

The Pearl Within

**AN INTERACTIVE JOURNEY ...
THROUGH YOUR PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE
TO DISCOVER THE PEARL WITHIN YOU!**

**JOURNEY 2 – FACING YOUR PAST, PRESENT, AND
FUTURE**

*The Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant
searching for pearls. ~Matthew 13:45*



Pamela and Michael Mathews

THE PEARL WITHIN

A SERIES
OF INSPIRATIONAL JOURNEYS AND
JOURNALING

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THE PEARL WITHIN

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Are you prepared for the *Journey of your Life* ... by finding out who you were created to be, and who you can become by letting the *Pearl Within* you be discovered? Will you ask, seek, and knock at your own hearts door to reveal that *Pearl Within*? The Kingdom of Heaven is waiting for each of us to discover our beauty, power, and potential.

Preface

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking for fine pearls!”
~Matthew 13:25

Welcome to your personal journey through the *Pearl Within Journal*. This Journal is uniquely designed for your life and is like no other journaling experience that you have encountered.

What makes this Contemporary Journal so unique is that it will take you through a personal journey of your life to find the hidden Pearl(s) within yourself. This is the very Pearl that God always intended for your life. The journey will take you through your past, through your present, and help launch you into the future as it illuminates the Pearl that God designed you to be from birth. The journey will blend many experiences and emotions that make you laugh, make you cry, make you rejoice, and lead you through many euphoric moments of thanksgiving as you see your true reflective pearl being extracted from the oyster and irritants of your life. You will soon see the similarities of the miracle of both the Pearl and your life, once you view the completeness God intended for your past, present and future.

The Miraculous Birth of a Pearl

The birth of a pearl is truly a miraculous event. Unlike gemstones or precious metals that must be mined from the earth, pearls are grown by live oysters far below the surface of the sea. Gemstones must be cut and polished to bring out their beauty. However, pearls need no such treatment to reveal their loveliness. They are born from oysters complete -- with a shimmering iridescence, lustre and soft inner glow unlike any other gem on earth.

A natural pearl begins its life as a foreign object, such as a parasite or piece of shell that accidentally lodges itself in an oyster's soft inner body where it cannot be expelled. To ease this irritant, the oyster's body takes defensive action. The oyster begins to secrete a smooth, hard crystalline substance around the irritant in order to protect itself. This substance is called "nacre." As long as the irritant remains within its body, the oyster will continue to secrete nacre around it, layer upon layer. Over time, the irritant will be completely encased by the silky crystalline coatings. And the result, ultimately, is the lovely and lustrous gem called a pearl.

How something so wondrous emerges from an oyster's way of protecting itself is one of nature's loveliest surprises. For the nacre is not just a soothing substance. It is composed of microscopic crystals of calcium carbonate, aligned perfectly with one another, so that light passing along the axis of one crystal is reflected and refracted by another to produce a rainbow of light and color.

The Miraculous Birth of the Pearls of Your Past, Present and Future

The full birth of who God designed you to be is a miraculous event. Unlike perfect people, God creates us into his image with a fallen nature because of the fall of Adam and Eve. Along your life journey many irritants such as disappointments, broken relationships, lack of self worth, dysfunctional family traits, addictions,

financial issues, thoughts of death, self-hatred, loss of hope, parasites, and many other clingy things seem to collect in the closets of your life. As your life progresses, the illusion of fear and failure are combined to force you to escape or resent the memories of your past, which in turn effect your present and eventually hinder your future.

God has allowed you as an individual to review your collection of irritants in a manner that allows Him to shine light into your past, present, and future, simultaneously. This review allows you to be thankful or exchange the irritants for a re-alignment that perfectly connects your past, present, and future via God's light. These light rays into your past, present, and future allow you to view the pearl of your life represented by a full rainbow of light and color that connects your past, present and future into the miracle God always intended.

Are you ready to begin the journey of finding the pearl within, by exchanging the irritants of your life for the miracle God intended! Should you embark on this personal journey you will be challenged to exchange your irritants for personal pearls.

The Pearl Within Journal includes various areas of your life that generally need to be refined, cultivated, and rid of irritants that have blocked the light rays of completeness to shine upon your pearl. In some cases, if you have released or exchanged your irritants over periods of time, the journey may be simple. However, if you have built up your irritants or hidden them through the years, the process could be lengthy and painful, but every bit worth it, as you begin seeing the **Pearls Within** you!

We encourage you to read and listen to the song called "Whatever Your Doing ... something Heavenly" by Sanctus Real. We encourage you to purchase the song once you have listened to the lyrics at -- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_t-PaBRSQY

"Whatever You're Doing ... Something Heavenly"

It's time for healing time to move on
It's time to fix what's been broken too long
Time to make right what has been wrong
It's time to find my way to where I belong
There's a wave that's crashing over me
All I can do is surrender

(Chorus)

Whatever you're doing inside of me
It feels like chaos somehow there's peace
It's hard to surrender to what I can't see
but I'm giving in to something heavenly

Time for a milestone
Time to begin again
Reevaluate who I really am
Am I doing everything to follow your will
or just climbing aimlessly over these hills
So show me what it is you want from me
I give everything I surrender...
To...

