

Placebo Placebo



by *Howard Pittman*

On August 3, 1979, Howard Pittman, a Baptist minister for 35 years, died while on the operating table during surgery and had a near-death experience. After angels showed him the second and third heavens, he was taken before the very throne of God where he was given a message to share with the world.

The following is an excerpt from his booklet, Placebo, which documents his amazing near-death experience. You can purchase his audio tapes and booklets at the Lake Hamilton Bible Camp store.

Forward

Webster's Dictionary defines "placebo" as "a medication prescribed more for the mental relief of a patient than for the actual effect on his disorder, or something tending to soothe."

The doctors tell us that if we know we are being treated with a placebo, it does not work. In our minds we must think that it is a real medication and has the strength or power to heal. If the patient believes this, then the treatment has been known to work wonders in many cases that otherwise could not have been treated. Placebo treatment is, in fact, nothing of substance, but in the mind of the patient it is real. In order for this kind of treatment to work, the doctor must convince the patient of the work of the medication.

My friend, I declare unto you that this is the exact "treatment" that most "mouth-professing" Christians are using today. The doctor administering this "medication" is Satan himself. He gives the "patient" a sugar-coated religion, a shallow experience, and whispers half-truths into his ears. He then tells the "patient" that it is real and that it is all the "patient" needs. The "patient", having been taken in by Satan, believes this and goes on his merry way declaring to all that he has been born again, his salvation is real, and this experience is all that he needs.

Doctor Satan will allow his "patient" to continue to go to church and will allow him to take part in any church, that is, singing, leading in prayer, teaching Sunday school, and even preaching. He will allow the "patient" to make any kind of statement in connection with his "mouth-professing" religion, even to the point of the saving power of Jesus. Yes, he will allow the "patient" to do all and say all with one exception. That exception is that the "patient" will not be allowed to live the life that he confesses with his mouth ...

Chapter 5: Preparation

In the year 1978, I retired from the New Orleans Police Department and moved my family to a sixty-one acre farm in Mississippi. Around August 7, 1979 I was suddenly struck with a grave and disastrous illness. The night before the tragedy I went to bed as usual. On awakening that morning I was slightly nauseated and skipped breakfast. My wife asked me if I was not going to eat. I replied that I had to hurry to keep my appointment with some folks who I hoped would support my candidacy for sheriff with campaign contributions. I was unaware that God had also made an appointment for me that day. Let me remind you that the Bible says that it is appointed once unto man to die and, without warning, my appointment came. Like a flash of lightning, the main trunk artery in my body cavity ruptured causing a devastating, sudden, blood loss. So at midnight they carried me into ICU and at 6:00 a.m. the following morning, my vital life signs failed again. The chief physician came out of ICU and told my wife, "It is something else." They took me into surgery where they worked on me for an additional seven hours.

[For the sake of brevity, a large amount of Pittman's description of his Emergency Room experience is not reprinted here. Read his book for the full description.]

Somewhere in that period of time when the physicians were working on me, I came to myself and realized that I was dying. Knowing that only God could give me back my life and that only God could change this appointed time to die, I prayed a strange prayer. My prayer was that God would allow me to appear before His throne and plead for an extension of my physical life.

Chapter 7: The Grand Tour

What happens next is so incredible that some people find it hard to believe. May I say at the outset that I know the difference between dreams, visions, and a real experience. May I also point out that if you do not believe in Satan and demons as being real, individual beings, then you do yourself and the Kingdom of God a great disservice. It stands to reason that you cannot understand or even withstand an enemy if you do not believe he is real.

At the moment I resisted Satan, he fled from me. The angels were there and they took my spirit from my body. These angels were present all the time that Satan tempted me although I did not know it because I was still in the flesh. The angels did not attempt to help me until I had resisted Satan with my own will. The only help I had was the supernatural revelation from the Holy Spirit that the voice I was hearing belonged to Satan and not to God. Whether or not to obey that voice was my choice.

When the angels lifted my spirit from my body, they carried me immediately to the Second Heaven. We did not have to leave that hospital room in order to enter the Second Heaven. We entered there in that same room where my body was, just by passing through a dimension wall. It is a wall which flesh cannot pass through, only spirit.

For you the reader, to understand what was happening, you must understand the separation of the spirit from the flesh. To know how this works, we must know how we, ourselves, are made. The Bible states that we, as human beings are made in the image of God. To understand this, we must know what God is. The Bible states three immutable things about God: 1st God is Spirit, 2nd God is invisible and 3rd God is immortal. If we are made in His image, then we are spirit, we are invisible, and we are immortal. Therefore, when we look into a mirror we do not see our real selves. We see only the body, or earthen vessel, in which we live. Since we are all made in the image of God, we would all be mirror images of one another without our earthly, physical bodies. Therefore, we were given a soul to separate us from one another to make us an individual.

The animals in this world also have a soul. The only difference between their souls and ours is that our soul belongs to the spirit. Their souls belong to the body. When their body perishes, their souls perish with it. When our body perishes, the soul remains with the spirit. When the spirit was lifted from my body, my soul came with it. I suppose the simplest way to identify the soul would be to say that it is one's personality. The entire time I was away from my body I remained an individual, that is, I retained my own personality. I retained all my faculties. In fact, they were greatly enhanced.

