, and he will be My son."

Wow! In the meantime, we can know by faith that our momentary light afflictions from all of these reversals and other sufferings in our lives are producing for us an eternal weight of glory. 2 Corinthians 4:7.

Conclusion. One of the greatest tests of our faith can be when God gives us something good, and then He turns around and allows the devil to take it right back from us. Such was the case with Job. The argument was made in hell that if God withdrew His blessings from Job's life, that he would curse God, and that the only reason he worshipped God was that God had blessed his life in the natural. Job is not the only one God has been pleased to allow to experience this test. I, too, have been tested multiple times, and after many years of having my faith tried, I can say with Job, the Lord has given, and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. To me, miraculous answers to prayer, or God's amazing providence, are meant to be evidence that God CAN, not that He always will,

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The miraculous work that I saw with my own eyes, where God removed all the unjust add-ons in my divorce with my ex-wife and her attorney is enough evidence for me that He is the one true God, and that He can do anything that pleases Him. I am satisfied to know that my God can do a miracle. Not that He always will. Or that everything He does in this life will remain forever. It is through God's mysterious and painful reversals that we can discover, by learning to walk in the greatest faith, the greatest object of our faith: Not God's blessings, but God, Himself. This is the true faith of our Lord, Jesus Christ, who for the joy set before Him, endured the unthinkable, and the greatest shame of all, the cross upon which He was crucified.

It took years for the Lord, Jesus Christ, Himself, to be perfected as a Son through obedience. And likewise, it takes God many years to work this kind of faith into the heart of one of His servants. This, indeed, calls for patient endurance on the part of the Saints. All who would wish to have a faith like this must prepare to settle in for the long haul, to endure through many difficulties, many years of long suffering, many seasons of total darkness, and perhaps more than their fair share of God's reversals. But for those of us who persevere, keeping our eyes on Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our perfect faith in God, there becomes an everlasting reality of God's peace, rest and goodness, written upon the heart, which no outside circumstances, storms or devils can take away.

Now, let me share with you the journal recording of where, through one of God's most shocking reversals in my life, I was first led by God's grace into this perfect faith, and what a glorious treat it was when I sat down today, February 14th, 2019, to tell this part of my story, that when I found this journal recording, I discovered that it was recorded on February 14th, 2014. Five years ago, to this very day. May God bless you, as you listen.

(Journal recording from Michael's phone.) It was 5:11 in the morning when I hit "Record" on this phone, but I just finished . . . I just sat down, and I opened up the Final Judgment, the Amended Final Judgment, and today is February 14th, 2014, of all days. It's Valentine's Day. I just witnessed with my own eyes a complete reversal of everything that I have been hoping for, and putting my time and efforts and prayer into, for God to have defended me. The whole "555," and "666," and "777" thing that God walked me through has been completely reversed, in every way imaginable.

I just received documents that now make it look like I owe about \$20,000 to my ex-wife, and I've got a \$125,000 income that has been impugned to me . . . everything you can think of. All of the things that were taken out, I am now responsible for 75% of all expenses. It's a major, major blow. No longer does she have to meet me halfway to pick up the kids . . . which she never did . . . but it was in the Agreement that she would do that. They took away the summertime visits in the good Agreement, the one where God had miraculously pulled the bad stuff out, and now, all that's back in.

So, now, she gets to pick them up. She gets to have Chelsey for her birthday, even though it's during my summertime visitation. It is a heavy-handed blow, and the thing I just wanted to capture so quickly is, I'm not in denial about the severity of it. It's ugly, a complete reversal. I mean, it means that my whole story is no longer my story. It means that everything I've put my hope in could be wrong. I mean, it literally means, did I mishear God? Did I . . . have I not heard from God on any of this? Were all of the "666's" and the "555's" and the divorce ending on the "777"th day after Him showing it to me over a hundred times . . . was that all just coincidence? Was that literally just nothing to do with God?

Well, the answer to that is, "No." Of course, it had to do with God. So, as I looked at these papers this morning, just before I looked at them, I said, "Father, I'm going to have the courage to look and see whatever is in it, and I'm going to trust You. I'm going to ask You to give me courage and protection." I read through them, and my heart sank a little bit, but I kind of knew that that was what was going to be

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in there, and I didn't get all upset. My stomach didn't get all turned on me, like it normally would. In fact, I just was forced to put my eyes back on the Lord, and say, "Lord, I don't understand this."