(Chorus)

Time to face up
Clean this old house
Time to breathe in and let everything out
That I've wanted to say for so many years
Time to release all my held back tears

Whatever you're doing inside of me
It feels like chaos but I believe
You're up to something bigger than me
Larger than life something heavenly

Whatever you're doing inside of me
It feels like chaos but now I can see
This something bigger than me
Larger than life something heavenly
Something heavenly

It's time to face up
Clean this old house
Time breathe in and let everything out

Sanctus Real, EMI/CMG Sparrow Records 2008

Introduction

"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you release on earth will have been released in heaven." ~ Matthew 16:19

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We are born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It is not just in some of us, it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others." Marianne Williamson

Many people seek for greater things such as greater meaning, greater understanding, greater wealth, greater relationships, greater significance, etc. The Bible is clear that we are to seek, we are to ask, and we are to knock (Matthew 7:7). In essence, the Bible encourages all people to improve and become the person God created them to be. Taking this one step further, Jesus begins to encourage people to not only believe upon Him but to expect to do even greater works than He did (John 14:12). Lastly, God states that He has given you the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven ... so that you can bind and loosen things in your life, your family's life and other people's life. Let it be known that for everyone that has allowed their past to block their future, feels inadequate, feels a failure, feels dysfunctional, feels incompetent, feels unworthy, feels relationally inept ... God has given you the keys to start finding and unlocking the pearl that is within you!!

Without a doubt, God has designed us to become more than many of us have become. However, few people have realized the simple process in which this takes place. That simple process can be explained in Scripture by stating what the Kingdom of Heaven is truly like. Open your hearts, listen, and pray over the following Scripture passage.

*"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it."
Matthew 13:45-46*

This passage in the Bible is vital to understand a simple process that many people overlook. You will note that in this passage the object of discovery is a **pearl** of great value. You will also note that the subject surrounding the object of great value is the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus was instructing us that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant who is looking for fine pearls, and finally finds a pearl of great value. When the merchant finds the one of great value he is willing to **exchange** all else to get the one of greatest value. Therefore, the Kingdom of God includes an exchange process as we progress through our asking, seeking, and knocking (Matt. 7:7). The doors of your opportunity begin to open and close with the key of exchange!

This passage is the key to your personal journey through the *Pearl Within* Journal. The Kingdom of Heaven and the Keys that God gave you to loosen and bind the issues within the Kingdom, is very similar to the journey of finding the great pearl within you. In order to recognize and obtain the great pearl you must exchange the issues of life. Simply put, the

key(s) to the Kingdom of God that allow you to loosen and bind (Matthew 16: 19) is the very process of exchange.

This process is so simple that at first glance it may appear complicated. The great news is that throughout scripture and our everyday life the process of exchange is shown as the key to getting the very things that God intended for us. Below is a long list of exchanges that have taken place that have advanced the Kingdom.

- God so love the world that He **exchanged** His one and only begotten Son so that we might believe and be saved.
- Jesus was on the Cross and **exchanged** His blood and body for our eternal salvation. He set the example of exchange for us to follow. This is why he commands us to also **exchange** by 'taking up our cross, daily.'
- Adam and Eve **exchanged** a life of perfection for a sinful future by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.
- Adam and Eve **exchanged** one more time by shedding the blood of an animal to cover up their new found sin.
- Noah **exchanged** the destruction of his family by having faith that rain would flood the earth even when there had never been any rain. He **exchanged** his role as a shepherd and shipbuilder for the title of a righteous preacher through his act of faith.
- Jacob **exchanged** His name for Israel upon confession of who he really was.
- Jonah **exchanged** his position in the belly of the whale when he committed to go to Nineveh.
- Joshua **exchanged** his lack of hope for victory when he listened to the voice of God to get up from prayer and move forward into action.
- Solomon **exchanged** his inexperience as a King, with the greatest wisdom in the world by acting and believing in His dream.
- Rahab, the prostitute, **exchanged** her faith for a place in the lineage of Jesus.
- The Apostle Paul **exchanged** his position as a martyr of Christians by asking God what He wanted from his life when he fell off his horse on the way to Damascus.
- Joseph and Mary **exchanged** their shame of having a child out of wedlock and became the parents of the greatest prophet and Messiah by believing what the angel of the Lord said to them.
- The Apostle John **exchanged** his fear of isolation and visions and wrote the greatest revelation of all time ... called the book of Revelation.
- Every sinner **exchanged** their life of sin by confessing that Jesus died on the cross for their sinful life in order to become a Christian.
- Many people in the New Testament **exchanged** their faith for a healing; as God said 'Your faith has made you whole'.

Simple and Personal Life Examples

- I **exchanged** my single life for a married life. The things I used to do with my single friends were exchanged for activities with my spouse and family.
- I **exchanged** marriage vows with my spouse making a commitment to be devoted to my spouse until death.
- I **exchanged** my feelings of a dysfunctional family by confessing that all families were born sinful, and therefore dysfunctional.
- I **exchanged** my college tuition for a college degree.
- I **exchanged** my college degree with a job in the computer industry.
- I **exchanged** my past failings with God's forgiveness by confessing the past failings. In **exchange**, God gave me a future direction.

- I **exchanged** my love for alcohol with a love for God's Word, once I realized I could ask for deliverance.
- I **exchanged** some of my retirement fund for a loan for my daughter's education.

As you can see by these examples, the process of exchange is what advanced the Kingdom of God and my personal life. Old Testament and New Testament people advanced the Kingdom and unlocked doors by exchanging what they had for something better. This is why Jesus stated that we could have the Keys to the Kingdom of Heaven to bind, and loosen things on earth. Even though this is a limited list of exchanges, any of us would be hard pressed to find examples where things are advanced or improved without a form of exchange.

Consider the mere fact that Jesus was used as the ransom and sacrifice for my sins. Even though He paid the price through the sacrifice, three forms of exchange had to take place for the ransom or sacrifice to have meaning.

1. God had to **exchange** with Humanity by giving His one and only Son in an earthly form.
2. Jesus had to **exchange** His position, come to earth, and die a sacrificial death.
3. Each sinner has to **exchange** by confessing that Jesus Christ died for their sins, before the ransom or sacrifice is applied to them personally.