As we moved through that dimension wall into the Second Heaven, I found myself in an entirely different world, far different from anything I had ever imagined. This world was a place occupied by spirit beings as vast in number as the sand of the seashore. These beings were demons [devils], or fallen angels, and were in thousands of different shapes and forms. Even those in similar shapes and forms were contrasted by diverse coloring. Many of the demons were in human shapes or forms and many were in forms similar to animals familiar to our present world. Others were in shapes and forms too hideous to imagine. Some of the forms were so morbid and revolting that I was almost to the point of nausea.

When I first arrived in the Second Heaven, I knew immediately in what direction I must go to reach the Third Heaven where God was. I don't know how I knew that, but I did. I also knew that if I was going to get my prayer answered, I was going to have to appear before God the Father in the Third Heaven. I was aware that I was traveling in that spirit world under the protection of the Holy Spirit, and that the angels who were escorting me were also moving about under the protection of the Holy Spirit. It might seem strange to you, the reader, that the angels needed the protection of the Holy Spirit, but remember where we were, the Second Heaven. The Second Heaven is the place where Satan presently has his throne located. Satan is not yet in Hell although Hell is to be his final destiny.

All the spirits in that world were aware of our presence and were aware of the Holy Spirit's protection over us. To give you an idea as to why that protection was necessary, let me give a Bible reference to the power of Satan as demonstrated in the Second Heaven. The tenth chapter of the book of Daniel tells about God sending one of His angels to deliver a message to Daniel. Because of the importance of that message, Satan did not want it delivered. In order for the angel sent from God in the Third Heaven to reach Daniel, he had to pass through the Second Heaven. Satan sent one of his princes, or one of his archangels, to stop the angel. The angel had to fight and could not get through alone so he had to call for reinforcements. God had to send one of His princes, or the archangel, to help the messenger and even this took twenty-one days. After the angel delivered the message, he reminded Daniel that he, the angel, would have to fight his way back through the Second Heaven.

As we moved about there in that world, I was greatly disappointed that my escort did not take me in the direction of the Third Heaven where God was. Instead, we moved in the opposite direction. As we moved from place to place in that world, I learned many things about demons.

I did things differently in the spirit realm than what we do here in the physical world. For instance, we do not communicate with our mouths and ears, but rather, we communicated with our minds. It was like projecting our words on thought waves and receiving the answer the same way. Although I could still think to myself without projecting, I discovered that this really did not benefit me because the angels could read my mind.

I could hear different sounds in that world, but I did not hear with my ears. I heard with my mind, but I was still able to “hear” those sounds. When we traveled, we traveled mostly at what I call the “speed of thought.” When we traveled at the “speed of thought,” there was no sensation of movement. The angel would say where we were going and we were there. There were other times when we did not travel in that manner, and I was very much aware of movement while traveling. One of those times when I was aware of movement was when they brought me back into the physical world and allowed me to see the demons working here. We moved about here somewhat like floating on a cloud. Still, I had the sensation of movement.

Make no mistake about demons for they are very real. The Bible makes more statements about demons than it does about angels and it points out in Luke 10:18 that demons are evil. Mark 5:8,9 indicates how numerous they are and Matthew 10:1 shows that they are unclean. Matthew 12:21-30 states that they are under the command of Satan and Matthew 8:29 shows that they can possess humans.

In the demon world, there is a division of power much like a military structured chain command with rank and order. Certain demons carry the title of prince, which is always the demon in charge of a principality. A principality is a territory, an area, a place or a group that may range in size from as large as a nation to as small as a person. When Satan assigns a prince a task, the prince is given the authority to act in the name of Satan and use whatever means necessary or available to him to accomplish his task.

When we started the tour of the Second Heaven, the angels began by showing me the different types of demons. Each demon was revealed to me in a form that indicated his area of expertise, and I soon discovered that there is no such thing as a “general practitioner” in all the demon world. They have only one area of expertise which they do very well.

Chapter 8: Demons

As each type of demon was pointed out to me, I quickly discovered a social order, or rank, that existed among them. Those at the top of that order were revealed in forms similar to humans. As we moved down the order, or rank, I saw demons in shapes or forms that looked like half-animal and half-human. I saw demons in forms resembling animals we know in this present world and I saw demons in forms and shapes so revoltingly morbid that you cannot possibly imagine them.

At the very top of the order were the warring demons which were the “cream” of Satan’s “crop.” They moved about the Second Heaven and even this present physical world at will always traveling in groups, never alone. Wherever they went, all other demons moved out of their way. These warring demons were revealed to me in human form. They looked like humans with the exception that they were giants. Appearing to be about eight feet tall, they were

rugged and handsomely constructed, somewhat like giant athletes. All of the warring demons were colored bronze. They were giant, bronze soldiers. All of the other demons seemed to be subject to them.

The second most powerful type demon was also revealed to me in human form and these demons looked like ordinary people. All of those possessing this area of expertise seemed to group together at about the second place of command. Chief among this group was the demon of greed and contained within this same group were demons of hate, lust, strife, and a few others.

The third most powerful type and group of demons were revealed to me in mixed shapes and forms. Some had human form while others had half-human and half-animal forms. Others resembled animals in their forms. These demons possessed skills in the dark arts area such as witchcraft and other related areas. Also among this group were demons of fear and the demons of self-destruction as well as those demons which are expert in mimicking departed human spirits [familiar spirits] and in manifesting themselves to the physical world as ghosts.