But I have this new awareness . . . and this is the most important thing I want to make a point of . . . I have this new awareness of just how much God is directing my steps. I can't prove it to anybody, obviously now . . . since everything I've been putting my stock in, and the evidence that God has been directing my steps has been based upon these numbers, and Him giving me this miraculous victory in Court . . . that's all been, essentially, a wash now. But I just know that I know that I know that God is still directing my steps. I would have to conclude that the things that are said of God in the Bible are not true. I would have to conclude that everything I've ever seen has been a complete lie. And I don't believe that.

This is a test to my faith. There is no doubt about it. And there will be some dark moments ahead, but I told the Father, as King Hezekiah said, "Lord, we don't know what to do, I don't know what to do, but my eyes are on You." And I'm going to sit down and do my Bible study this morning, and I'm going to seek to rebuild, re-establish my faith, by God's Word. I'm not going to quit. I'm not going to roll over. I'm just going to say, "Okay, Lord, this is pretty serious. This could have some really big implications for Michael Chriswell. Did I hear You wrong, or is this a test of my faith? Have I been hearing You wrong on not taking a job right now, in trusting You, or is this a test to my faith?" And I asked the Father to please help me.

I saw "777" last night on the way to dinner with my mom, and the last two days, the numbers have been so unbelievable, like about Laura, about perseverance, about faith, it's been really that God is going to do something awesome. That's what the numbers have been saying the last couple of days. That's just what the Scriptures He has been pointing me to are saying. As I went to grab my phone, and I said, "Lord, I'm going to need You to refresh my spirit," I picked up my phone, and it was "5:11." James 5:11 – "We consider blessed those who have persevered. We have heard of Job's perseverance, and what the Lord finally brought about."

So, it could be, when I look at what's going on in my life, and I compare it to the Bible, not to what men do . . . if I compare my situation to how men act and what men would do, then I'm doomed. And this is just a guy who's been completely delusional, and God is not the God that the Bible says He is, and I just need to be about saving myself right now. But when I look at who the Bible says God is, and I look at how He works with His children, this is exactly how He works. He often will allow a circumstance that will completely contradict everything that the person has been told.

"Oh, You're going to give me that land? Well, then why are all of those enemies in it? Oh, You're going to let me get out of here, let me get out of Laban's household safely? Then why is my brother on his way to destroy me? Oh, You're going to give me a promise of a multitude of nations? Why are You asking me to kill my son? Oh, You're going to take me into the promised land? Why are these people going crazy on me, and You're not providing food and water for them?" I mean, there are just so many stories of faith being contradicted.

I just taught in Bible class last week, Elijah. He goes to the woman and says . . . I mean, I'm going to go read this story again this morning. This is a wonderful . . . he goes to this woman's house. The woman has been told, by the Lord, to provide for this man. She has no food. He gets there. She's making a bowl of stew out of sticks for herself and her son, so they can die. Basically, Elijah says, "Look, God is going to provide for our food. The flour, the oil and the water will never run out while there is no rain on the land."

And sure enough, they begin to eat of the miracle provisions, but her son dies. So, this is his circumstance that is gigantic. It's terrifying, it's horrible, and it completely flies in the face of the idea that God is with

them and providing for them. And I knew that that was a test of faith for Elijah. As you read further into the story, you realize that Elijah is going to have a gigantic test of his faith, to face the prophets of Baal. One guy against 450? So, that child dying, I truly believe, was more of a test for Elijah's faith than it was for the mom's.

And you can see that it was a circumstance that completely contradicted. So, if I was not able to see this kind of pattern and this principle in testing of faith in play in the lives of so many of the Saints in the Bible, then I would say, "I'm in trouble, and I've misheard from God, and I need to pay that. I'm doomed myself here." But that's not what I see in the Bible. So, God either is who He says He is, in this moment, and He is very well aware of everything that has happened, and He is directing my steps and allowing my faith to be tested. Or He's nothing, and He's not worth following, He's not worth serving, He's not the God that the Bible made Him out to be. That's just . . . there are no if's, and's, or but's about it.