Even though we claim that salvation is free, we need to admit that there was a price to be paid, and that I cannot claim my own salvation without exchanging with God my confession that I was born a sinner.

The simplicity of the process of exchange is best explained by understanding the simplicity of a relationship. In every living relationship, there is a process of exchange. There is no healthy relationship where there is no ongoing exchange. This includes relationships with God, spouses, children, friends, family, co-workers, but most of all with yourself. Note again that Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant of pearls who is willing to exchange for the great pearl they have found. Possibly Jesus used this parable to indicate that we must be like a merchant, knowing that a merchant is an 'exchanger' of goods. A merchant is also always asking, seeking, and knocking for greater goods to improve their position. If we are commanded to continue to ask, seek, and knock, we should conclude that we are always finding/learning of greater things that we can exchange with. In fact, we can take all the irritants of our life, and begin to exchange for greater things. This is possible when God's light shines truth and revelation on my irritants, transforming them into the greatest ***Pearl Within*** me.

This process of exchange will be the basis for every chapter within the Journal. In other words, the keys to your personal healing and the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven cannot be used without an exchange that will take place. Are you willing to **exchange** in an effort to see God's full light come into each area of your life to make your past, present and future the full rainbow of perfect light, color, and reflection that God intended it to be? Your ***Pearl Within*** is waiting for the full light of God to be reflected!

If the key to finding the **Pearl Within** is the action or process of exchange, every chapter of this journal will require action on your part to exchange things from your past, present, and future in order to identify the fullness and completeness of who God created you to become. Because God did not wake up today and change His mind about you, or who He created you to become, He desires you to ask, seek, knock as you exchange your entire past, present and future ambitions. This process for the theological at heart would be known as the process of redemption.⁽¹⁾ God instituted the process of redemption through many facets including covenants, testaments, and promises throughout scripture. However the full nature of redemption does not reach full value and maturity until we meet Christ in heaven (Ephesians 1:14). This indicates that the exchange and/or redemptive process to be an ongoing transaction of exchange. This is very much what God intended when He said that we would be in His image and progress through stages of ever increasing Glory. *"And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."* (1I Corinthians 3:18)

Let's begin the process of ever-increasing Glory in your life by allowing you the opportunity and privilege to exchange who you and others thought you were, with who God created you to be; as this is truly your **Pearl Within!** Make sure you write down the **Pearl(s)** that you find within yourself, in the spaces provided called *"Personal Pearls of Wisdom."*

It will excite you to learn that in Genesis 9:13-17 that God made a covenant (agreement of exchange) that he will use a cloud and the rainbow to remind Himself and us of His everlasting agreement of love for humanity. The rainbow that is created by light-rays of reflection and refraction are a great reminder of God's light that is able to reflect and refract of the beauty of who he created you to be. This beauty can be found if you search and decide to exchange with Him.

Note: Because this journey is so interactive and requires you to exchange with God we have provided a Blog called **The Pearl Within** Blog at focusonheaven.com/pearlwithin.htm. Please use the Blog to openly discuss your findings and exchanges. If you prefer to keep things less public, you can email Pam or Mike at ThePearlWithin@focusonheaven.com.

**Personal
Pearls of
Wisdom**

Personal Pearls of Wisdom

Please start listing some of the things you learned in the introduction: Don't forget to list the Pearls you have found within. Also, please visit the Pearl Within Blog at <http://www.focusonheaven.com/pearlwithin.html> to share your thoughts, questions and breakthroughs.

Please list the things that you already know you want to exchange with God:

Journey 2 – Facing your Past, Present, and Future

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises (shines) upon you. ~ Isaiah 60: 1

"You will never meet your fullest future until God's light transcends your past, present and future to reconnect you to who He always created you to be." ~ Michael L. Mathews

The image below is a picture of a photo of what meteorologist's call a Cloud Halo. The definition of a Halo in the sky is "The ring of light that seems to encircle the sun or moon when veiled by cirrus clouds." This phenomena is created when the cirrus clouds are in a heterogeneous arrangement to reflect and refract the sunlight through the ice crystals in the clouds. The ice crystals in the cirrus clouds serve as prisms of lights that both reflect and refract light.



Below is another example of a Halo that represents a complete circle of brilliance by the ice crystal prisms within a cirrus cloud. The prisms or ice crystals are so connected to each other that it results in a form that represents completeness.



If your life was connected like these ice crystal prisms, your life would also produce the same form of symmetry and completeness as the cloud halo. And, what if this connectedness of your life included your past, present, and future. If you could imagine that this type of completeness is possible, then the only missing ingredient would be the source of light that shines through the crystals of your past, present and future. This may sound way too simple, yet this is the Journey of this chapter.

This would be an opportune time to go back to the song by *Sanctus Real* and listen to the portion of the song that reminds you that God is up to something bigger than you; something heavenly inside of you.

In order for this portion of the Journey to make sense, you must understand that God may be much bigger, broader, and more phenomenal than you ever thought possible. Let it be known that God desires, longs, and waits for you to allow this greater aspect of Him to shine in all aspects of your life, including your past, present and future.

Bringing out an often missed aspect of God

Our modern day society has been overexposed to certain aspects of God that have blinded people to some other key aspects of God. The aspect of God that often gets overlooked is the aspect that God describes himself as the *light of life*.

Below are some of the scripture passages that describe this aspect.

