

## Chapter 10 The Oscar Goes to . . .

Then those who feared the Lord talked with each other, and the Lord listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the Lord and honored his name.

— MALACHI 3:16, NIV

Dear Remnant,

If the world is worshipping you and you're enjoying it, then somewhere along the way, Jesus left the room.

"I just got 'big-timed' by him."

Those were the words I heard a pastor friend of mine say who is leading a powerful youth movement in California. He was saying it in reference to how a guest speaker had treated him. The guest speaker came to speak at one of my friend's youth conferences, and during his time there, he made outlandish demands and acted as if he was a celebrity.

My heart grieved for my friend, but I knew exactly what he meant when he said he had been "big-timed." I have, over the years, had to do a gut check on myself as an evangelist who has traveled over 2 million miles. It is easy to begin to believe that you are the greatest voice out there. And in a culture that is celebrity-driven, we all battle with a deep desire to be seen and heard.

But this is not God's plan for any of us. My friend and mentor, pastor Glen Berteau, who at one time worked at the largest evangelistic ministry of the day and watched the moral failure of its leader, once said to me, "God did not call us to drink the oil but rather wear the oil. The oil, if consumed, will make you fat and poison you." I have never forgotten those profound words.

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*The remnant says yes to the cross and no to the applause, yes to the altar and no to arrogance, yes to the covenant and no to worldly concepts.*

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Every generation is looking for a hero. Someone who can lead them to the promised land and show them the way to a better life. And the church is not absent in this endeavor. It seems every few years, someone rises to the surface and becomes the face of the church to the populace. And this isn't necessarily a good thing.

Throughout history, God has raised up great leaders to be voices of a season for either a weary, disenchanted, or hungry church. I love studying the great voices of the past, such as Smith Wigglesworth, Jonathan Edwards, Aimee Simple McPherson, John and Charles Wesley, Charles Finney, D. L. Moody, William Booth, Charles Spurgeon, and others. Each one of these great remnant leaders not only had something to say, but they were also very human. Some lasted a long time and their legacy continues, and others didn't finish the race as a strong voice.

What makes God's Spirit so special is that He inhabits temples made of dirt.

### **Get Out of the Green Room**

When the Holy Spirit invades a room, He doesn't care about Christian stature and prominence. He doesn't look at name badges but rather heart cries. By the same turn,

when you look at the ministry of Jesus, you get a picture of the stark reality of ministry. Jesus was never in the green room, hobnobbing with the most popular preachers of the day. He was always in the streets rescuing people. He had no microphone. Most of the time, He was spending time with those who didn't give in an offering, pat Him on the back, or give Him props for His eloquence.

How did Jesus repay His followers? With pierced hands that couldn't hold a microphone. Jesus never walked the red carpet of premieres. In fact, the closest we get to a red carpet experience in our Christian history is the blood-soaked trails of the martyrs, and the only roped-off areas we see are the place the Christians were hung.

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*The remnant are private worshippers with a public voice who seek only the revelation of God's kingdom and not their own empire.*

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When we try to build our own empires and not the kingdom of God, we have to be willing to take responsibility when those empires crumble to the ground. We are on very dangerous ground when we begin to believe we produce the glory. Listen to what Jeremiah says:

“This is what the LORD says: “Don't let the wise boast in their wisdom, or the powerful boast in their power, or the rich boast in their riches. But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know me and understand that I am the Lord who demonstrates unfailing love and who brings justice and righteousness to the earth, and that I delight in these things. I, the Lord, have spoken!”

—JEREMIAH 9:23-24, NLT

God will never show up in a church service when He doesn't trust those who are ministering. History tells us that any time man gets bigger than God, he is destined for failure. Scripture tells us the same thing: “First pride, then the crash—the bigger the ego, the harder the fall” (Prov. 16:18). God cannot bless a man or ministry that refuses to bow before the one true God. The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Christians at Philippi, had to confront this issue of celebrity ministers:

It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. The latter do so out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice.