When we got down to the fourth group, or order, all the demons of this rank were revealed in forms other than human. Some had forms like known animals while others had unknown forms. In this group were the demons of murder, brutality, sadism, and others related to carnage.

As we moved even further down the order toward the end of the chain of command, all the demons were revealed in horrible and morbid forms. Some were so revolting that their appearance produced nausea. They are so despised by their own companions that they always seem to be lurking off to themselves while in the Second Heaven and even while in this physical world. They do not associate with the other demons except in the line of their duty.

There was another group of demons that I was able to see, but I do not recall much of their ability. It was purposely taken away from me as I was not permitted to learn or retain too much memory about them. I don't even know where they rank in order and their form was not revealed to me. I am not sure of their entire area of expertise, however, I am vaguely aware of their powerful hold on the flesh. It seems that this mysterious group of demons work differently from all other demons and are used in only special cases and special situations of which I do not clearly understand. As I stated, I was not permitted to retain too much in my memory about this particular group of demons. I was only permitted to retain that portion which I am now reporting to you and this, in itself, is very vague.

I'm also aware that these particular demons are harder to deal with than any of the rest. It seems their great strength rests in their ability to remain anonymous in their work in the human being. Among this group is the one that is able to manifest himself as a form of epilepsy in the human. I am not sure but I seem to recall that some other demons in some of the other groups also have the ability to mimic epilepsy. I do not know if demons cause epilepsy, per se, but I do recall very vividly that they can mimic this condition in human beings.

At one time during this tour of the Second Heaven, I watched the demons within their own related group and I experienced an awful feeling. It was an overwhelming, oppressive, and morbid feeling. This feeling came to me shortly after I had entered the Second Heaven and I wondered what was causing it. It was at this time that I learned that the angel could read my mind because my guardian angel said to me, "That feeling you are wondering about is caused by the fact that there is no love in this world." The angel was telling me that in this Second Heaven there is not one bit of love! Wow! Can you imagine all of those demons serving a master they don't love and the master ruling over beings that he doesn't love? Worse than that, these companions are working together for an eternity and they do not even love each other.

I started reflecting on what our physical world, called the First Heaven, would be like without love. If God had not introduced His love in our world, then we would be living in a no-love atmosphere like the Second Heaven. By God giving us His love, we are able to return that love and then love one another. Can you imagine what it would be like in your own home or your community if it was totally void of love?

When I was made aware of the fact that no love existed among the demons, I wondered even more about their motivation and zeal. What makes them work so hard? What makes them carry out orders so rapidly? They don't love one another, yet they carry out these orders so quickly and with such zeal that any military organization on Earth would be proud to have such loyal and obedient employees. I wonder if their motivation could have anything to do with the judgment and sentence that awaits them. It seems that since their first rebellion ages ago while in the Third Heaven, they have reached a place in their existence where they can no longer rebel. Whatever it is that motivates them seems to excel in their very being while they, in turn, are expressing their fury upon the flesh. It may just be that the only enjoyment of their entire existence is to create misery for the flesh. Even though I was permitted to go among them and watch them while they worked, many things were not explained fully or made clear to me. Some of the things that I saw, I was not permitted to retain in my memory. I knew the high order of the demons resented my presence and would have withstood me had I not been under the protection of the Holy Spirit. One of the warring demons came right up to me and leered into my face, but I did not flinch for I was not afraid. I knew it would not be me with whom he would have to contend but, instead, it would be He who brought me, the Holy Spirit. The demons in the middle order seemed to totally ignore me and went about their existence as if I were not there. Those of the lower order seemed to display slight fear of me or fear of the angel that was escorting me, however, the higher order of demons had no fear of me or the angel.

My escort informed me that he wanted me to see a demon in the process of actually possessing a human being. At this point in the trip, I was escorted back through the dimension wall separating the Second Heaven from the physical world. When we came back into this world, we were in the same hospital with my body but in a different room. The room appeared to be an employee's lounge. I saw tables, chairs, dishes with food, and in the room were a young man and a young lady facing each other while laughing and talking. It was obvious that they could not see the angels, yet I was so close to them I could almost reach out and touch them. I could hear and understand every word they said. They thought they were alone and as they laughed and talked, they were unaware of the horrible creature standing between them. This demon was so horrible in the appearance of his shape and form that I recognized him immediately to be from the lower group, the perverted group. The angels, the demons, and I were in the spirit in that room and were aware of everything that was happening. Those in the flesh were only aware of themselves for they could not see or hear us even though we were back in this physical world. Since we were in the spirit, we still communicated with our minds.

I was not really paying close attention to the words the two were speaking. My entire attention was focused upon the demon. He was a most horrible looking thing, reminding me of an overgrown, stuffed, slimy, green frog all out of shape and proportion. He moved slowly up into the face of the man then, suddenly, like a puff of smoke, he seemed to disappear into the face of the man just as if he went through the pores of his skin. When the demon had entered the man, the angels said, "Now it's done." The angel then proceeded to tell me how it was that this man was possessed. He stated, "The demon made himself desirable and attractive to the human." The angel then pointed out to me that mankind has a sovereign will, all his own, beyond which the demons cannot come. He also pointed out to me that the angels could not come beyond that sovereign will of man. God, Himself, will not violate that will. We are made in the image of God, therefore, we were given, like God, a sovereign will, the right to choose our destiny. I was not permitted to retain all that I learned along these lines.

