

Chapter II

The Secret of Personal Power

What if the world's best-kept secret was given to you? Would you allow yourself to embrace the secret, to study its use, to understand it and then to turn it to your dreams, your goals and your needs and let it guide you to a life of destiny?

Legendary Christians such as Dwight A. Moody, Carey of India, Livingston of Africa, Lottie Moon of China, Martin Luther, John Wesley, Billy Graham, Bill Bright and thousands others, discovered and embraced the secret and became what God had in mind for them. The Great Commission was emblazoned on their hearts leading them to consider the world as their theater of operations. The secret burned within, creating enthusiasm, vitality and energy

The secret?

The personal power of the Holy Spirit.

The mysterious comforter Jesus left behind is the giver of the Abundant Life Jesus promised. Life is abundant when your muscles surge with energy as you face whatever mountains you want to move. Life is abundant when your mind crackles with imagination and determi-

nation. Life is abundant when your heart beats with force and your days are met with purpose.

The secret promises these and more.

Your body can easily go 80 years or more with minimal maintenance when you treat it as the temple for the spirit. Set a goal right now to outlive your doctor. Avoid doctor visits. Refuse to let stress rule your life. Avoid hospitals. Rev up your immune and endocrine systems. Avoid sicknesses that require potent, expensive medicines that have undesirable side effects. Don't be passive about your health. It is a valuable jewel.

The power of the spirit gives you the keys to the kingdom. Open the doors before you.

The doors are in your mind. The keys change the way you think. As you believe in the power of the spirit, the power becomes a creative force within you and, whatever you conceive, you can achieve.

The power of the spirit opens the windows of your mind so that what your eyes behold and your ears hear is interpreted as it really is, not as someone else wishes you to believe. Thus, you have the power of discernment.

The power of discernment is used to crack open the lies and deceit of the culture we live in. Society will blind you and seduce you and capture your attention, robbing you of the destiny the spirit promises.

The secret contains the meaning of important laws such as the Law of Sowing and Reaping. The secret will teach you how to pray effectively and many other valuable skills.

The secret will rid you of robber emotions such as worry, fear, denial, anger and procrastination, which result in lives of regret, not destiny.

The secret gave birth to science as the spirit was in power in the minds and hearts of men and women who believed what Jesus said and vowed to follow him. Their

discoveries launched the power of knowledge which is now ours to use because all science is connected to Heaven.

The power of knowledge teaches us how to eat, how to exercise, how to lose weight, how to shop for food, how to cook, how to avoid fat, how to calculate the number of calories you need and gives us thousands of other useful bits of information.

The secret has the power to search your heart to weed out harmful habits. Habits that harm are those that sabotage your journey, that make you settle for less than a truly remarkable journey. No other group of humans has been given the Great Commission to carry out. It is ours and ours alone. The journey is worthy of our full attention and all our energies.

You may be called to be in business or to become a professional. Or, it may be that your journey will be to care for the sick in a hospital or a nursing home or it may be that you will help children of despair cross the threshold of hope. Whatever it is, we have been given the power and the commandment to love our neighbors because God has called us to be special.

We are free from bondage to systems of law or thought that arise from the minds of little persons who seek to ensnare us. We are free to find our own horizons. We can rise to the challenge and become one of the exceptional Christians, now that we know where the power is.

In every era God has raised up men and women of destiny to address the mess of the moment. He unfetters their minds, expands their imaginations, and makes history come alive. Try to imagine the unthinkable, a world without people of the spirit, without people of power.

In the final analysis all that matters is that we choose to accept the power and that we accept it fully. Then, look forward to an unbelievable journey.

The Source of the Secret

The Bible supports the idea that the Holy Spirit is a person, with personal attributes; a conscious, intelligent, personal friend sent from God. This is how our personal friend works with us.