- Praise the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty. He wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters. He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind. **(Psalms 104:1-3)**
- When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." **(John 8:12)**
- While I am in the world, I am the light of the world. **(John 9:5)**
- I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness. **(John 12:46)**
- This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him, there is no darkness at all. **(1 John 1:5)**

Personal Pearls of Wisdom

Out of curiosity go back to Exercise 1.3 and see if you selected 'light' as one of the attributes of God. We all need to appreciate the many attributes of God such as love, mercy, grace, kindness, justice, etc. However, when we finally see God as light, and understand how powerful and transforming light is; we may have an opportunity to allow that light to both reflect and refract upon our life. When we comprehend this light, we can start seeing God's beauty, and how His beauty allows us to reflect our own beauty. When we refuse, or unknowingly deny this light, we lose sight of God's true power. Without this light searching for the Pearl Within may be a long and/or wasted journey.

The reason many people miss the foundational element of God being light, is simply because we all strive for 'love'. Because we search so hard and desperately for love, we tend to cling to people, relationships, spouses, churches, and even believe in the portions of God that make us feel loved. Love is important; however, love by itself does not illuminate things or speed things up. In fact, love mixed with passion often blinds people. This explains why people who only see love without light get blind sighted fairly frequently; including their relationships and religion. Therefore, we can biblically and appropriately say, that without God's Light, which is His defining attribute, we cannot see love, justice, grace, mercy, kindness, peace, joy, faith, patience in their purest sense. And, without seeing them in their purest sense, we settle for the human version of these attributes. History has proven that man's version of these attributes are often manipulated and distorted. This explains why there are thousands of religions that are divided on the simple essence of God's grace, mercy, justice, salvation, love, faith etc. Each denomination has not properly reflected the Light of Life on these attributes, simply because they do not put the defining attribute first; **LIGHT!**

Now that we can appreciate that God is Light, let's define some unique characteristics of light. Light's defining characteristics include speed and illumination. Light travels at 186,000 miles per second and illuminates any darkness that exists in its presence. In fact, light is so fast, that it actually reaches its destination at the same time it left its starting point. This phenomenal attribute of light is why God references Himself as the **Great I AM**. Because He is light, he was at the end at the same time that He was at the beginning. Jesus also echo's the same words; before **I was, I AM**. This also means that my God is able to transcend all time, including my past, present, and future. God's attribute of light means that when my past began, that same light was at the end of my future. It traveled through my past, present, and future simultaneously. It is fair to say that Hollywood never invented time-travel, rather God is time travel. He is the **Great I AM**. Because light is so fast this is the reason that God states that one thousand years to humanity is as one day to the Lord. No wonder God knew me before I was born, and knows in advance my choices and ultimate destiny. He as light traveled through my past and destiny before I ever left my mother's womb. On a positive note, it is no wonder he can correct my past, my present, and re-invent my future all within a split second dream, vision, or circumstance. It may also be how He can relate to all my infirmities and temptations; he traveled through them and experienced them before I was born.

Let's take a minute and compare our human love to God's light. Upon comparison, we can start seeing a vast contrast between the two; describing why there are so many issues when we strive only for the love side of a relationship. Table 2.1 shows the contrast between love and light.

Personal Pearls of Wisdom

Attributes of Love	Attributes of Light
Love is more of a feeling than a fact	Light is more fact than a feeling
Love can be fleeting at times	Light is always constant
Love can cause us to be blind at times.	Light always exposes blindness/darkness
When love is pure and true it feels awesome	Light is always pure and true
When love is abused, it hurts or destroys a person, feelings and relationship.	You can never abuse light; it always exposes truth, and separates light from darkness.
When love is right; my life improves and goes forward	Light always improves things and moves things forward
When love is wrong, my life moves backwards.	Light cannot be wrong, and when used it always moves my life forward.
Hatred, bitterness, and envy can squash or minimize human love.	Darkness cannot squash light. There is no conqueror of light.
Variable – Can be fast, stagnant, slow, or regressive.	Constant – Always Fast (Travels at 186,000 miles/second)
God did not say 'Let us create love'	God did say "let us create light"
God did not say let your love shine before men, so they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven.	God did say 'let your light shine before men, so they see your good works and glorify your father in heaven.'
Love let's me like, judge, or dislike someone else.	Light lets me see things for what they really are, as it exposes things.
God did not say that 'The love of the body is the eye; and if your eye be full of love, your whole body will be full of love.'	God did say that 'The light of the body is the eye; and if your eye be full of light, your whole body will be full of love.' (Matt 6:22)
Satan does not need to disguise himself as an angel of Love, because it would cast out fear. "Perfect love casts out all fear." (1 John 4:18)	Satan tries to disguise himself as an angel of Light. Because this is the perfect impersonation of God. Satan tries to reflect himself in our lives. (II Cor. 11:14)
Also, it could be because humans destroy love all by themselves; no help is necessary.	
Medical research did not discover 'love deprivation disorder.'	Medical research did discover light deprivation disorder as part of seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

Table 2.1 – The contrast between love and light

By examining table 2.1 a person can rationalize, that light is the one constant force that comes from God. His Love is also perfect, but humans have a tendency to modify and easily distort God's love. The great news is that there is no way humans can distort God's light. Humans can only ignore light. In the 23rd Psalm, King David describes the feeling of walking through the valley of the shadow of death, yet fears no evil. He fears no evil because he openly admits that a light is shining in his circumstance (Psalms 23). He admits by stating that there is a shadow, and wherever there is a shadow means that there is also a light shining into the darkness. Without light, there can be no shadow.

Imagine the power that is unleashed when I recognize that God is not just love, but *Light!* This revelation of *Light* combined with love was given that we could begin to see things that we never saw before. That light might begin to reflect and refract on the issues of my life, and allow me to finally see the pearl or pearls within me; that were only viewed as irritants to me before.

