

## Significant Lives — Chapter 4

By Jim Golden — That You Might Know Him!

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It was still very gray outside as I saw the first prospects of the rising sun begin to add substance and form to the shadows of my unfinished bathroom. It had become a place of solitude lately. It used to boast a 5 foot California Redwood hot-tub in its more prosperous days, but recently hard times had forced it to sacrifice itself on the auction block for the welfare of the family. Did I say recently? That was in 1987. I can remember when it seemed like a month between weekends and now it seems like a month between years. One funny thing about aging is, time becomes a very precious commodity. That is as it should be.

In February of 1994 an old friend of mine prophesied to me concerning some things that God wanted to do in my life. One of them was to teach me some things about meditation, meditation on the person of God. I have long been a fan of A.W. Tozer's writings, especially his small but powerful volume called THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY. In his book he speaks of the attributes of God as things an unknowable God has revealed about himself that are true, so that we finite creatures might worship our infinite Creator. For many years it had been a volume that I would return to time after time. More recently it had become a means by which God was beginning to fulfill my friend's prophecy.

I had just finished reading the chapter on the faithfulness of God and began to meditate on the implications of God's faithfulness, when His Spirit seemed to flood the room with wisdom and revelation. I began to see all the times I had been engaged in the practice of what I call subconscious, unworthy meditation of him. Simultaneously, he was revealing the truth concerning his faithfulness to me. Yes, what usually happens in a situation like this happened, I began to weep. Seeing the immutable faithfulness and love of God for me, through the eyes of the Spirit, made my highest and most noble thoughts of him teeter on the edge of insult and blasphemy.

As the Spirit of God began to give flight to my earth-bound mind I began to move from the realm of "creature-words and thoughts" into the realm of "spiritual knowledge." I feel somewhat like Paul, who struggled for the words to express what the Spirit

revealed to him about God on his journey into the third heaven. He finally was satisfied to say that he saw and heard things which were unlawful and unutterable. The NIV translation puts it this way, "I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know-God knows. And I know that this man-whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows-was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell. (2 Cor. 12:2-4).

I believe he was not permitted to speak about these things for two possible reasons. The first reason is that the revelation of who God is, cannot be expressed in the mere words of men. God is so unlike anything that we can perceive that our most noble thoughts cannot even exist in the same galaxy with the reality of God. When the Prophets and Apostles spoke of his heavenly glory they only had comparative terms to help their readers or listeners imagine what they saw. They would say things like, "He was like unto...or...he lives in unapproachable light..." I, however, am not trying to describe the physical appearance of God but the incredible nature of God. And I find myself harnessed by the same dilemma as those who have gone before me. There are no words or thoughts or meditations that can even begin to do our God justice. The second reason is, God wants us all to have this intimate knowledge of him on a first-hand basis.

As I said earlier, seeing the immutable faithfulness and love of God for me made my highest and most noble thoughts of him teeter on the edge of insult and blasphemy. Even though this is a comparative statement what must ignoble and depraved thoughts be like? I am certain that everyone who names the name of Jesus is worthy of death a thousand times over for blasphemy if it is looked at in this light. How many times have we allowed the circumstances and situations of life that didn't go just the way we thought they should, to become the accuser of our God?

Blasphemy and idolatry are strange "bed-fellows" frequenting the normal Christian's life all too often. The reason we don't recognize them is because of our life's focus. Our eyes are almost always turned inward. To us, sin is the nasty and unloving little things we do. Most of us do not even consider the sin of our thought life. Yet every Sunday, most of us try to worship a God that we have hardly thought of throughout the week, and if we have, our thoughts certainly were not worthy of

him. Yet God who is rich in mercy has asked us to worship him, and to worship him in spirit and truth. I have come to believe that apart from the presence and anointing of his Holy Spirit it is impossible to accomplish this. Worship is an intimate communication, so tender and personal between God and his child, as to be compared with the relationship existing between a man and a woman in the act of consecrating the wedding bed.

As I began to cry out for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the *knowledge* of God, fear and deep reverence came upon me. I was afraid to offend this Holy One who had become the lover of my soul. I quietly, almost secretly sought for words to speak in appreciation, but found my tongue and mind almost terror-stricken by the possibility of insulting him. Yet he graciously and lovingly receives every feeble attempt at worship. Then I began to realize why Paul said that he spoke in tongues more than everyone else, and why the hymnist cried out for a thousand tongues to sing his Great Creator's praise.

Revival is beginning to sweep our country and reports are coming in from other parts of the world as well. The devil would most certainly like to misdirect our focus to the accompanying phenomena, rather than the fruitful reunion of intimate communion with our Father. I pray that all the wonderful **things** that are taking place as a result of the outpouring of his Spirit do not become the center of our focus. In our Father, being and doing, thought and expression, are the same. However, we are not ones such as him. We always seem to be about the doing part without the being part. If we would see this move of God's precious, manifested presence preserved, then all activity or ministry must come out of relationship. "Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." John 17:3 (NIV) I want to encourage everyone reading this to fall into agreement with Jesus and allow the blessed third person of the Trinity to take you into the place where the Seraphim cry, "Holy, Holy, Holy," day and night. In that place you will be changed forever.