- He has the wisdom to make clear the deep things of God, 1 Cor. 2:10.
- He loves us, Romans 15:30.
- He is grieved when we are out of step with him, Ephesians 4:30 and Galatians 5:25.
- He speaks to us, 1 Timothy 4:1.
- He teaches us what to say, Luke 12:12.
- He commands us, Acts 13:2.
- He intercedes when we are weak, Romans 8:26.
- He comforts us when we have trouble, expecting us to comfort others, 2 Cor 1:4.
- He is the source of hope, Romans 15:13.
- He is the witness that we belong to God, Romans 8:16.
- He justifies and sanctifies, 1 Cor 6:11.
- He distributes spiritual gifts, 1 Cor 12:11.
- He appoints the believer to his or her work in life, Acts 13:2-4.
- He guides us unto all truth, John 15:13.
- He teaches us all things. And when we are tempted he brings to mind one of Jesus' sayings so that we can resist, John 22:14.
- He gives guidance to our attitudes, calling them fruits, Gal 5:22.

Love	Goodness
Joy	Faithfulness
Peace	Gentleness
Patience	Self-control
Kindness	

- And the Holy Spirit is all for healthy living since

we are told to "glorify God in your body" which is viewed as the Holy Spirit's temple, 1 Cor 6:19-20.

My personal experience with the power of the Holy Spirit, came on the heels of a crisis. A business I operated with my son, Steve, went bad and hemorrhaged money enough to drop me very close to bankruptcy. I had nowhere to turn.

During long nights I would stare at an unseen spot on the ceiling of the bedroom, letting my mind roam through the options open to me.

Gradually I found the doors and windows of my mind closing to my problems and opening to one fact:

The Lord has called me to be one of his special friends. He is nourishing me with his love, strengthening me to press on, so as to take possession of my heritage in his kingdom.

I set goals that I believed were in line with the grace given me by the Lord and began moving toward them. I found that I could master the knowledge necessary to move me to my goals but that only the miracle of love could grasp and embrace the Lord. Only from love could I get the peace of mind promised by Jesus. I was at peace. And, a heart at peace gives power to the body.

I found that the Lord, the master of time, never gave me promise of a future. He gives only the present, moment by moment, for this is the law of creation and cannot be contradicted. So, I was never overwhelmed by the future. It seemed to be filled with overwhelming problems. I did not dwell on them. I only had the moment I had.

This isn't to say that distractions didn't occur. They did. But, I was able to cut through the daydreaming, fantasizing, and subtle reasonings of my mind and get back on track with singleness of purpose.

And, it isn't to say that darkness didn't occur. Darkness sometimes lay like a cloud over my soul, keeping me confused about which direction to take. This was the darkness due to absence of knowledge. This was correctable by unraveling the depth of a problem or seeking the counsel of

others.

Another remarkable thing happened. Whenever a bit of knowledge was needed or whenever a time of decision drew near, I would suddenly find the book or the article or the person I needed would come to mind. I never ignored these for they were help from the Lord.

I affirmed in my mind that the world is a place of interaction and connection and that the purpose of our souls and bodies is to reenchant the world with the ethical and moral principles taught by Jesus. Through controlling our choices and thereby our habits we live the spirit-filled life before we share it.

When trouble strikes, the natural tendency is to develop negative thinking. Here's how I kept a positive outlook.

Seven Steps to a Positive Attitude

Fear of failure is a major cause of negative emotions. I knew that I would have to get outside my role as a physician in order to correct my situation. I knew that I could fail.

Step #1. I developed a sense of practical optimism. Failure was not one of my options. My view was a healthy realism. With eyes wide open I stood ready to confront events as they arose.

Step #2. My thinking became very flexible. Things weren't viewed as black and white or all or nothing. Everything had its range or scale of possibilities.

Step #3. I became tough skinned with regard to disapproval and rejection. No matter who said what, I would keep going.

Step #4. All my thinking became action oriented. If something needed doing, I went ahead and did it.

Step #5. My thinking became more effective, giving me control over negative emotions. I focused only on things I could do something about, rather than worrying over things outside my control.

Step #6. I viewed my problems not as failures but as important parts of learning. I refused to let trouble lower my self regard. This kept my productivity up, even though I had no assurance that the solutions I sought would work out.

Step #7. In addition to thinking optimistically, I planned purposely.

I knew absolutely what I wanted:

- All debts paid.
- Credit cards cut in half, check book balanced, and a mailbox that wasn't stuffed with bills from banks and other lending agencies. To achieve these I learned a new way to pray.