Let me give you one of my personal examples.

One day this concept of light versus love dawned on me; and I started to search for more meaning in my marriage, my life, and my walk with God. This search allowed me to put the love for Mike in a better perspective. My fear and worry about the limitations of how much we loved each other began to vanish. When I decided to see God's light, and the light within Mike, I could see who both God and Mike truly were. The elusive nature of feelings and emotions no longer mattered; whereas they controlled me in the past. The new reflection of light caused my life, marriage and relationship with God to skyrocket to a new level, and continues to grow. Looking back what I was really saying was; I chose to no longer worry over the elusiveness of love, but have a flashlight shined into my life and my Mike's life. That light of God shines and reveals the reflection of myself in Mike, and his reflection into me. We were instantly more compatible, respectful, and true to each other; a feeling we never had when we were fretting if we loved each other. I believe I choose at that moment in my life to let God's light shine, and Mike's light shine to the point I found a new respect, new admiration, and new future for my marriage, my relationship, and myself with God. Through this experience or exchange, I found that I operated less from emotion and more from facts that light revealed. This should not have surprised me because light exposes facts, while human love expresses emotion.

Human love had a very strange way of having me always doubt, fear, worry, and at times think evil, condemning, and spiteful thoughts. My experience was a revelation that is explained in Matthew 6:22-23. The light of the body is the eye and if my eye be single/clear my whole body will be full of life; but if my eye is evil, my whole body is full of darkness, and oh how great is that darkness. This light that began to shine in me began a work on my mind, rather than just my heart. My new found light was amazing as things changed and opened up to me like never before. Have you ever noticed that when you buy a different make, model, and color of automobile, that suddenly you start noticing how many more people drive the exact same make and model that you are driving? It now seems as if everyone suddenly has one just like yours. My experience of light is much the same way. Once I accepted and allowed God to shine His light upon my life and circumstances, I started to notice things being exposed by His light, which were normally hidden from my view. In addition, my understanding and desire for change sped up. Light fulfilled its purpose in me; it exposed darkness and sped things up.

Let's try a quick exercise that may help personalize what is being communicated about the contrast between love and light. Take a few minutes and fill in the 'yes' or 'no' questions in Exercise 2.2

Have you ever been hurt by light? (do not include the last sunburn you had)		
Have you ever been hurt by love?		
Has new light or information in a dark situation ever revealed something that had previously been hidden from your view?		
Has new love ever revealed something that had not been hidden from your view?		
Has someone ever hurt you with light?		
Has someone ever hurt you with passion or love?		
Have you ever felt emotionally bankrupt over light?		
Have you ever felt emotionally bankrupt over love?		
Has light ever blinded you to truth, common sense, or logic?		

Has love ever blinded you to truth, common sense, or logic?		
Has light ever held you back in life?		
Has a love relationship ever held you back in life?		

Exercise 2.2 - Personal Love versus Light Contrast Exercise

Now, let's take a very personal Biblical example that connects the concept that light from God is far superior than the feelings of love. Light has the potential to change circumstances that love by itself cannot. Love from God is phenomenal in many ways;

Biblical Example: (Acts 9)

The religious leader (Saul), later named Paul was a religious leader who initially missed the fact that Jesus Christ was the Messiah; the light that was changing the world. This lack of seeing the light, created great confusion for him, and as a religious leader he made a drastic mistake and concurred with his religious peers that Christians must be killed. They were convinced that Christianity was a cult that was working against the organization of religion. Saul/Paul was a zealous religious person who had hated the truth of Jesus Christ. One day on the way to Damascus, an amazing light flashed around Saul. The light was so powerful that it knocked him off his horse. Immediately, Saul knew that it was the Lord who was examining his life at that very moment. Saul knew it was the Lord by the mere confession of saying, "who are you Lord?" Through all his years of religious training, Saul never experienced nor understood that the Lord was such a bright light like this. The light blinded Saul and he could not see for a few days. However, God got his attention by replying, "This is Jesus, the one you persecute. Now get up and go into the city and you will be told what to do next."

To make a long story short, Saul became the Apostle Paul, and went on in many ways to lead the New Testament church, and write many of the New Testament Bible books. In other words, during one **flash of light** of completeness, Saul/Paul's entire past, present, and future was healed and revealed. God's light of completeness healed one of the vilest religious leaders. Let's review the table below to capture the events that happened in his experience to help you relate to your own moment of light that may be on its way.

Fact about Saul/Paul	What God and Light Did in Saul/Paul's Circumstance	Scripture Reference
Paul was a zealous religious murderer of Christians	Instantaneously made him a completely new person, past, present, and future.	Acts 7:58; Acts 9:1; Acts 9:13
Paul states that the light that knocked him off his horse was 'around' him, and in one passage states, it was a 'complete' light.	Light formed a completeness around Saul. He was being healed from his past, present, and future. He was made a completely new man. The light reflected and refracted off his past, present, and future. Possibly much like the crystals in the Halo effect.	Acts 9:3; Acts 22:6; Acts 26:13
God cleansed his past for a greater purpose in his future.	When Christians first heard that Saul the murdered was now cleansed, they argued with God. God told them 'He is now a chosen vessel unto God.	Acts 9:15; Acts 9:21

<p>God revealed the true pearl within Saul via the light that flashed around Paul.</p>	<p>God's light in this process is one of the greatest human examples. It shows that God can even take his own irritants (a murderer of Christians) and find the pearl within them. This shows all of us greater hope!</p>	<p>Acts 9: 15</p>
<p>Light came before love; but once light came, the pure love could come.</p> <p>Light did exactly what its two attributes do best, sped up the process and illuminated things.</p>	<p>Notice that light shined into Saul's darkness before love did. Imagine if the local church group said we need to invite Saul to church and love him before we can introduce him to Jesus. Jesus' light shined down, gave full exposure, and sped up his transformation. Remember the defining attributes of light; 1) speed and 2) illumination.</p>	<p>Acts 7:58; Acts 9: 1; Acts 9:13</p>

Table 2.3 – Defining Attributes of Saul/Paul's Encounter with Light

Personal Pearls of Wisdom

List any areas of your life that you wish a similar light would "Zap." Don't forget to list the Pearls you have found within. Also, please visit the Pearl Within Blog at <http://www.focusonheaven.com/pearlwithin.html> to share your thoughts, questions and breakthroughs.

