



"You will know them by their fruits." Mt. 7:16

Tom Plumb

I needed to escape from my own impoverished inner character. But how could I do that? Nobody knew such a thing -and I did not know who or what to ask. Was grad school the answer? After talking to some PhD candidates I found they were just as spiritually lost and bankrupt as I was-

I had friends describe their travels in Europe, but their accounts left me intensely frustrated. I did not want to discover endless landscapes and dusty museums -I wanted to find what made up a real life that works. After University I was tired of endless books and poverty.

I was so full of spiritual vacuum that I hurt. One evening I was walking outside and I kicked a street light post for just for standing there without caring. I kicked it so hard I really hurt my foot. Being fatherless does not work very well. I tried going to churches and Christian youth meetings until I came to the conclusion that Canada lacked the answers I needed.

So, in disgust and total desperation I resigned my new teaching position, drove to Vancouver and sold my car. I then bought a rucksack and hitched to San Francisco where I caught a passenger/freight ship one-way for Yokohama -simply because it was the opposite direction from Europe. At that time only the wealthy could use air travel. I hitched and slept in parks etc in the deep of night around Japan when foreign travelers were almost unknown. I certainly saw none. Sometimes I was treated as a celebrity and invited into homes. In Tokyo I was eagerly taken to the "Ingerr-ish" speaking club.

On my way I was thinking about how I should travel. During University I learned the most when there were "case studies" of particular people or places in history or in a particular culture -so I decided to do just that. I would travel slowly and stop in places long enough to get to know local situations in some depth. No museums. Real life was what I needed to discover.

Eventually in my travels I got so involved in spiritual Yoga and Buddhism that I was employed at an Ashram in New Zealand, but one day I decided to do something different. I attended a "Christian Fellowship" meeting.

While singing a familiar gospel song I started to feel strange. And then I started to feel really strange and then this voice spoke to me in a gentle audible voice that was freighted with the power of the Universe that simply said: -"MY NAME IS JESUS". I responded instantly with "Well, if you are Jesus, WELCOME!!!!" (to my heart) He in turn instantly flooded me with what I came to understand as His Holy Spirit. I was totally undone and was not able to speak for the next three weeks! They had to help me back to my room. Ever since it has been my hope to embody the peerless character I heard in that astounding Heavenly Voice.

Naturally, I set out to serve the Lord with my customary total Yogic zeal. My uninformed expectation was to surpass my former Eastern "enhanced consciousness" since this was the real thing with the real God. Perhaps this could be the start of a new religion that combined the two? Well, that was a great idea, but little did I know that God was a jealous God. For these first months, I walked in a rosy honeymoon cloud of anointing. Then it became more complicated. I had much indeed to learn.

I woke up one quiet Saturday morning to find that the Holy Spirit was gone. Just gone. It was very spooky until My eyes rested on all my exotic Buddhist artwork. With that, anger just flowed into my arms. I hardly knew what to think of this, but I got the message after I had destroyed it all. Any new religion that retained all this eastern stuff was evidently totally out of the question!!!

I was invited to speak at a few small rural churches because they were enthralled by my spectacular testimony of sudden transformation from ghastly heathen evil to blazing Holy Spirit light. Apparently my testimonial was instrumental in bringing some young people to the Lord. They returned in a few months to become local teachers. They invited me to their home to meet regularly with themselves and friends. Though I knew virtually nothing about the gospel at that time, I prayed and read my Bible tirelessly, and so whenever they asked a question, I had a good answer right there for them from the Bible and recent revelation. And whenever the group had a problem, and nobody had any idea what to do, we simply prayed together in desperation. And lo and behold things happened every time!!! We came to count on it. I learned a great deal in this time just by listening to my own Bible and my own voice. Casual speaking out of revelation quickly became a regular thing with me.

Latter Rain

I returned to Canada and became established in a small “Latter Rain” church in London, Ontario. After a few months, the Lord had me spend weeks repenting with tears to wash away any remaining uncleanness from the Orient. At that time I had a menial warehouse job, that allowed me to quietly weep all day while working. Coming out of my amoral adventures across the world -I discovered that I had no shortage of spiritual pollution. I was just overwhelmed with conviction. This world is a lost wasteland that quietly devours the unwary.

And over the years, I gradually came to the terrible realization that nobody in the church world knew how to maintain a close and intimate relationship with Him and expand it into a solid constant reality such as I had come to expect with Yoga. Nobody had it. All that was offered was “more of the same” up and down, sometimes clouded Christianity. There was nothing beyond this. I was dismayed.

