

Message #1074  
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"HOW TO SAFELY LAND AFTER A SPIRITUAL HIGH" {Your Spiritual Journey--I}  
{Revelation 2: 1-7}  
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## INTRODUCTION

There's a natural tendency when a person has been on a spiritual high to pull back...shift into neutral...and, not build upon the principles they learned while they were on a spiritual mountaintop.

A good number of you recently completed the "40 Days of Purpose" and many found that time so very meaningful to your lives. {Let me add, that I'm so pleased that such a good number of you have enrolled in Don Hammond's Class, "UNIQUELY YOU" which is a good way to keep moving in the right direction.}

However, for some, once the book was completed and you learned about God's purpose for your life, the book was closed and you haven't done much with it since...and you're not putting the purposes learned into practice!

Well, where do we go from here?

How do we move on?

What's the next leg of our spiritual journey?

I have a question for you: What's the highest point on earth?

...answer: Mount Everest: 29,035 feet

...did you know that since 1921 1,600 people have climbed to the summit of this mountain?

...but, did you also know that 160 have died trying during their expedition?

...that means that 10% died in their attempt

...for that, people pay about \$60,000--90 days of their life--and know there's a 10% chance they won't make it In spite of the risk, there's something about getting to the highest place that's compelling!

Second question for you: Is it more dangerous to climb Mount Everest, or to descend down the slope of that mountain?

...you can tell by the way the question was worded what the obvious answer is

...more people die descending than ascending the summit By the way, there's a spiritual application to all of this...you have to be very careful when coming off a spiritual high.

Let me ask you a third question: In weather patterns would you rather have a high-pressure system or a low-pressure system?

...of course, you'd rather have a high pressure system.

...that's where the stable air is

...low pressure systems bring unstable stormy weather

...but...high and low pressure systems are inevitable

We ALL experience highs and lows in life: emotionally and spiritually--and, if you're not prepared for them, you're going to be in a lot of trouble! No one maintains on a constant high!

...life is a series of highs and lows

...ups and downs

...the good and the bad!

Did you hear about the man sharing a good news-bad news story with his buddy? He said: "Hey, did you hear that John fell out of an airplane?"

"Oh, that's bad," said his buddy!

"No, not so bad, he had a parachute!" said the first.

"Oh, that's good! said his buddy!

"Well, the parachute didn't open!" said the first.

"Oh, that's bad!"

"No, there was a haystack!"

"Oh, that's good!"

"No, there was a pitchfork in it!"

"Oh, that's bad!"

"No, he missed the pitchfork!"

"Oh, that's good!"

The first guy said: "No, he missed the haystack!"

...now that's bad...really bad!

We all know that the highs are sooo good and the lows can be sooo painful. We like just to hang on to those highs and not let them go.

Remember the story of when Jesus was with His disciples on a mountain and they had a unique and euphoric spiritual experience? When Jesus was ready to descend the disciples begged: "Could we just stay here for a little longer!" They just didn't want to let go! And...neither do we!

I love the email stories that many of you send along to me. I especially like the one I received this week...

"This is a story about a little boy who had a pet turtle, Albert. All of a sudden the pet turtle turns pale and falls on its back and lays motionless. Here's this little guy and tears are streaming down his face and he carries this little turtle to his dad. His dad is the ultimate salesman and he knows that he's got to put on a real sales job for his heartbroken son; so, he takes the little turtle, pits it in a shoe box and says, 'Let me tell you son, this is the best thing that's ever happened! This turtle now is walking around up there in heaven.

It's sooo great! And, I'll tell you what we're going to do. We'll have a little funeral party and you can invite all your friends. After we have a little funeral, we'll have cake and ice cream and games for all

your friends. What do you think?' The little boy started to smile.

So, the dad knew that he had to close the sale; so, he said: 'OK, let's go outside now, let's have a little burial in the backyard.' So they carried the shoe box out into the backyard; and, just at the last moment, the little boy opens the lid, peeks inside, and Albert is walking around like nothing had happened. With a little disappointed look on his face, he looks up at his dad and says, 'Dad, can we kill him?'"

There's also a spiritual point to that story, too.

...we want spiritual highs at any price!

...we want to stay spiritually high

The Bible is full of examples that the Christian life is full of challenges.

...Daniel was faithful to God

...he was thrown into a den a lions--that's low

...but, the lions don't eat him--that's high

...Jonah ran away from God...and...