The story of the Apostle Paul should give great hope for every circumstance you may have been through. I am of the opinion that Paul had to see so much light at one time because he had so much past baggage. A sense of love by the local church group was not going to wipe out his reality of killing Christians. Saul allowed God's light to shine through to pierce his past, present, and future so He could truly love the Lord with all his heart mind and soul. God's light is all empowering and transforming. It should be noted that this great transformation of light is what gave Paul the love he needed for the Jews and Gentiles, as well as his enemies. It is amazing how love is a natural outcome of God light, but when we put love first, or love as a message all by itself, it is a back-wards message that disappoints many people. This is why Jesus stated in Matthew 5:16 *"Let your light so shine before men that they may see good works and glorify your father in heaven."* Jesus did not say, *"Let your love so shine before men so they could see your good works."* The reason that light comes first in the sequence is because light (not love) fulfills God's original purpose for the good works. Light in me, versus love in me, allows people to glory God, not me or my love. If people see my love and my good works they will tend to give me the credit and the glory, instead of God. If they see the light that is in me through Christ, they will give him the Glory, knowing that my good works can only come through His light within me. The same concept is true with the Apostle Paul. If he had been 'loved' by a church group into forgiveness or relationship with Jesus, he would have had quickly given thanks/glory to the Church, or people instead of God.

Personal Pearls of Wisdom

Now that you get the idea of light and love, please complete Exercise 2.4 and list your own past personal issues that you will pray for God's light to shine on! If you are like the apostle Paul and went as far as murder, please include that as well, as God forgives everything; if we let His light 'Jesus' shine on it.

Prayer -- If the Apostle Paul could be forgiven of murder in his past, Lord please shine on the following past issues of my life and forgive me. Shine your light in such a way that your light transcends my past, present, and future to form the perfect Halo in my life.	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Exercise 2.4 – List of My Past Issues

We are getting into the heart of this chapter; the transforming power of God's light. In the Apostle Paul's story of forgiveness, we find in (Acts 9:9-15) that a fellow Christian called Ananias was hurt by Paul's acts of murder. Ananias was not ready to forgive Paul's sinful acts of murder, and follow God's request to pray for Paul to be a blessing to the world. Nonetheless, the Lord's light also showed Ananias that even though he was offended, and hurt by murder, he could forgive Paul and endorse His new future. Once again, there are not many greater acts of forgiveness than forgiving someone who murdered your friends and/or family members. Yet, God's light is able to transcend the issues, circumstances, time, and our individual purposes to give each and every human being hope. This means that God is willing to forgive perpetrators who went as far as torture or murder; and He gives the ability for the people who were violated against in such cases to forgive the perpetrators. A person no longer has to be bitter over past violations. This is amazing, as bitterness is like drinking your own poison and expecting the other person to die. This portion of the journal may be extremely difficult for some people, so please do not rush through this next exercise. Rather consider the following three items as examples to follow.

1. In Exercise 2.4 above, it was probably easier to ask and believe God to forgive your own past issues, than it is to ask God to forgive someone who may have violated you. Let me challenge you to consider the fact that the reason it is so hard is because you are trying to forgive them in your own human love; versus letting God forgive them in His transforming light. When God forgives them, and you like Ananias believe it, then you could possibly see God's reflection in the person who God forgave. Ananias had to go and pray for Paul and look at his new found light that was being reflected in Paul. If we let God forgive them through His light, then your human love and forgiveness can follow. Also, if you follow scripture, which says; *'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you;'* then you should believe God for their forgiveness in exercise 2.2, with the same belief you had for God to shed light and forgiveness on your issues.
2. As followers of Christ, we must attempt to follow His actions. Jesus was violated in the most severe and traumatic manner before He was killed. Yet, after the violations of His name, identity, physical being, his position, his flesh, His blood, His pride, He still prayed for his violators and killers to be forgiven. Christ experienced violations until death to help fulfill the passage; that states that Jesus felt our infirmities and was tempted in every way that we have been, yet without sin. (Heb. 4:15; Mat. 8:17) Jesus went the fullest distance of violations to relate to our violations.
3. The missing piece of information that we will not know until we get to heaven is the depths of pain and experiences that Christ went through between His death and resurrection. We do not know exactly what exactly happened during that 3-day period that Jesus went to the heart of the earth (Matthew 12:40) to set captives free. However, what we do know is that Jesus experienced all levels of our infirmities and overcame all dominions, powers, authorities, and conquered even deaths very sting. He traveled the distance for you and me, so we can truly claim that by His stripes we are healed!