I faintly recall that there is another process under certain given circumstances whereby demons may possess or be allowed to enter small children. It seems as though those demons from that mysterious group are the ones that are allowed to do this. From what I recall about this, it is only under the most unusual circumstances that this can happen. According to what the angels told me, over ninety percent of all cases of demon activity in human beings is restricted to those humans who are at or over the age of accountability.

During the course of this talk the angel was giving me, he pointed out that all of God's children have been given power over all demons and can cast them out, however, this power is based on the faith of the Christian. It will only work when the Christian knows without a doubt what he is doing. There are certain Christians who have received a special gift in this area. They are those who have been called specifically by the Holy Spirit to a deliverance ministry and in almost every case, those called to a deliverance ministry have also received the gift of discernment. When one is commanding demons, it is most important to know what spirit one is dealing with. In those rare cases where children are possessed, it takes a special effort and divine insight in each case to deliver them. Such a case was reported in the Bible in Matthew 17:14-21. All Christians potentially have the ability to command demons.

My escort told me that they wanted me to see demon activity in the outside world. I was then escorted outside the hospital directly through the brick wall into the streets of that city. I was amazed as I watched all the activity of the humans in the physical world. Going about their daily pursuit, they were completely unaware that they were being stalked by beings from the spirit world. I was totally flabbergasted as I watched and horrified as I saw the demons in all shapes and forms as they moved at will among the humans.

While I learned about demons not being able to work in a person's life against their will, I also learned the angels cannot do it either. Each born again Christian has a guardian angel and before that Christian's life is over, it might take a whole host of angels to keep him. I learned that guardian angels fight for us, but they cannot fight in the area of our will. The fighting they do is sort of like protecting our "blind" side. They oppose the demons when the demons come against us outside the area of our will. They cannot oppose the demons when the demons come against us through our own will. Remember, we are made in the image of God, like God, we have a sovereign will.

I learned that the demons will fight the angels if they must, but they prefer not to do so. They find that it is easier and safer to destroy us through our own will where the angels are unable to interfere, rather than go outside our will where they would have to fight angels personally. Because of this, the demons have developed great skills in the area of deception. They move through our lives by deceit and trickery and keep us totally unaware of their activity.

I was made aware of the fact that not all demons are in the Second Heaven. There are some demons so awesome that they are reserved in chains in Hell, however, Satan and his army of demons are not in Hell, presently. Neither do they want to be there. I was not permitted to look into Hell, nor was I permitted to view the chained demons. I do know that these demons who are chained went beyond the limitations of their domain.

God in His wisdom has allowed Satan and his demons certain bounds or limitations within which they may work. They may not go beyond those limitations established by the Lord, however, those demons who are chained in Hell did just that. Because they went beyond the restrictions established by the Lord, they are now chained in Hell.

The Bible points out this fact in many places, especially in the book of Jude. Any time Satan goes beyond those bounds, he must receive permission from God. In the case of Job, he was granted the permission, but in Peter's case he was not granted permission. The demons who

work in children under the age of accountability are allowed to do so only after obtaining this special permission. [I might add that a “legal” door was opened by certain sin or sins that gave the demons a right in the first place]. It was not made plain to me what sort of circumstances must be present for God to grant permission, although it was made clear that in certain circumstances permission is granted. However, permission to work in children under the age of accountability is rarely granted. The majority of the time Satan is denied this special permission, but in these last days we can expect a substantial increase in demonic activity, not only in adults but in children as well. This increase in demonic activity is what the Lord warned us about in Mark 13:22 when He spoke of the incredible miracles that false prophets would perform in the last days.

The demons that are reserved in chains did not obtain permission for their activity which violated the restrictions established by our Lord. Their illegal deeds are recorded in Genesis 6:2-5. Because they did not obtain permission, they received immediate punishment. Specific punishment for the devil and his demons is scheduled for the end-time and is recorded in Revelation 20:1-3. As you well know, the lake of fire was created for the devil and his demons as their eternal fate.

In this age we must be on guard for Satan’s fiery darts of deception and temptation that are allowed within the limitations of the Lord’s permissive will. There is a time limit set by the Lord in which demons may work, but that time period has not yet been fulfilled. As Christians we are able to have them “bound” under the authority of Jesus, however, this is not permanent. We can not cast them into hell for only God can do this. That is why it is very important for someone who has just been delivered to be properly instructed in remaining in the Lord’s will lest they become afflicted again. A Christian can cast out demons from a lost person, but unless that person gets saved and abides in the Lord’s will, there will be the possibility of the demons returning. [See Matthew 12:43-45].

Demons are real, individual, spirit beings and they are the ones manipulating all the evil in the world today. This was shown to me while I was in the spirit world traveling through the street of a city and watching in horror as the demons went about their task of corrupting humans.

Although humans are spirit beings, we are confined to physical bodies. The great spiritual warfare that rages today is between the “spirit of man” and the “spiritual forces” of evil directed by Satan which are contending for control and manipulation of our fleshly, physical bodies. Our spirits fight by faith and through our sovereign will; while the devil and his [fallen] angels fight through deceit, cunning, trickery, and temptation. You must make no mistake about this war or the weapons involved because the scriptures are plain and empathic on both. I actually saw these demons contend for control of that human body.