—PHILIPPIANS 1:15-18, NIV

We are accountable to the mantle, and I don't want to apologize to the next generation for not preparing the way. I must declare “Enough is enough” when it comes to the Hollywood elite of over-graced, perverse-talking, self-indulgent ministers. We must get back to the cross! The Apostle Paul would have probably sat these elitist minister of today down with the Epicureans at Mars Hill and said, “Your hedonism is choking my message! Now, be quiet and keep worshipping at the altar of the unknown God as we continue to fight the good fight.”

I cannot begin to tell you how many times I have heard people say of someone, “They fell!” This is the term we use when someone has morally fallen into sin, and my

heart has always broken for the wounded followers who are left behind to clean up the mess after a leader chooses flesh over purity. The tears that flow from faces of the spouses as they stand beside such a leader through the very public humiliation of moral failure can be heart wrenching. I wonder about the children who hear the words, “Daddy or Mommy messed up.”

How does this happen? What is the process? When or where does the character flaw begin to win?

### **The Beginning of Moral Failure**

Most of those I’ve met who walked through a moral failure started out with a true passion for changing the world for Christ but somewhere along the way lost their reasoning. As I always say, “We are all only minutes from a moral failure, but Jesus is only a whisper away from your intervention.”

I believe the devil allows some very flawed ministers to continue into great success without impediment because he knows when they fall, it will create a monstrous wave of pain. So he sits back and waits. But we must remember God will not be mocked (Gal. 6:7). Just as He didn’t allow David to go undiscovered in his sin (2 Sam. 11-12), He will not allow others to trample His grace without consequences. Just because we are able to garner thousands of followers on social media and take our pictures with the hottest young star of the day, that does not mean the kiss of God is on our ministries.

Remember the Laodicean church in the Book of Revelation? They thought they had it all together. But Jesus gave them a stern warning in Revelation 3:15-19:

“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent.”

Please understand that I am not casting stones. Rather, I am attempting to say to you, “Please be careful!” Every time another minister falls prey to the lies of the enemy, the world becomes increasingly numb to our message. As we have already learned, God is calling His church back to mourning and weeping. Mourning always produces a prophetic move of God.

If you study the last 100 years of the church, every couple of decades sees the rise of a new crop of celebrities. As their popularity grows, so does the demand to feed the “monster of ministry.” If these celebrity pastors are not careful, the sin of pride or self-indulgence takes over. This is usually driven by greed to maintain their status. Many times the preachers even begin to preach a watered-down version of the gospel that ends up sounding like a self-help seminar.

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*The remnant seeks to gain nothing but always has everything to give.*

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In 2013 a reality TV show called *Preachers of L.A.* made its debut. The show focused on the private and public lives of several men who lead lives of excess and luxury all in the name of Christian ministry. What these men are doing is a mockery of

the very call of God. For so long Hollywood has used the church and its leaders as for fodder for ridicule. The problem is multiplied when so-called ministers partner with Hollywood to back up what so many in the secular world believe about preachers.

I am reminded of a quote by Augustine of Hippo that has brought much clarity to my life. He said, “It was pride that changed angels into devils; it is humility that makes men as angels.” [ENDNOTE: [http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Augustine\\_of\\_Hippo](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Augustine_of_Hippo)] The Apostle Paul gave us clear instruction to how we are to represent Christ:

Remember, there is only one foundation, the one already laid: Jesus Christ. Take particular care in picking out your building materials. Eventually there is going to be an inspection. If you use cheap or inferior materials, you'll be found out. The inspection will be thorough and rigorous. You won't get by with a thing. If your work passes inspection, fine; if it doesn't, your part of the building will be torn out and started over. But you won't be torn out; you'll survive—but just barely. You realize, don't you, that you are the temple of God, and God himself is present in you? No one will get by with vandalizing God's temple, you can be sure of that. God's temple is sacred—and you, remember, are the temple. Don't fool yourself. Don't think that you can be wise merely by being up-to-date with the times. Be God's fool—that's the path to true wisdom. What the world calls smart, God calls stupid. It's written in Scripture, He exposes the chicanery of the chic.

—1 CORINTHIANS 3:11-19

I truly believe that God blesses his servants, but the *Preachers of L.A.* is the opposite of the remnant spirit. There are many amazing leaders in Los Angeles who are not flaunting their wealth instead of proclaiming Christ. My dear friends Jeremy and Christy Johnson lead a congregation called Fearless Church that is exploding with baby Christians who are want a real encounter with God. Their new church is transforming lives! And there is the L.A. Dream Center led by Pastors Matthew and Tommy Barnett. That ministry is rescuing and restoring lives in a supernatural way.