"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed." Isaiah 53:5

The Biblical reality is that Jesus went the full distance of being '**violated**' to give us confidence that no matter how we were violated; we like Christ can ask for their forgiveness. This in no way in-validates what people experienced or went through. There will always be people that experienced unbelievable and/or traumatic setbacks that are

Prayer -- If Jesus and Ananias could forgive their violators; Lord please shine on the violators who committed the following violations against me. I am asking your transforming light to transcend my past, present and future to form a perfect halo in my life.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

Exercise 2.5 – List of Past Violations Committed Against Me

You have just listened and processed some of the most simple, yet most powerful promises found in the Bible. God's light shines in such a way that we along with Him can transcend our past issues into our future. Allowing God's light to transcend these issues allows them to pass through the illumination of God's light for a complete healing. I, like the Halo, can form the completeness that God always intended for me. Remember, the two great attributes of light are speed and illumination. This self-completeness includes my past, present, and my future. My past, present, and future are also connected very closely to the three things that God said we are to worship him with; our hearts, our minds, and our souls. God says that He desires us to worship him with all our heart, all my mind, and all my soul. Unfortunately, during most of my Christian walk I had been exposed only to the heart side of my life. About six years ago, I learned that I had only developed 1/3 of the aspects that God was looking for me to serve and worship him with. I strived, functioned, and operated on Christian love, God's love, the Church's love, the pastors love, my husband's love to the point that my love 'balloon' was ready to burst. It was ready to burst because I did not develop my mind and my soul. Without developing my mind and my soul, how could I truly love God with all my heart, mind and soul? I realized that until God's light came in its fullness, my mind did not want to deal with the past, and therefore my soul could not encompass my own fullness of whom God wanted and created me to be. This kind of behavior adds to the disappointments that love-based relationships bring. The true light allowed me to see my entire heart, mind, and soul as the completeness of who God always desired me to be. I have forgiven myself, my violators or transgressors, stopped operating off emotion, and allowed God's light to reflect and refract off of all things in my life. No wonder I have found some pearls!

Personal Pearls of Wisdom

Reflection and Refraction

Reflection is where the source of light bounces off an object and it comes back toward the source of light. For instance when the sun hits a piece of flat metal, the light rays reflect off the metal back at the sun, giving a reflection from the Sun. Refraction is where the source of light bounces off an object and depending on the angle and composition of the object, the light passes through one dimension and out another dimension. For instance, when the sun hits a three-sided piece of glass or a prism, the sun passes through

one side and comes out the other dimensions in a potentially new form of light ray(s). This concept of reflection and refraction is what is happening when we open up our past, present, and future, as a three-dimensional view for God's light to pass through. His light can pass through my present circumstances, and if I let His light shine on my past, it will illuminate my past as well as my future on the other side; making my own personal completeness. However, if I choose to shut down areas of my past, the light of God cannot come through and expose, illuminate, heal, and bring it cleanly into my future. I remain incomplete.

Many people may ask; how does this reflection and refraction take place to heal my past and my future? Step back and think about the many dreams you have. If you are mindful over your dreams, you will notice that you have dreams that include past childhood memories, past memories in general, present circumstances, and future events that you have not yet lived. All these dreams (most allowed by God) is a manner in which God can show us the past, present, and future in an effort to allow us to reflect on the past, and refract into the future. In fact, the refraction is why many futuristic dreams may seem so strange. It appears distorted. God allows and gives dreams to help people get into the right future. *And God Chose Dreams* by Michael L. Mathews is an excellent resource to see all the Biblical examples of dreams that helped people get where they were supposed to be; and in many cases, the fulfillment of the dream healed their past. Take a few minutes and complete Exercise 2.6 pertaining to your dreams

Question	Yes	No
1. Have you had dreams about your past circumstances?		
2. Have you had dreams about your present circumstances?		
3. Have you had dreams about your future?		
4. Have you developed a method to process your dreams to allow them to help you with your past, present, future?		
List any dreams that have been life changing for you:		
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
List any dream that you have had numerous times, yet cannot understand		
1.		
2.		
3.		
For more information on Dreams visit http://www.focusonheaven.com		

Exercise 2.6 – Dreams Exercise

Please take a few minutes, reflect on what is being conveyed, and answer the questions in Exercise 2.7

Thoughts Going through Your Mind -Exercise	Check Box
1. This all makes perfect sense and I am excited for my healing!	
2. This all makes perfect sense but seems too easy to be true!	
3. I will need to process this, as I too have been over inflated with love, and never thought about light.	
4. I am completely perplexed by what is being presented!	
5. I cannot wait to share this with others!	

Exercise 2.7 – Personal Viewpoint

Considering that this concept is so simple, yet so revealing, we will continue as we have with a few more Biblical examples. The Biblical examples will help you take special notice of God's light as well as his transcending power from the past into the future.

Biblical example 1: (Acts 7:54 -59)

In Acts 7, Stephen was being stoned and killed by the religious leaders, including Saul. Stephen takes his beating and stoning by the violators with great grace because he did something many of us refuse or don't know how to do. He allowed his reflection and refraction to shine in the midst of the circumstance. Listen to the words that are spoken in this passage.

"But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. " Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep. (Acts 7:55, 56, 59, 60)

These words are powerful because Stephen allowed himself to look toward heaven and reflect, as well as refract back and forth with Heaven. Before they stoned Stephen, he was able to see into heaven and view the glory of God, which also reflected back toward him, giving him the strength for the moment, as well as forgive them in advance of what they were doing to him. Imagine this kind of power that allows you to see into a circumstance, view heavenly details, and reach into the future and forgive someone who is stoning you to death. Most of us cannot forgive people until after the violation has been completed against us. Stephen did it before they completed violating him. He did it right in the midst of the circumstance. This is not love; this is the power of light! There was no love-fest going on in this circumstance; it was a light-fest, where the power, glory and light of God opened up to Stephen. In a split second he was able to reflect on his recent sermon he delivered (Acts 7:2-54), and refracted into his future to see his position with Christ in heaven; giving him the ability to say 'forgive' the sin.