...he's swallowed by a great fish--that's low

...but, the fish spews him out on dry ground--that's high

...Jesus was God's beloved Son--that's high

...He spent 40 days in the desert being assaulted by the devil--that's low

...He spent His life to teaching about the Kingdom...

...transforming lives

...performing miracles

...that was a high

...But, He was crucified--that was a low

...but...then He rose from the dead--that's high  
The point? Because Jesus stayed faithful to God in the highs and lows, it's in the highs and the lows that we will learn to become like Him!

## I. HOW TO GET STARTED ON THE JOURNEY TO MAINTAIN A STABLE CHRISTIAN LIFE

I want to look at a group of Christians that obviously went through some highs and lows in their lives. Look at the text in your outline...

"I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot endure evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false, and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.

Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first." {Revelation 2:2-5--NAS}

...these believers had grown in their faith

...they had a sense of purpose

...they had served the Lord with great diligence

...but...SOMETHING HAPPENED!

...THEY HAD A LOVE PROBLEM!

...THEY LEFT THEIR FIRST LOVE!

## II. WHAT IS FIRST LOVE LIKE?

Let's look at some of the attributes of first love. Number 1--There is an insatiable desire to learn all you can about the other person!

...you want to learn everything you can

...remember what it was like when you first came to Christ?

Secondly: There is a heavy investment in that love relationship.

...you're willing to invest heavily

...time

...money

...you want to be with that individual

Thirdly: There is an intense preoccupation of the heart.

...no room in the heart for anyone else

...your heart is full of love for the other

...they go into the relationship with reckless abandon

...no mountain is too high...no valley too low

Next...

## III. WHAT CAN HAPPEN TO THAT LOVE?

Look at your outline and it says something extremely insightful about love. It says:

"You have LEFT your first love!" {Revelation 2:4}

Have you ever loved Jesus more than you do today?

...has the low pressure system set in?

...have you started to descend the mountain?

What does one do when this happens?

...or, if it's already happening?

...how do you get back on the track?

...what steps need to be taken?

## IV. FIRST STEPS ON THIS JOURNEY

Let's look at our text to find the answer.

1--REMEMBER!

...can you remember the mountaintop?  
...when you made an investment in this relationship?  
...when the Lord was the preoccupation of your heart?  
...when reading the Bible was so precious...a priority in your day?  
...when you looked forward to communicating and sharing?  
...when giving of your time, energy, talent, and monetary gifts was an incredible joy?

Have you lost the thrill?

Lionel Harrison wrote a song some years ago where God is the singer and He says to the listener...

"I miss my time with you. Those moments together. I need to be with you each day and it hurts Me when you say you're too busy. Busy trying to serve Me. But how can you serve Me when your spirit's empty?"

...God wants to be in a love relationship with you.

...He's tried throughout the ages to say to you and me: "I love you...I love you...I love you...I love you!"

He says...REMEMBER...what it was like!

2--REPENT

That word means that we recognize that where we are is not where we're supposed to be; so, we turn and move toward where we're supposed to be!

That repentance!

Read with me the verse from Lamentations 3:40-- "Let's take a good look at the way we're living and reorder our lives under God!"

...moved from your love for God?

...turn back...now!

The steps thus far: Remember...Repent...

3--RETURN--you do the works you use to do!

...take it one step at a time

...you'll begin your ascent once again

...step by step!

Suggestions--

...do what you were doing for 40 days

...get back into God's Word

...spend time daily with Him

...give Him your heart anew

...talk with Him

Do the next right thing!

Don't worry about feelings. Write this down: "Motion will lead to emotion!"

...start moving

...head back for the top

...rekindle that love flame

Read with me the passage from Philippians--"Now that we're on the right track, let's stay on it!"

...one step...one choice at a time.

Now read the Galatians 5 passage--"Live by the Spirit that fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."

...the Spirit will work within you

...day by day you will become more Christlike

...if you don't quench the Spirit's work.

And note the II Corinthians 8:11 passage--

"Having started the ball rolling so enthusiastically; you should carry this project through to completion just as gladly. Let your enthusiastic idea at the start be equaled by your realistic action now!"

But, you say--ok--I'm willing to follow step-by-step, but what if I trip up? What do I do when I hit the lows?

Here's your answer: REMEMBER...EVEN WHEN YOU FAIL--GOD NEVER FAILS!

...God's care for you will never fail

...and...God's love for you will never fail

God wants you in His arms where you belong...no matter what!

Why? Because His love for you never fails!

...how's your love for Him?

...moved a bit?

...then pick up...move back in the right direction

...He hasn't moved one iota!