It may seem to you that mankind is vastly over-powered by these spirits because these spirits are able to see and hear everything we think, say, and do; while we are totally unable to perceive any of their activities. It is very difficult to fight an enemy you cannot see, hear, and feel, but as long as you trust the Lord, you have nothing to fear. At times, even the strongest Christian may doubt their existence and activities, thus making it easier for them. However, man was not left defenseless. Being made in the image of God, man, like God, has a sovereign will and no spirit can violate that will without the permission of the person himself. Because of this, these demons have developed great skills in deception. The basic principle of their operations is to make something evil as desirable, beautiful, and non-threatening as possible so that the person being tempted will lower his guard and accept whatever it is that is being used to cause sin. Once someone is deceived, it becomes easier for the deception to remain. In the case of possession, it becomes easier for the demon to maintain his control.

Another great defense man has is the guardian angel. The guardian angel is not assigned to all mankind, but only to those who are “saved and belong to God.” Remember, just like the demons the guardian angel cannot violate the will of any man which is why most of his activity is reserved to protecting that individual outside his sovereign will. Man’s greatest weapon, however, is the Word of God. In his description of the weapons used in our spiritual warfare, Paul insists the Word of God [Ephesians 6:11-18] as the only offensive weapon mankind has. Although vastly outnumbered by these beings [thousands to one individual], man is adequately prepared for battle. Because of a sovereign will, guardian angels, and the Word of God, man has superior defense and is much more potent in the battle for his soul than the demons.

Therefore, I say to everyone – if you are serious in your commitment to fight this war and win, fear not! Your commander-in-chief, teacher, healer and sustainer – the Holy Spirit – will never leave you nor forsake you.

Chapter 9: The Way Home

When the angels decided that I had seen enough of the demons at work in this physical world, I was taken back into the Second Heaven just by passing through the dividing, dimension wall. Once back inside the Second Heaven, my escort guided me in the direction of the Third Heaven and I was happy at last. After all, this was where I had wanted to go all the time. Even at this stage, my physical life was still my primary concern.

Suddenly we came to a most beautiful place. I know that I’ve already reported how terrible that the Second Heaven was, so you can imagine how surprising it was to find anything beautiful over there. God would not allow me to retain the memory of why this place was so beautiful. I do remember that it was the most beautiful place I’d ever seen. This place looked like a tunnel, a roadway, a valley or some sort of highway. It had a most brilliant light all its own and was completely surrounded with an invisible shield. I knew that the invisible shield was the protection of the Holy Spirit.

Walking in this tunnel, or along that roadway, or valley, or whatever, was what appeared to be human beings. I asked my escort who they were. He told me, “They are saints going home.” These were the departed spirits of Christians who had died on Earth and they were going home. Each of these saints was accompanied by at least one guardian angel and some had a whole host of angels with them. I wondered why some saints were accompanied by only one angel and others had many. I was watching as the saints passed through the way that all saints must take to go home. Here it was, the passageway from Earth to the Third Heaven. I found that only “authorized” spirits were allowed in that tunnel. No demon was permitted there.

When my escort had finished explaining to me about the homeward trip of the saints. I started into the tunnel. The angel stopped me and told me that we had to travel alongside the tunnel and not inside of it. I traveled, therefore parallel with but outside the tunnel where the saints were. While we were traveling here alongside the tunnel, we did not move at the “speed of thought.” Instead, we traveled as if floating on a cloud. In other words, there was no cloud but the mode of traveling felt as if I were floating on a cloud.

I could see the saints at all times moving along inside the tunnel. They were in the form and shape of humans, yet I could not detect any race, age, or sex. They were all clothed alike with the garments appearing to be made up of two pieces. There was a blouse or shirt and a pair of slacks. The color of the garments was a pastel, baby blue with one of the garment pieces being a shade lighter than the other piece. The blue was so light that it was almost white. I realize

that these saints I was viewing had not yet received their glorified body because that must wait until the first resurrection.

At first I was disappointed that I was not permitted to travel in the tunnel with the saints, but the disappointment was eased when I was told that we were going to the same place they were going. After all, I knew that if my physical life was going to be extended, I would have to appear before God. Even now, my physical life was still the uppermost thing to me.

As we traveled along, I noticed all around me that the demons were beginning to drop behind. The Gates came into view and the closer we got to those Gates, the farther behind fell the demons. When we arrived before the Gates there were no demons in view. Although the Gates of the Third Heaven opened out into the Second Heaven, no demon could come close.

Instead of allowing me to enter, the angel stationed me before the Gates, slightly to one side. He instructed me to stay there and watch as the saints were permitted to enter into Heaven. As the saints were allowed into Heaven, I noticed a strange thing. They were permitted to enter only one at a time. No two were permitted to enter those Gates at the same time. I wondered about this but it was never explained to me. I've studied about this often since I have returned and now I think I know why. I believe this is a tribute or a salute to the individual. After all, that individual made the choice with his own sovereign will. Remember, it had been pointed out to me specifically that we, as images of the Living God, possess a sovereign will through which we have the right to choose our own destiny.