Can you be like Stephen and forgive your violators?

Personal Pearls of Wisdom

Biblical Example 2

Before we get into the exact Biblical example, let me give you some background on a word that is not used very often. The word is called *quicken*, and it is used to illustrate the concept of speeding up something, making someone more alert or aware about something, and/or bringing something to life. Scripture uses this word in Romans 8:11 (KJV) to demonstrate an experience we all can have when we let the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead dwell in us. This is why it is not strange that Stephen and millions of other martyrs can joyfully be killed. They are experiencing a 'quicken' or 'coming alive' feeling that comes from the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead. What an awesome thought to know that not only was Jesus raised, resurrected, and made alive, but we may also get to experience this at times. "And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you." Romans 8:11.

This passage verifies that Jesus was raised from the dead by the Spirit of God. It is worthy to note that this Spirit that can quicken us, also quickened or rose Christ from the dead. Just prior to being raised from the dead Jesus echoed the words '*It is finished!*' Many people over simplify this and say it was in reference to His death, but the reality is that he was just made alive again. What He was more than likely echoing are the very things that he saw just prior to the Spirit raising him from the dead. The things he saw were probably the kind of things that Stephen witnessed just prior to His death, and then some! What Christ saw was so powerful, wonderful, and majestic that darkness invaded the land for three hours, an

Challenge Question: Have you Ever Been Quicken?

Have you ever had a stressful or dramatic experience in life where things seem to move in slow motion, and you could see everything around you as if they were in fine detail? Quite a few people experienced stressful situations where things seem to speed up and slow down all at the same time. The slow down looks like it is happening because suddenly they are seeing very vivid detail around them, yet things are moving rapidly because of the circumstances. For instance most police officers in high speed chases recall the vivid details that most people never pay attention to, yet the events of the chase and what happened after the chase went so quick that it seemed over before it began. For those people who have had this type of experience it is a very surreal moment and strange experience. During these moments what transpires is that you are being '*quicken*' or made alive in a difference sense to the things around you, that normally go completely un-noticed. It is very possible when Stephen was being stoned that he was quickened in his spirit so that he could see heaven, and Christ sitting on His right side, while he was still on earth. Scripture says 'If that same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead dwell in you; it will quicken your mortal body. (Romans 8:11 KJV).

earthquake split the temple in two, and many dead saints arose from their graves (Matthew 27:52:53). Not only did the Spirit raise Christ from the dead, but the Spirit also rose many who had been dead. At that moment, they got out of their graves, and walked into Jerusalem. Yes, this fact is often overlooked, but it is right in scripture. The Spirit of the Living God was quickening this special moment in time to allow the real story (His-Story) to be visualized by His own Son. More than likely what Jesus saw in a split 'quicken' moment was the experience of things becoming fast motion and slow motion at the same

time. He probably saw in a split split-second the entire past, present, and future flash with a bright light that allowed him to endure the pain He was going through. Within in a split-second he saw the reconnection of humanity all the way from the history of humanity, through present day humanity, and out into the future of humanity all being saved by His personal sacrifice. When He saw this, He was able to say... it is finished!! God and Christ who are Light, traveled in that moment throughout history and into the future to save each and every soul ever born and that will ever be born. It was the greatest quickening experience known to humanity.

That same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead desires to quicken your entire life, which includes your past, present, and future; but will you let Him? Jesus had to first become obedient unto death before He saw His quickening moment. You too, must become obedient onto the death of your own sins, and people who have sinned against you, in order to reconnect you past, present, and future. This will be your own 'quickenning' moment.

As you recall, we started this Journey with the photos of the Halo Affect where light is able to shine in a complete circle around all aspects of the ice crystals in a cloud. Are you ready to let God's light shine into all past, present, and future aspects of your life, to make you who you were always created to be? You cannot forget your past if you want to get to your future. You need to heal and reconnect your past into your future. In this manner, God receives all the Glory.

Spend the next few days reviewing this chapter and taking notes on your own completeness. Seek after God's answers and light to begin to let God know that you are ever thankful for His provision to deal with your past, present and future. Do some examination on the happiest people you know. Usually the people who are the happiest are not those who had no serious mistakes, or serious violations committed against them. In fact you will most often find just the opposite is true. The happiest people are those who have traveled through the mountains and valleys of life and learned how to thank God for bringing them through the circumstance, as well as forgive themselves and others. For this reason, the next Journey is on Thankfulness.

"People must die before they are fully born to live to their fullest potential. Death of self allows one to see the truth that God knew them from their birth unto their death -- all at the same time. This reflection of self in God's light, heals the whole person and launches them into their future." ~Michael L. Mathews

The Pearl Within



Ministers Michael and Pamela Mathews

What makes the Pearl Within so unique is that it will take you through a personal journey of your life to find the hidden Pearl(s) within yourself. This is the very Pearl that God always intended for your life. The journey will take you through your past, through your present, and help launch you into the future as it illuminates the Pearl that God designed you to be from birth. The journey will blend many experiences and emotions that make you laugh, make you cry, make you rejoice, and lead you through many euphoric moments of thanksgiving as you see your true reflective pearl being extracted from the oyster and irritants of your life. You will soon see the similarities of the miracle of both the Pearl and your life, once you view the completeness God intended for your past, present and future.

Michael and Pamela have been ministering in marriage for 23 years, and as licensed ministers for over 12 years. They have been affiliated with numerous denominations and parachurch ministries. Their background and hunger for God's truth and wisdom has allowed them to develop a systematic perspective that combines biblical history and future revelation to illustrate a modern-day understanding that enlightens truth for many.

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