At first I treated my new church like a University lecture hall and wrote careful notes so I wouldn't miss anything, but later I caught on to what the pastor was doing.

Ninety five percent of the preaching was about “trials”. He just served up the same tired theme every Sunday using fifty different approaches. It was an outrageous insult to the intelligence. I stopped taking notes. What was the use? I now knew the simple drill. And years later as his reward he was promoted to be the head of that small denomination! I can only guess that His hearers honored him simply because he was consistent.

With this lazy sort of “leadership” how can a young man serve God without falling spiritually asleep?

Brother Lawrence

During this period I developed a technique after I had read about the life of the medieval monk “Brother Lawrence”.

Now that was more like it!! Perhaps I should become a monk?!! But how do you do that without taking a time machine and becoming a medieval Catholic? Here is what Brother Lawrence did:

“He was assigned to the monastery kitchen where, amidst the tedious chores of cooking and cleaning at the constant bidding of his superiors, he developed his rule of spirituality and work. In his “Maxims”, Lawrence writes, “Men invent means and methods of coming at God's love, they learn rules and set up devices to remind them of that love, and it seems like a world of trouble to bring oneself into the consciousness of God's presence.

Yet it might be so simple. Is it not quicker and easier just to do our common business wholly for the love of Him?" For Brother Lawrence, "common business," no matter how mundane or routine, could be a medium of God's love. The sacredness or worldly status of a task mattered less than the motivation behind it. "Nor is it needful that we should have great things to do. . . We can do little things for God; I turn the cake that is frying on the pan for love of him, and that done, if there is nothing else to call me, I prostrate myself in worship before Him, who has given me grace to work; afterward I rise happier than a king. It is enough for me to pick up but a straw from the ground for the love of God."

Brother Lawrence felt having a proper heart about tasks made every detail of his life possess surpassing value. "I began to live as if there were no one save God and me in the world." Brother Lawrence felt that he cooked meals, ran errands, scrubbed pots, and endured the scorn of the world alongside God. One of his most famous sayings refers to his kitchen:

"The time of business does not with me differ from the time of prayer; and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, *I possess God in as great tranquility as if I were upon my knees at the blessed sacrament*".

The path to this union was difficult. He spent years disciplining his heart and mind to yield to God's presence. "As often as I could, I placed myself as a worshiper before him, fixing my mind upon his holy presence, recalling it when I found it wandering from him. This proved to be an exercise frequently painful, yet I persisted through all difficulties." He found a peace in reconciling himself to the thought that this struggle and longing was his destiny. He said his soul "had come to its own home and place of rest." His death in 1691 occurred in relative obscurity, but his teachings lived on in the compilation of his words."

This was a very spiritually healthy practice quite similar to my familiar yoga. It kept me spiritually active and alert so that when I came across anything in my heart that did not please God, I naturally gave it over to Him right away. I spoke in tongues every waking hour. I gradually learned to do this sub-vocally so nobody could tell unless they noticed my radiant countenance.

Later, I purchased a very small Bible. I kept it in a custom made leather case with a belt loop on it. I used it at work. When others would grab a smoke, I would grab my Bible. Of course, my loud Christian co-workers scorned and marginalized me for this because I was not fitting in. That was fine with me. I did not have time to waste as they did.

There was a troubled elderly lady in the church with perennial personality problems and a sick unsaved husband. You know- a spiritual hypochondriac.. She had an appointment for counseling with the pastor every week. And every time there was a service she was there. And every time she came -she prophesied with a trembling voice. And if there was an anointing on the meeting it left as soon as she started speaking out. I had a discussion with the pastor over this, but he did not want to hurt her feelings. The anointing would recover much of its strength in a few minutes, but finally one day the Holy Spirit just left and did not return to that church. Ever.

My anointing remained intact, but I was totally flabbergasted. It had been a church just packed with precious people, and miracles. But it all departed just like that!!!

They had been encouraging us young people to use our gifts and prophesy. I saw now that there had been no spiritual support for this. The leaders had all the discernment and revelation of a potato. We were all quite unprotected from our youthful ignorance. I was suitably chastened so I decided to stay out of trouble by avoiding further public prophecy. I decided the thing to follow was not revelation, but Holiness -whatever that might be, I wanted to stay away from things that might make you lose your blessing. After all the things I had been through, a loss like that was just too much to contemplate.

[The Living Word](#)

So I was without a church again. But my auto mechanic went to a church that was new in town.

The pastor was an American that would drive over from near Detroit from time to time. He later became famous for his writing. His name is Francis Frangipane. He was good then, and he is good now.