As the saints were being admitted, I was wondering why I was not being allowed to do what I came to do. I was so impatient to get my request before God that I missed the whole point of what I saw. This point was so important that the Holy Spirit told me Himself. I watched the fifty saints enter Heaven but the point I missed was the time frame involved. It was explained to me that at the same time those fifty saints died on Earth, 1,950 other humans also died; or only 50 out of 2000 made it into Heaven. That other 1,950 were not there. Where were they? That was only 2 ½ percent going to Heaven! Ninety seven point five percent did not make it! Is that representative of the entire world today? If so, 97 and ½ percent of the population of this world today is not ready to meet God. The sad part, my friend, is that is exactly representative of this Laodicean Church Age in which we live today. We are now in the time when the great majority of church goers are only "mouth-professors" and not "heart-possessors."

At the outset, I stated that I would not try to convince anyone of anything I said. However, I would like to offer as evidence the parable of the sower as told by Jesus in the thirteenth chapter of the book of Matthew. If you read this chapter closely, you will notice that three out of every four people who heard the gospel preached, turned it down. That is seventy-five percent anyway you look at it. I am talking about three out of every four people who bothered to hear the gospel, turned it down! The sad part about this is the overwhelming majority of the people that did turn the gospel down, do not know that they have turned it down! They have bought a lie of Satan and have been deceived. They have been led to believe something that is not the truth and they been fooled by Satan into rejecting the gospel! Place the seventy-five percent who turned down the gospel with those in the world who made no pretense of hearing the truth and you have the overwhelming ninety seven and one-half percent of the population today!

As I contemplate this fact. I now understand the Lord's disgust with the Laodicean-type Church. I also clearly understand the verses of scripture in Matthew 7:22-23 that describes how many people will stand before the Throne at the Judgment pleading. "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name? And in thy Name cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?" only to have the Lord process to them, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Chapter 10: The Rude Awakening

My escort told me to stand to one side of the Gates and present my case. He assured me that God would hear and answer my request. As I stood before the Gates, the sense of joy, happiness, and contentment radiated out from Heaven. I could feel the warmth it produced and as I stood there to plead my case. I could feel the awesome power of God. No being could possibly appear before Him, even separated by a gate as I was, without experiencing this awesome power, might and majesty. At first I had a sense of fear, sort of a guilt feeling that is always produced in me when I believe I have imposed on others. In my mind's eye I could just visualize a busy God who was annoyed with me for taking Him away from important things. Then, just as suddenly as this feeling came, it passed. I then found strength or boldness in my belief that I had served my God faithfully for many years. To me, I was convinced that this request of mine would be a snap!

Boldly I came before the throne and started out by reminding God what a great life of love, worship, and sacrifice I had lived for Him. I told Him of all the works I had done reminding Him that I was now in trouble and only He could help by granting me an extension on my physical life. God was totally silent while I spoke. When I had completed my request, I heard the real, audible voice of God as He answered me.

The voice I heard was not like the sweet voice that Satan had used to trick me before in the valley. You could put together the noise of all the storms, volcanoes, tornadoes, and hurricanes and they could in no way imitate what I heard. The sound of His voice was in no way like the sweet voice I talked about earlier. The sound of His voice came down on me from over the Gates even before the words hit me. The tone of His anger knocked me on my face as God proceeded to tell me just what kind of life I had really lived. He told me what He really thought of me and even others who did as I had. He pointed out that my faith was dead, that my works were not acceptable, and that I had labored in vain. He told me that it was an abomination for me to live such a life and then dare call it a life of worship. Furthermore, He said to those who do it, they are in danger of experiencing His everlasting wrath. As God dealt with me, He displayed His wrath to me. Notice, it was not His everlasting wrath. He did say there are some who will experience His everlasting wrath.

I could not believe He was talking to me in this manner! I had served Him for years! I thought I had lived a life pleasing to Him! As He was enumerating my wrongs, I was sure He had me confused with someone else. There was no strength left in me to even move, let alone protest, yet I was panicking within myself. No way He could be talking about me! All of these years I thought I was doing those works for God! Now He was telling me that what I did, I did for myself. Even as I preached and testified about the saving grace of Jesus Christ, I was doing that only for myself in order that my conscience might be soothed. In essence, my first love and first works were for myself. After my needs and wants were met or satisfied, in order to soothe my conscience I would set out to do the Lord's work. This made my priorities out of order and unacceptable. Actually, I had become my own false God.

He makes it plain in His teachings that He is a jealous God and will have no other gods before Him; flesh, stone, blood, or whatever. He will have no other gods before Him. God told me that He would not accept this kind of worship in the day of the Pharisees and He certainly was not about to accept it now in this the Laodicean Church Age. He put it to me as plain as words and actions could make it. In order for our works to be acceptable, we must work according to His command in Matthew 6:33 which empathically states, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these other things shall be added to you." As God told me about my true motives, the verse of scripture in Matthew 16:24-26 and Luke 14:26-33 became

so clear to me. In Matthew 16 it states, "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me, for whosoever shall save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." In Luke 14 beginning with verse 26 it is stated, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?" In verse 23 of this same chapter Jesus makes the following statement which is the cornerstone of the two portions of scripture previously stated: "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

Only now as I was here before Him being chastised did those two portions of scripture become crystal clear to me as to their true meaning. As God told me about my true motives, I could see plainly for the first time how my works were dead. Because God was displaying His wrath toward me, I could not stand nor could I speak. No strength was left within me as I was nothing more than a wet rag lying there writhing in agony. It indeed, was fortunate for me that this was not God's everlasting wrath, only temporary wrath. However, at this time I did not know this was only temporary.