I'm not saying that God has to give me justice on this earth. I know that ultimate justice comes in heaven, and that's where I really want justice, because that's where it lasts forever. This is just temporary. But you would like to have some evidence on earth that God is good, and that God is for His children and those who are wronged. That's why my heart is so much for this, because I feel that it brings God so much glory, when He does these kinds of things on earth.

This has been a huge blow, but I'm so thankful for the peace that's in my heart. It's only explainable by God. I have peace, and I even prayed and said, "Lord, I forgive her attorney again. I have compassion. Lord, you have given me the desire to want to do good to her, and this does do good to her. This has taken on . . . you know, cutting flesh off of me and giving it to her, and I am okay with that, but the Lord is going to have to provide." So, now it comes down to, what will the Lord ask me to do next, as I wait upon Him in this? And I'm amazed at how much faith I still have in my Father, in spite of the fact that everything I've been hoping for has just been reversed.

Some people would say, "Michael, it's time to come back to reality. It's time to come back to reality and quit leaning on this idea that God is just going to take care of your every little problem." And that's not what I've done. I've simply followed and been obedient to what I believe the Lord has told me to do, which has caused me to have some rather uncomfortable circumstances. But I believe God. And I'm going to persevere. And I do believe, 100%, that God communicates to me through numbers, by showing me Scriptures. I believe every instance of "666" is irrefutable. It is not a coincidence that over 150 times, God would 100% nail it, telling me in advance, before a bad document came.

I look back, and I say, "Lord, how come You didn't tell me this time of something like this? The last couple of times, there hasn't been one." And I'm going to tell you the reason for this is because there's not a need. I don't get knocked off my horse anymore, like I used to. I now have this relationship with the Lord that so goes beyond my circumstances. It's not something I could've ever even understood before. This is a level of faith in God that so far rises . . . it's like, "Okay, God, I'm Yours. Do whatever You want with me." That's the way I feel, in this moment. If you truly believe that God is who He says He is, and that He bought us with the price of Jesus Christ on that cross, how are we to have any say in our own life?

Unless a man gives up everything, he cannot be My disciple . . . I mean, all of the disciples were grievously wronged. Jesus was grievously wronged. Yet, everything was made good for them in the end. They didn't receive their promises in this life, or their vindication, or their justice. They got great rewards in heaven. And I believe that I'm going to be rewarded for this, and I believe that God will provide for me, so that I can fulfill these financial and legal obligations. I believe He is providing for me in spirit already. The peace, it's unbelievable. What a gift, Father. I thank You. God, I thank You.

I mean, I above all things am so thankful that I can take a blow like this, and still think “even though He slay me, yet will I praise my God.” Oh, my God, how I love Him, I praise Him. I thank Him so much, and it’s like, “how can I possibly feel this way, in spite of the fact that everything I had put my hope in just got blown away.” Yet, even as I say that, the answer comes to me: “We are never supposed to put our hope in good circumstances, or even in a good verdict, or even in something God will do. My hope is not in my circumstances. My hope is in my God.”

As I stand here, early in the morning, and I see this amazing, amazing moon that burns almost like a yellow outside right now . . . it’s just incredible . . . I think to myself, “The God who is keeping that moon hung in the sky is the God who is directing my steps, and I will trust Him. And I love Him so much, and I’m so thankful for what He has done in my heart. I will trust Him to provide the things that I need, externally, to fulfill the walk that He has called me to walk. I’m going to James 5:11 – I’m going to persevere, with God’s help.

May the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ, be praised for what He has done. I still have a “777”-day divorce, and in many ways, it still stands as a miracle of God’s amazing grace. But on this five-year anniversary of its reversal, I have seen a much bigger and much more complex miracle than this one. I have seen a heart which has relentlessly held to its belief that God is, indeed, good; despite many years of suffering and circumstances, which have all screamed back at me that He is not. The love and faith I feel for my heavenly Father today that permit me to say, like Job, “The Lord has given, and the Lord has taken away,” that is now the biggest miracle I have ever seen.