At that time he belonged to a world wide fellowship called "Church of the Living Word" headquartered in Anaheim California. Now this Church was really together. It had "apostles"!!! -and this was way back before apostles became fashionable. Regular members were all called prophets!!! This quite dazzled me since I had heard of nothing so high and exalted before. (1977) Because it did seem overblown I stayed on the periphery until I was sure this was the real thing. I hoped that I might learn more than the shallow faith I was already acquainted with. They had quite few "elders" that made up the exclusive inner circle around the "apostle".

A lot of time was spent listening to cassette tapes by the apostle "John Robert Stevens". They had big high speed tape duplicators they kept busy. I duplicated a few thousand myself.

I was in charge of volunteers doing extensive concrete work and necessary structural renovations in the footings and basement of their big old building in Edmonton. I had experience doing just that. The work was needed because when two or three hundred enthusiastic young people jumped in unison upstairs the whole structure would move.!!

And then one day the Holy Spirit just left this church too. Not because of carnal prophecy, but because of "destiny creep". They spent a lot of energy discussing the "Kingdom", the end times and their amazing leading role in it. This perceived role kept on inflating.

The gray haired head apostle divorced his old skeptical wife who did not recognize his glorious position. After he quickly re-married a devoted young admirer -things quickly changed. First, a commandment came down that people who were still struggling with old habits like smoking etc should be honest and admit the truth. Smokers should smoke. People should practice their favorite failures (in the church) until they could repent properly... Makes sense doesn't it? Simply be honest! The trouble with this idea is that the church quickly became a meat market full of honest swearing and honest uncleanness of every sort. Honest adultery. Honest drunkenness. Honest pub crawling. Honest mysticism. The scriptural remedy of course, is for those regularly practicing acts of sin to be notified by the church that they will be glad to welcome them to church fellowship after they come clean. For example, there is no such thing as a practicing Christian thief..

Things then went from the sublime to the ridiculous. The whole purpose of the church became to intercede for this head apostle so that he would be the first "into the Kingdom", (whatever that might mean) because after all somebody has to be first, don't they? And the Lord did not have time to raise up another people of astonishing faith like us now did He? Shortly after this was proclaimed in 1982, he got a rapid form of brain cancer and soon died. I don't think it was any coincidence. His young wife took over the mantle of leadership, and before long married a man of her own age who was also a dedicated follower.

And then one Sunday I showed up and the Holy Spirit did not. Everybody else thought it was normal. I thought it was creepy. He was gone!! The next Sunday, I showed up again just to be sure, and sure enough, He was still gone. I followed Him out the door. He did not come back again, and so neither did I. And then everybody else gradually trickled away also. And then over time through the grapevine I heard many heart-stopping stories of woe. The inner circle mostly moved away, including the local apostle. Most of them divorced and returned to the world. Even the "elders". Dust to dust. What a waste.

Books

My spiritual circle was reduced to two other men for two or three years. We would read the best Godly books and then meet to share what we had learned -usually on a long walk in the riverside park. We had no church.

As a result of these talks, I got in touch with the best ministries that existed at that time. I ordered their books, and then ordered more to share. I then ordered even more to share. And the more I shared, the more people wanted, so I started ordering in bulk and getting bookstore prices. So people wanted even more. So I set up a book rack in my home, and took boxes of books to set up a book table when ever there was a Christian conference in town (Edmonton -pop 1 million). At these tables I not only sold books but talked to the people, quietly discerned where they were at and recommended books appropriate for their next step in God -as I had always done in various ways ever since I was saved -and even before when I was a junior guru.

The Spirit

Without any church, the Word and the Spirit became my only available sources of edification, so I redoubled my personal habits of spiritual diligence.. By now it was my long habit to just hit it speaking in secret tongues while at work or at home. Every break was spent in the Word. Every possible spoken word was freighted with His grace. I came into a place where I would gain short periods where I was just walking under an open heaven, just imbued with a strong unearthly blessing, every moment and free of every burden. These times of supernatural radiance gradually increased in length, while the intervening times of oppression became shorter but much more difficult.

One day in 1987, I was in the Spirit while driving back from work. The Lord spoke very clearly to me, *"Tom. You are now mature enough in Me to be an ideal church leader and esteemed pillar of the community. You may go that way or instead continue on to come closer to Me: but the way will be difficult. CHOOSE!"* I immediately burst into an intense prayer of total abject re-dedication of my life to the fullness of His purposes. With great zeal I am sure I prayed the sun, moon and stars right there in the car. I carelessly flung every aspect of my existence into His capable hands. I could sense clearly that God had heard the cry of my heart.