It needs to be stated that at no time while God was chastising me did He say I was not saved nor did He say that my name was not in the Lamb's Book of Life. He never mentioned salvation to me at all but only spoke about the works produced through my life. He told me the type of life I lived was an unacceptable life for a true Christian. As He spoke to me of my dead works, he indicated that there are some people who are not saved but think they are. These people will experience His everlasting wrath. He also made it plain to me that there are others of His children who will find themselves in my present condition on Judgment Day. This revealed to me the true meaning of 1 Corinthians 3:15 which states, "If any man's works shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

The first time I started to enter the Third Heaven, the angel stopped me. At that time he did not tell me I could not enter. He only said that if I went in I could not come out again and that I would have to remain there until God brought me back with Him. Notice that I made the choice not to enter Heaven but to have my physical life restored. I was unaware that I had made that choice at that particular time. I thought I had been living in the Lord's will and I was not thinking in terms of unfinished work. My choice was based entirely on selfish motives.

There are no words that can describe the pain I endured as God's wrath was upon me for this life of so-called service. The agony was beyond the scope of the imagination and the remorse that I felt produced a very heavy burden similar to a physical weight pinning me down or an enormous stone crushing me. Growing weaker and weaker, my mind was frantically racing in an effort to grasp what the Lord was telling me while recalling each actual incident. God leaves no room for error and that includes whatever is in our minds.

The surprise was so overwhelming in its magnitude that it rendered me senseless. My strength left me immediately, just as though I had been hit by a bolt of lightning. Even if God would have ceased and allowed me to speak on word of protest, I would not have been able to do so. I had absolutely no strength whatsoever to utter anything or to project my idea. In my mind I was constantly denying the wrong in my life while acknowledging the fact that I had committed them. My conscience was asleep but my mind was not.

Slowly, it all began to be absorbed by me. Remember how the Bible tells us to have no other gods before us? I had thought that the Most High God was the only God of my life, but I was not fulfilling that part of scripture which tells us that if we allow anything to come between us and

the Lord, (whatever it may be) it becomes our “God.” I realized that each day of my life was devoted only to myself! My whole life I was preoccupied with my needs first and then I was concerned with what the Lord wanted. The money to help the church, the poor, or anything else was secondary because I was my own “god.” Naturally, the devil was contented with allowing me to remain in that condition because as long as I was in that condition, I was of no use to the Lord and His kingdom.

I allowed this to occur because I was really indifferent to the things of the Lord. It was too uncomfortable to change and I was convinced I could remain as I was without having to really DO anything (such as following the Lord’s commandment about denying myself and picking up my cross daily to follow him.) For this reason, my life was wasted and amounted to absolutely nothing in the Lord’s eyes.

I hope that you understand what it is that I am saying because it is the whole point of this chapter. The fact is we must prove we are really Christians by first examining our motives behind each deed in our lives, and then repenting and recommitting ourselves to follow the Lord daily. When we decide to serve Him first, this decision must be followed by action or it will be as useless as if we did not decide to do so in the first place.

Chapter 11: My Real Father

When God was through with me the interview was over as suddenly as one would turn off a faucet. I was not allowed to linger or even reflect on what God said. The angels immediately carried me away as if I were as wet rag having no strength in myself. Totally annihilated, I could not even gather my thoughts.

The angels carried me back through the Second Heaven, through the dimension wall, and into the hospital room where my body was lying. It was not until I reached the bed upon which my body lay did I regain my composure. As I regained my composure, I vehemently protested, “No! No!” I told the angels, “God did not answer me! He did not say yes or no to my request! Please, oh please, take me back!” I pleaded with the angels.

God is a God of order and He never does anything haphazardly. Since all of this entire experience had been planned by God, the angels complied with my request to take me back. God was dealing with me gently and tenderly through His great love knowing what was necessary for me to experience in order for me to have the scales fall off my eyes.

During the time God was displaying His wrath toward me, I thought this wrath was terrible and painful. I found out later that it was nothing compared to the pain the lost will experience when they receive His everlasting wrath.

While in route back to the Third Heaven, I was beside myself trying to come up with a logical reason or legitimate basis on which to plead my case. God had already told me that my life had been a failure, therefore, I could not offer my past life as evidence of my intentions to serve Him. Somehow or another, the thought of Hezekiah came to my mind. When God sent word for him to put his house in order, he cried and prayed and God heard him. God extended his life for fifteen years. I remembered from my studies about him that Hezekiah was the “good-old-boy” type, similar to me. I remembered how he had good intentions in his heart but how he had trouble translating out those intentions into everyday living. Since this seemed to be the same kind of trouble I had in my life, I concluded that God dealt with Hezekiah based on the

intentions of his heart. Because of this assumption, I concluded this reasoning would be the basis of my plea.

Upon my arrival back before the third heaven, I was brought to the same place from which I had previously pleaded my case. Not nearly so bold this time, I remembered how God's wrath had floored me beforehand. Nevertheless, I had asked God for a favor and God had not answered. Wanting his answer no matter what it was, I timidly started pleading my case again.