Do we honestly believe that God can turn a blind eye to the dysfunction and perverted representatives Hollywood as handpicked as to be the church's voice? I don't think so. They are living a very dangerous dream. “God cannot be mocked” (Gal. 6:7, NIV).

In our feeble attempts to handle the holy things of God, we must remember who is the author of life and not confuse our message with hedonism and self-gratification. The devil is liar. He will do everything he can to promote half-truths.

It reminds me of what John Michael Talbot told me one day. I asked him how he felt about worship music today. After all, he was one of the founders of modern contemporary Christian worship. He told me, “The problem with worship leaders today is that they no longer worship upward toward God but now worship outward toward the crowd.”

I have been guilty of this. Once, while I was speaking at a conference of several thousand teenagers, I had an awakening by the Holy Spirit. The worship band on stage was the top worship band in the nation. I was personally so excited to finally meet them. I listened to their music nearly every day on my iPod when I jogged. This group is very pure-hearted, and they usher in the presence of God like very few I have ever seen.

As they ministered on stage, I watched as the crowd worshipped with great intensity. After they ministered, the other guest speaker at the conference got up to speak.

I noticed that the crowd wasn't engaged at all. It was as if a large percentage were not even listening, but rather talking and even walking around. What happened to the crowd that was worshipping so intently with the band?

I was now dreading speaking the next day to this same crowd. Then the Lord spoke to my heart. He said, "They adore the band because they are rock stars to them. Son, if we are not careful, we will raise a Saul generation who loves worship more than Word because it soothes their demons."

Jesus said in John 4:24, "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth" (NIV). We must go deep in worship and Word. The next day, I shared those very words from the stage. I was shocked to see thousands of young people run to the altar under conviction. It wasn't my words that brought the crowd to the altar. It was the Holy Spirit moving on the hearts of the students.

The Holy Spirit doesn't need you or me to be a substitute teacher. He knows what He is doing. We are simply His mouthpiece and a clay vessel that He shines through. God didn't call us to be actors on stage! He called us to be real and walk in holiness. It doesn't say anything in the Bible that we must act like the world to win the world. On the contrary, the Bible warns of the wrath of God if we are not preaching truth. Romans 1:18 warns, "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them" (NIV).

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*The remnant is not a pulpiteer or public speaker, but rather a resuscitator of life to those who have lost breath.*

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Jennifer LeClaire, a minister and writer and the news editor for Charisma News, recently wrote this powerful indictment in her newsletter:

When preachers tour like rock stars, it's no wonder sinners flock to stadiums. Of course, preachers holding stadium-sized events packed out with lost souls is awesome—unless those preachers present a hyped-up, watered-down, seeker-friendly gospel that's giving the assurance of heaven while sending people to hell. I am convinced that too many people who claim to be Christ-followers are not really saved because too many false teachers and false prophets are propagating a "different gospel" centered on "another Jesus" (see 2 Cor. 11:3-4). I am convinced that many self-professing saints are going to sit right next to sinners in hell when it's all said and done—thanks, in part, to rock-star preachers presenting a hyped-up, watered-down, seeker-friendly gospel. [[ENDNOTE: Jennifer LeClaire, "When Rock-Star Preachers Spew a False Gospel," Jennifer LeClaire Ministries, May 4, 2013, <http://www.jenniferleclaire.org/articles/when-rock-star-preachers-spew-a-false-gospel>]]

Those are heavy and very truthful words, and I believe if we are not careful, we will try to seduce the Holy Spirit by our feeble attempts to rock-star the crowd.

One of the most humble men I have ever had the privilege of being around is Pastor Larry Stockstill. Pastor Larry is considered one of the leading voices in Christianity today. Yet for many years I have watched him lead with amazing authority and purity of heart. Years ago he invited me, his son Joel, and another leader to join him for a day of mentoring at the campus of Bethany World Prayer Center, where he served as pastor for several decades. During that time he shared with us what was then the unfinished manuscript of *The Remnant: Restoring the Call to Personal Integrity*. This

book was the tool God used to teach me the concept of remnant. It is a clarion call for leaders to walk free from the trappings of “success” by calling them back to the kind of transparency and integrity that used to mark the church. It asks a sobering question, When did the simple, pure gospel of the Savior become about “me,” “my,” and “mine”? It is a question that I too must ask.