(This is called a "re-consecration") I kept this locked firmly in my heart. From that time, in no thing did I consciously hold back from Him.

The Final Battle

Things then really heated up, and became more difficult. My long-term stable management job terminated since the company was sold off. Employment became spotty and uncertain.

The times of feeling as if I were walking under an open heaven became as long as three weeks at a stretch. The constant glory was beyond compare. But also the regular times of spiritual assault became so vicious it was beyond belief. Strong spirits of lust and every carnal thing in a magnified form surrounded me in a thick putrid stinking darkness. My spirit was full of a lethal suffocating oppression. I prayed the tremendous oppression back again as if it had never been overcome. I found it so humiliating, so inappropriate. Here I was: a citizen of the light, walking without known fault for years now: full of His assurance, power, revelation; dwelling in His majesty and dignity- near the very pinnacle of Christian spiritual achievement -and being subjected to this!?

I just couldn't accept this stark contrast. It was so completely inconsistent with my reality of innate spiritual dignity. I was totally fed up with this repulsive garbage, (after all I had been repeatedly repenting of everything possible for 18 years at this point) so one dark and difficult day I prayed a desperate prayer. I prayed, "Lord, if you are not able to clean this disgusting garbage away, please, take

my life. I have just had it!” (The part that galled the most was the totally arrogant affront to the spiritual dignity the Lord had imparted within from so much anointing and consecrating.) This cleared the dark cloud away from this bout, and I went my way; but with deep reservations. I had done all and still there was all this trouble!! What was going on here? Is there actual victory in the Lord or not?

I basically was ready to give up. What was the use? I had done all that could be done spiritually, and yet where was His boasted victory? Was this all there was? I needed more. Much more. And yet there was nothing more I could do but tenderly go on trusting Him regardless of the all evidence that so loudly argued His impotence.

Where else could I go except to His feet?

I then went around under a vague sense of being under observation by a stern (uncompromising, firm) and scary Heavenly Court high above. I occasionally heard a sound like a very distant grumbling like thunder. I felt I was being weighed in the balances, but had no idea what to do about it. None. Very scary.

His Rest

A few days later I was riding my bike on the paved river valley bike path in Edmonton, with oppressing thoughts coming at me like, “All these years of dedication to the Lord have just not been worth it. Where is the victory? You might as well go back to your carefree life of adventuring around the world!” Right then something caught in the front spokes so that I flew through the air until I was stunned by the sudden stop on the pavement. I felt I should get right back on to my feet in order to not worry anybody, but instead, I decided to just lay there. He was there on the pavement with me so I allowed myself to just totally relax into and trust the waiting arms of His anointing of love within and allowed myself to merely lay there injured on the asphalt. I just completely let myself go into His love. Where else could I go? I humbly laid down my whole life into His capable Hands and sub-vocally asked for His help. As soon as I consciously made this decision to relax into Him in total trust, and let go of all concern, including my strong concern and striving for my own unacceptable spiritual state, I felt a palpable fiery oil being poured from the throne. It ran down over my whole being. I felt it's oily wetness all over. This was August, 1988.

Now, you may think that this a very strange way for a momentous spiritual event to occur, and I would agree with you. But what could I do? My ignorance was total. Churches and ministries had been no help. I consecrated but did not know that it was leading up to something. After a whole-hearted consecration of my life, I then needed to ask Him to specifically intervene to purify my heart and life. But how could I do this when I didn't even know that this was possible? What was God to do with me? He waited. And then He waited.

His Glorious Tableland

At first, although I knew something momentous had taken place within, I couldn't quite pin it down. It was only as I quietly went through life as usual for the next couple of days, that I realized that I just didn't function in the same way as I did before. As I kept living I kept discovering inward things that just were not there anymore, while discovering other things that just as mysteriously simply were there. Apparently a profound and fundamental restructuring had taken place within -rather than an ever-greater endowment of power for service and anointing one always expects in Pentecostal circles.

My spirit has ever since just been filled with a profound holy hush together with all the anointing I want. The muddy and restless waters of my spirit were replaced by a smooth and crystal clear reflecting millpond within.

So cool and refreshing. There has never again been the background mental and emotional chatter of

fear, doubt or worry that used to dominate my inward thought life.

Instead, the background of my mind is clean and new: totally silent and free from all interference. I feel like I am playing my life out in an oh so very holy hush upon a perfectly reflecting expanse of darkly translucent glass: His very whisper is always easy to hear, "Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal." Rev. 4:6

This is not like earthly glass that smudges and scratches. It remains stainless and flawless in every way.