I suppose you would call it meditation. I wrote out my goals on 3 x 5 cards, which I always kept near at hand. Periodically, throughout the day I would find a quiet place, read several of my goals over, close my eyes and let my mind be open to the Holy Spirit.

The Art of Meditation

The Encyclopedia Britannica describes meditation as profound and generally peaceful considerations of truths that are thought to have great importance in ordering and living one's life. Meditation is especially esteemed and practiced regularly by persons who have dedicated their lives to the spiritual life.

The art of meditation is a major key to healing. To get the most from your prayer life, try it.

Meditation is a simple art, available to everyone. Ignore the extravagant claims of current groups and the

show of meditation as an occult experience. It is neither alien thought nor something to fear.

After all, if you sit in a church pew in silent prayer, you're meditating.

When the Bible says, "If a man would but reflect he would ," meditation is being advocated. Reflection is a form of meditation.

To meditate:

- Select a quiet time of the day.
- Sit relaxed -- gazing at a fixed point. Sensations will come and go. Noises will distract you. Your thoughts will crowd in. You will wonder, "Is this a waste of time?"
- Keep looking at the fixation spot.
- Your mind will quieten.

Then ideas will flood you. You will feel calmer. The fixation spot will turn into images. You can visualize yourself as a healthy person, eating what you should, exercising regularly, and so on. Then, visualize your body's defenses conquering your problem.

After about 10 minutes you can call yourself out of meditation, feeling calm, relaxed, and confident that a spiritual process is being worked out through you.

Actually, meditation is very similar to silent prayer except for the fixed gaze. It isn't the same as simply thinking of saying a prayer out loud.

The value of fixing the gaze is simple. The point of concentration keeps the mind focused on your inner self rather than on your external self.

Why You Should Meditate

One of the major values of meditation is to lessen the influence of your problems on your life. Normal thought is temporarily suspended, allowing you to experience peace of mind. New insights open up and new learning comes from the inner spiritual aspects of your mind.

Meditation lets the mind go in search of solutions outside of the information already known. If you are really open to God and reaching out, you are prepared to receive sudden flashes of insight that will offer new and fresh solutions to your area of concern, as given to you by the Holy Spirit.

The usual effects of 10 minutes of meditation are a relaxed and refreshed mind. Through new truths the mind shows its endless creativity

Meditation is a gentle, subtle exercise, not filled with strange visions and breathtaking experiences. When you first begin meditating you may feel impatient. You may also expect too much and feel that you are wasting time.

Don't give up.

Meditation — A Peaceful Refuge

Everyone needs a peaceful refuge away from the noises of the world. We tend to over-identify with life's difficulties, including illness, as though there is no alternative.

Meditation is a free, peaceful refuge, available to anyone, anywhere, any time. Meditation is a major way to regeneration.

A New Form of Worship

It was obvious that this bond of union between Christ and me was incomplete without faith. Faith was required to complete the circle as it says in Ephesians 3:17, "Christ dwells in our hearts by faith."

I knew from my feelings that this faith which united me to Christ and saved my soul was no natural act of the mind. Rather it was a supernatural act, an effect produced by the power of the spirit of grace. And the details of how it happened were too mysterious for me to figure out. As my soul became empowered, my pace, energy and activity picked up. Thus the soul became the life of the body. The physical power of the spirit became real.

As I progressed up the spiritual scale, the traditions of worship became less appropriate and less relevant. I wanted at all costs to avoid a religious rut. I wanted enough truth to see the big picture of how Jesus, through his life and death, taught me not only the way I must follow but also the response I must make.

Prayer and praise became my constant companions, bringing instant renewal and revival. Communion became commonplace. I received from Him peace of mind, discernment, comfort, enlightenment, confirmation and assurance. I gave him love and obedience. From him I received life daily. I gave him my trust. I gave him my heart. And I gave it throughout every day. I integrated my journey.

The Integrated Journey

Even though we are born again, we differ. Each has his or her own work, own special calling. We each have a will, the mysterious freedom of choice which operates within certain biological limitations and the confines of our own particular gifts.