### **Let Them See Your Scars**

God uses you and me to bring truth and freedom. But I am amazed at how, when we look upon a stage, we see the shimmering armor of modern-day knights. They never allow us to get close enough to see the scars they secured in battle!

I am so glad Jesus let the crowd get close to Him. Think about it—if He hadn’t, the woman with the issue of blood would never have been able to touch Him and be healed. Blind Bartimaeus never would have been healed. The man with the withered hand never would have gained a perfected limb. The ten lepers would have gone on being lepers. The woman with the alabaster jar never would have anointed his feet with perfume and tears.

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*The remnant doesn't need the stage but rather a place to call home to bring a weary guest.*

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The stage has the ability to make you forget the crowd in front of you. I can speak to this from experience. One day, I was praying and weeping before the Lord. On this particular day, my prayer closet had become a whiner’s den. I was complaining to God about difficulties I had faced over a period of time. It just didn’t feel that our ministry was going to another level.

The Lord spoke to me and said, “Pat, when did your ministry become yours? Son, do you remember when you promised me that your ministry would always belong to me?”

I said, “Lord, this ministry *is* yours. Please forgive me!”

He responded and said, “Pat, if they can see you, then they can’t see me. Just be a stagehand and lift the curtain for my glory. Then get out of the way. Allow me to always shine.”

This was one of those “come to Jesus” moments for me. It helped set me and my attitude—not to mention my ministry!—back on the right track. But what if I hadn’t found my way into the prayer closet? The results might have been unpleasantly different.

Look what the apostle Paul said concerning how we should act:

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation. Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky.

—PHILIPPIANS 2:12-15, NIV

If you want to be a star for God, then you have to shine with purity and truth. It isn’t about who you know, where you have ministered, or who endorses your ministry. It

is about leading the sheep—and being shepherds who smell like sheep. When we get to a place where we no longer like the sheep, we have lost our way and must be found.

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*The remnant does not walk in flattering circles but rather in the places where the unknown sojourner must be found.*

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When we rescue the hurting, we are reminded of our original calling. But when our honorariums or love offerings become an amount we demand in order to keep up our lifestyle, we lose our focus on the “least of these.”

The people Jesus considered the celebrities of His day were the children. When His handlers, the disciples, tried to keep them from Him, he got angry. He went so far as to declare to the disciples, “The kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (Matt. 19:14, NIV).

### **Get Back to the Cave**

It is in the cave that God can reshape our thinking and remold our hearts. There have been times where I have prayed that God would put me in His cave, because these are the times that He speaks the loudest and draws me back to my priorities.

I call it a cave because God used the cave many times to rescue and restore His leaders. He protected His people in caves in 1 Samuel 13:6: “When the Israelites saw that their situation was critical and that their army was hard pressed, they hid in caves and thickets, among the rocks, and in pits and cisterns” (NIV). It was in the cave experience that David began the process of building his army (1 Sam. 22:1). This is where Moses was hidden when God’s glory passed by and gave him the revelation to write the first five books of the Bible as (Exodus 33:22). It is in the cave that Elijah had God’s glory pass by in 1 Kings 19:11. This is where Elijah discerned that God was not in the wind, the earthquake or the fire, but in the whisper.

We, too, must get back to the cave. It is in the cave God speaks to his warriors.

My brother, Scott Schatzline, wrote an amazing book called *Hubs*. The book speaks of the importance of being in seasons of transition between each place God takes us. This book deeply touched me, because it is in those “hubs,” or “caves,” that God has transformed me, just like I shared in the example above about what happened when I went into my prayer closet.

My heart is that you will not end up a casualty of the self but a victor of the Kingdom of God. Guard the foundation God is putting under you. Learn the power of serving and being teachable. Make yourself accountable, and handle criticism as a guardian of the soul.