From that day forward, the "black cloud" has never returned. Not once. Nor has there ever been any hint of spiritual opposition within. However, I no longer had any idea how to pray. I failed when I tried to do some of my customary repentance prayer. I found this confusing. I didn't know what to do since that was my main prayer type. It was a key pillar of my system of belief and practice. But there just was no conviction remaining to repent with. There was nothing left to repent for. I could not get any traction. Consequently, I had no idea how to progress from there in Him. I felt unemployed spiritually! All the spiritual work was now done, so what was I supposed to do now??? Before, I had been quite a worrier, but now I could no longer worry even if I tried. I could only trust with this new unshakable rock solid faith since my spirit was full of His unshakable palpable assurance.

The goading stick of condemnation was gone, and I had eaten the carrot of reward! All this donkey now knew to do was to quietly walk this glorious tableland under the clear skies of His anointing that was now crystal clear, constant and effortless because there was no more inward work to do. I didn't even know how to worship since I now had become worship.

There was no longer any continuity between my spirit and the self-serving spirit of this world; therefore it was just natural to reach out with His mercy when appropriate. After all these years I still feel that being myself is an unearned holy privilege each day, but I have gradually learned to function, grow and comprehend in a completely new way that fits this new reality.

I had changed my citizenship: before, I was a citizen of earth struggling spiritually to relate to a sometimes distant heaven. Now I am a citizen of heaven, finding the observed ways of earth (and unsanctified church) to be somewhat alien, and certainly twisted! I do not say this in a theoretical scriptural sense, but in an actual experiential sense that has become hard-wired within. I call this a "conversion" in the full meaning of the word, in that my original conversion experience has now been gloriously completed. My Baptism in the Spirit is no longer an occasional dunk but a new aquatic life in Him.

At last that mysterious "real life" has been fully found. After all my years of effort and searching the globe, it has been found!! I did not struggle over the price of His Rest, because I felt that my only treasure was what He had given me so far anyway. My struggle was with ignorance and self-effort. I had never heard any hint of teaching in this area at all. This possibility of total cleanliness of heart was diligently ignored, while we were constantly exhorted to expect failures. We miserable "sinners-saved-by-grace" were blithely expected to fall from time to time, and then just get up, repent and walk on without considering the possibility that there was a deeper problem that was causing it all! There was never any hint of a possibility of complete freedom from all this sordid falling in all the endless teaching of "victory" I had heard over all these years!!!!

So many wonderful people and churches I knew in the past I now understand to face an uncertain eternity. They are quite lost in popular cults and mysticisms of various sorts.

They relied upon their considerable prowess and now what do they have? I thank the Lord for His special protection in this O so dangerous world.

I pray that you will find this better dimension of His Grace. We all need it in order to at least stay saved as we slow down with increasing age.

Yours in His Service;

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POSTSCRIPT

In 1996 I became ill with severe Mercury poisoning right after an elderly dentist carelessly replaced many of my fillings with new ones. I often had clear times in the evening, but otherwise I became quite dysfunctional mentally. Food intolerances multiplied until there were only a few things left and even then I had to use special digestive enzymes to help out. I could actually feel the outline of my brain since it had pins and needles all over it. I could hardly think. Social interaction was impossible. My limbs became unreliable. I would fill the toilet with blood. I was too sick to work, so money became tight.

I went to a good doctor, and he told me that if it was Mercury that the medical community would be no help. And I knew it was Mercury because my Naturopath had sent a sample to the states to verify it.

For years I stayed away from church as well as everybody else because I was certain that everybody was out to get me. I was in a situation similar to Nebuchadnezzar in the wilderness eating grass. Possibly he too was given mercury as a medication? The grass he was eating would chelate it out.. Like myself, he probably could not tolerate his regular food anyway.

However, spiritually I was still just cruising. Most of the time on dark and stormy seas, but sometimes all the symptoms would just clear away and He would be with me in His usual glory.

I finally found a formula online at <http://www.awakennutrition.com/> that took away Mercury far better than all these chelation remedies I had been taking for so long. With that I slowly returned to the human race.

But about three years ago I staggered into the hospital emergency because I could hardly breathe. Since then it has been a struggle with the "side effects" of their toxic remedies. Right now I breath just fine but my legs are nearly useless because of lack of blood flow, which is a known side effect of the long term use of Prednisone. They even have Latin name for the condition!

More recently I have been scraped off the floor and taken to the hospital a dozen times. Finally they found out it was caused by "gluten intolerance". Now I avoid gluten, and am happy to stay on my feet!

January 2014