This time God did not knock me down but let me talk. God did not talk to me in anger but started out answering me in a tone of pity. Before it was all over, God was speaking in sorrow.

Opening my plea by quoting scriptures to God, I began by telling him all about Hezekiah. I told God that I figured out that Hezekiah was the "good-old-boy" type, that the intentions of his heart were pure, but he seemed to be unable to translate out those intentions into everyday living. Here I was, an insignificant nothing and the smallest creature in all his universe, bartering words with this great and awesome God who had created it all.

I said, "Father, if You will grant this request, I promise you I will do better the next time."

The Lord answered me thusly, "Howard Pittman, you have promised before." God did not have to say another word. There they were, all the promises I had made to a holy God in my past entire life. Not one of them remained whole. Somehow, somehow, I had managed to break them all. With nothing left to say, no words in all my vocabulary, nowhere to go, I fell on my knees before him. All I could say was "Amen" to my own condemnation. I knew that if at that moment God would banish me into the pits of hell, it would be just to say "amen" to my own condemnation.

At that moment God did not demand justice but showed me mercy. The scales fell from my eyes and my soul was suddenly filled with light. That powerful, awesome, all-consuming God was now not evident. There on that throne dealing with me was my Father. God was no longer a distant God, but a real, genuine Father. The realization of his being my true Father and my best friend came to me for the first time in my life. The wonderful relationship I had enjoyed with my physical father and the wonderful love we shared for each other was suddenly brought to mind yet magnified a thousand fold. For now I was with my real Father, the one who loved me so much that God left all of his creation to deal with me, the prodigal son.

For the first time in my life, I saw in my mind's eye who God really is. For the first time I met God as God truly is, my real Father, my very best friend. As the realization of who God is flooded my soul, great and painful sorrow also came. Sorrow came when I realized that through disobedience I had hurt my Father. This realization and sorrow produced actual pain which was not just a guilt feeling but actual pain similar to what one would experience in the flesh when one sustains a physical injury. At this point in time, God started dealing with me in sorrow and no longer did the tone of his voice express pity. Instead, the sound was of genuine sorrow. I suddenly realized that God was hurting too. God was hurting because I was hurting. Being a true and just God as God is, God had to allow me to suffer the pain and God could not lift it from me. Although God had to allow me to suffer the pain, God would not allow me to suffer it alone. God the most High, the most Supreme, the Creator of all, the Father of all would not let me suffer alone.

By this time I suddenly realized that my physical life was not so important after all. What I was really concerned about now was what my Father wanted. His will had suddenly become the first thing of my life and my physical life was no longer important. This is when God gave me back my physical life. Only when I reached a place that my life did not mean anything to me, did God give it back to me. Now that the prodigal son had returned, the Father could talk at

last. God could tell me what my trip to heaven was all about and that God had a message God wanted me to tell people on earth.

Chapter 12: Wake Up!

I now repeat for you point by point the entire five point message that God gave me to deliver to this world today.

Point Number 1: For those who call themselves Christians, this is the Laodicean Church Age in which we live. A high majority of so-called Christians are, in fact, living a deceived life. They talk Jesus and play church, but do not live it. They claim to be Christians and then live like the devil. They have bought the great lie from Satan who tells them that they are alright. He tells them that it is alright to go to church on Sunday and attend mid-week services but as far as the rest of the time is concerned, they are to get all they can out of life. As far as their Christian life is concerned, they believe they are comfortable and have need of nothing and as a result, they are only lukewarm Christians if Christians at all.

Point Number 2: Satan is a personal devil.

Point Number 3: To the whole world, this is Noah's second day. As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the son of man. Humans took no thought of what Noah was saying nor did humans believe that anything was about to change. Humanity could see the storm clouds over the horizon, but yet did not believe the rain was imminent. Notice the close parallel today. Humanity can see all the signs of the last days, yet humanity does not believe that anything will change. He does not believe in the impending coming of our Lord and he does not prepare to meet God."

Point Number 4: For those who claim to be Christians, they are supposed to be ambassadors for Christ here on earth. One cannot have any true witness or power in his life unless that one lives his Christian faith at all times, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. To be a true Christian one must live it, not just talk it. To honor God with your lips and not your heart is not acceptable. Those who accept the responsibility of teaching, preaching, or any leadership role have much for which to answer.

Point Number 5: God is now in the process of recruiting an army with which God will shake this old world one more time. By working through his soldiers, God will produce great miracles that will shake the established hierarchy of the so-called organized religion that is in this world today. These soldiers that God is now recruiting will demonstrate the power of God to a greater extent than did the disciples in the Pentecostal age. Now the recruitment has begun in earnest because God is about to perform the great miracles through his army that God promised us God would do in the Bible. John the Baptist brought the spirit of Elijah into this world and he did not even know he had it. John denied it, but Jesus confessed that it was so. The purpose of that spirit was to make straight the paths of the coming of the Lord.

"The Alpha and Omega, the Cause of all the universe's existence was hurting because a mere Earth child was hurting. Oh, what Love! What Understanding! It was so far beyond anything a

mere Earthling can understand. Oh how precious just one, little, insignificant Earth child is to that Great God" - Howard Pittman