Your potential is great, but your flesh will always try to drink the oil instead of wear it. Go back to Genesis and rediscover what caused man to fall. It was the simple promise that they could know more than God.

The cry of the lost must be louder in our ears than cheer of the crowd. We will never win the world to Christ when we’re lost in the celebration of ourselves. The moment we realize we are remnant, we begin rising past our circumstances and personal desires. Your purpose then becomes other people’s freedom.

When the populace demands that Christians act like world and live like the world, God causes a remnant to rise up and stand for truth and not bow to culture. Remember the guideline put in place by the Apostle Paul when he wrote, “Follow me as I follow Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1, NIV).

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*The remnant will not be swayed by the wind of compromise, will not stare into the eyes of revenge, and will not seek the approval of the populace.*

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### **Take Care How You Dress Yourself**

Do you remember that story about the emperor's new clothes? It's about an emperor who wanted to wear the fanciest clothes money could buy. This desire so consumed him that he never focused on his kingdom. He never worried about protecting his people or paid attention to the advancement of intruders.

One day, two fakes came to the gates of the city. They declared they made the best clothes an emperor could wear. They were brought before the emperor, where they shared with him that they could make the most beautiful clothes that had ever been made—for a large sum of money and gold. Then they said the secret to their clothes was two things: 1) only the smartest people would be able to see the clothes, and 2) only those who rightfully belonged in their position would be able to see the clothes.

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*The remnant includes the apostle with worn-out garments, the smiling prophet, the transparent pastor, the weeping missionary, the teacher with tools in hand, and the servant evangelist.*

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The emperor begged these two men to make him their clothes. And so they acted as if they were. They asked for more and more money as they worked in secret at their imaginary loom. When the king sent advisors to see the clothes—which were actually invisible—the advisors bragged about them and declared, “Aren't they beautiful?” Of course, the advisors couldn't see the clothes because the clothes did not, in fact, exist, but in fear of not being seen as smart or not being able to keep their positions, they told the emperor the clothes were just amazing.

Finally, the emperor was invited to see the clothes. He, too, could see nothing. But as the two fakes acted as if they were putting the clothes on him—with everyone seeing how naked he was—the emperor dared not utter he couldn't see them. Doing so would mean admitting he wasn't smart and didn't belong in his position.

Naked, the emperor went before the people. The people knew the rules about the clothes, and so they cheered as if they could see them. But as the naked emperor led a parade for his new clothes, a little boy cried out, “But he is naked!”

The Emperor had bought into the lie that he was above the ability to be transparent—therefore, he ended up naked. There is so much we can learn from this metaphorical story. For instance, is it possible . . .

To be so self-indulgent that you refuse to realize when you're naked?

To have people around you who are so worried about position that they won't be honest with you?

To be so wrapped up in image that you ignore the kingdom?

To be so overwhelmed with self that your fear of failure never allows those around you to see the real you?

To be so self-absorbed that the enemy can deceive you into purchasing an identity that leaves you nude?

That in the midst of your parade, people could be singing your praises  
while children see the real you?

Every leader fears overexposure to the reality of how they're really dressed. Truthfully, I have prayed more than once, "Please, Lord, don't let them see the real me. The real me is tired, weary, and at times very carnal. Lord, please cover my nakedness. Clothe me, God, with righteousness!"

So often we get dressed for the world and forget to be clothed to meet the Savior. It is so easy to get drunk off our own vineyards that we end up like Noah, naked in front of our family (Gen. 9:20). Nakedness is always a metaphor for one's spiritual state, but God is looking to clothe us with His blessings: "Real help comes from God. Your blessing clothes your people." (Ps. 3:8)

We aren't meant to be adorned with self. Rather, God gives clear instructions as to how we ought to dress: "Then adorn yourself with glory and splendor, and clothe yourself in honor and majesty." (Job 40:10, NIV) We must be dressed as priests again!

God has prepared a new outfit for us that represents Him: "Always be clothed in white, and always anoint your head with oil." (Ecc. 9:8, NIV) The white represents the call to purity, innocence, and cleanliness. In other words, we are called to be clothed different than the world. It was when Adam and Eve sinned that God found it important to cover their nakedness. Genesis 3:21 states, "The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them." It was the Laodicean church that needed to be dressed: "Here's what I want you to do: Buy your gold from me, gold that's been through the refiner's fire. Then you'll be rich. Buy your clothes from me, clothes designed in Heaven. You've gone around half-naked long enough. And buy medicine for your eyes from me so you can see, really see" (Rev. 3:18)

God created us in the secret place. There, we were naked before Him. Leaders who do not visit the secret place forget when it is important to wear clothes. God is calling His leaders back to transparency and purity. We must not ignore those around us who will tell us when we are naked.

It is time to get dressed. Time is running out! Revelation 16:15, "Keep watch! I come unannounced, like a thief. You're blessed if, awake and dressed, you're ready for me. Too bad if you're found running through the streets, naked and ashamed."

We may take to Twitter to proclaim how great we are, and we may Facebook our newest message. We may promote our ideas, and we may declare we are voice to a generation—yet we rarely get honest about our spiritual state. Joel 2:13-14 says:

Change your life, not just your clothes. Come back to God, your God. And here's why: God is kind and merciful. He takes a deep breath, puts up with a lot, This most patient God, extravagant in love, always ready to cancel catastrophe. Who knows? Maybe he'll do it now, maybe he'll turn around and show pity. Maybe, when all's said and done, there'll be blessings full and robust for your God!

**Our approach must change!**

There is a stirring in my heart for a cleaning up of the priesthood. We have created such an image that if we fall, people will just move on to a new celebrity.

The world wants priests that look like them, act like them, and even lead like them. The world has always cried out for compromise. In John 18:40 the people cried out, "Give us Barabbas!" Remember, the people didn't want Jesus; they wanted a murderer. "No, not Him!" they cried. "Give us Barabbas! Give us somebody who looks

like us. He is much easier to look at than Jesus. Because Jesus reminds us what we should be, while Barabbas gives us the excuse to say, ‘I’m not that bad.’”

But we must be different.

### **Three Guidelines for Staying on Track**

Given the pressures of the world and the reality of our flesh, it’s not easy to stay on track—and yet it is essential to the cause of Christ. Here are three reminders that can help us stay in the place we’re meant to be along the way.

#### **1. Remember who rescued you.**

Always remember God is your rescuer. Man did not rescue you. Position and applause will not keep you. God was the one who reached into your dark cell and unlocked the prison doors—and God will always be there to rescue you.

Some of you were locked in a dark cell, cruelly confined behind bars, Punished for defying God’s Word, for turning your back on the High God’s counsel— A hard sentence, and your hearts so heavy, and not a soul in sight to help. Then you called out to GOD in your desperate condition; he got you out in the nick of time. He led you out of your dark, dark cell, broke open the jail and led you out. So thank GOD for his marvelous love, for his miracle mercy to the children he loves; He shattered the heavy jailhouse doors, he snapped the prison bars like matchsticks!

—Ps. 107:10-16

#### **2. Have an attitude of gratitude.**

God is using the ones who are broken, torn, and tattered. When He gets them healthy, they don’t live their lives in arrogance and pride but rather thankfulness. Thankfulness is a sign you didn’t do it on your own!

Do you see what we’ve got? An unshakable kingdom! And do you see how thankful we must be? Not only thankful, but brimming with worship, deeply reverent before God. For God is not an indifferent bystander. He’s actively cleaning house, torching all that needs to burn, and he won’t quit until it’s all cleansed. God himself is Fire!

—HEBREWS 12:28-29

#### **3. Remember where you came from.**

You didn’t just “arrive.” People helped you. People believed in you. People sacrificed for you. You’re not an overnight success, but rather a God project!

When I was desperate, I called out, and GOD got me out of a tight spot.

—PSALM 34:6

Glance over your shoulder at your past so you recognize it in those you meet in your future. In other words, when you live your call with one finger on the pulse of God and the other on the pulse of humanity, an aligning takes place with both God and man’s heart.

God has a greater reward for you than the world could ever offer. His reward comes on the day of accountability, where we will receive crowns we will be allowed to throw at His feet. Those crowns will be adorned with the jewels of souls we helped lead to the cross. That, my friend, is what I call the true definition of winning, for it is far more important to be remnant than relevant!