Variety has great benefit. The differences of people is part of what makes a community at church. Variety creates wholeness.

There are many differing roads each can take, and choices each can make to form his or her unique journey. After we are born again, if we ask again and again and again the answer will come to us and we will take the right road.

Whatever your experience with Jesus before, things are now different. God is in the driver's seat of your life. This gives you a remarkable opportunity to integrate your life with the mission of Jesus.

No more "Sunday Morning Christianity", no more putting work in one compartment and religion in another. From the word integrated, we get integrity. Integrity

means to achieve wholeness which is the opposite of fragmentation. Fragmentation is easy. Integrity is painful. But without it there can be no wholeness. Without it there can be no satisfactory journey.

Integrity requires that we fully open our journey to the challenges, conflicts, forces, ideas, and stresses that Jesus would have for us, because he resides both inside us in his still, small voice and, simultaneously, outside us in all of his transcendent, magnificent otherness.

When we integrate our lives with Jesus mission we may find ourselves crossing hostile continents filled with strangers, spreading the good news on foot, on horseback, or in rough vehicles.

We may be called to build or operate a hospital, church, orphanage, university, day care center, rescue mission, or business. Life with Jesus is challenging. Persons on born again journeys conquer frontiers, make scientific discoveries, write books, teach pupils of all sorts, render care to the sick, their lives ignited by their belief in Jesus.

Jesus hated sickness. He sought wholeness and restored the sick to health, so that they could carry out their purpose in life, with energy. The born again life is a life of action.

Seven Rules for a Long Life of Action

A scientific study of health habits called The Alameda Study, has identified 7 habits that can lead to good health. Those who practice these 7 simple rules will, on average, live 12 years longer and have less sickness than those who do not.

Unlike automobiles and other mechanical devices, people do not come in new and improved models. Infants born today will differ little from those born in Jesus' time. The rules for the sound body in which to house the sound mind are still the same. In health and

fitness there is indeed nothing new under the sun.

Our science is, of course, much more complex. We have discovered more and more of the sophisticated mechanisms that make the body work. Yet all that we know can be reduced to one rule:

- Use the benefits or lose them.

And one admonition:

- Use the benefits correctly.

The general health rule has to be applied to your situation exactly. Each of us must learn specifically how to take a general rule and adjust it for our own, because each of us is different. As you go through these 7 rules, check your own habits against them so that you can get ready to live out the good physical life that is a mark of being born again.

Rule #1. Eat a good breakfast. After eight hours without fuel our bodies need a substantial breakfast to get things going again. Believers in Arizona may eat the cowboy's breakfast; in Anaheim they eat the trucker's breakfast and in Minnesota it's the farmer's breakfast. Eat a good breakfast no matter where you are.

Rule #2. Don't eat between meals. This rule becomes easy to follow after a good breakfast. Otherwise we follow the 90-minute feeding cycle of infancy. For the adult, the 90 minute infant's feeding cycle leads to excess weight. We are responding to messages left over from childhood or, if you can't live by this rule, eat an apple as you snack.

Rule #3. Maintain your weight. This must, however, be lean body weight. We should weigh close to what we did in our later youth. If we do, we find that the rate of aging is so slow as to be almost unnoticed. Our weight and percentage of body fat are good indicators of how seriously we take our obligation to be fit.

Rule #4. Don't smoke. Tobacco is simply an obvious

example of any number of substances hazardous to our health. We should avoid all pollutants to whatever extent possible. Arthur Morgan, the famous educator and founder of Antioch College, once said he treated his body like a Stradivarius. The Bible tells us to treat it like a temple.

Rule #5. Drink alcohol moderately or not at all. The drinking of wine has been said to favor less heart disease, yet, few doctors recommend it because the risks of abuse outweigh the possible advantages. And, since the #1 cause of premature death up to age 40 is automobile accidents and as many as 50% of automobile accidents are alcohol related, avoiding alcohol is good advice. The best reason for avoiding alcohol, however, remains the Biblical reason, so that our children will not accept the alcoholic drink as normal activity because we do it and thereby do it themselves.

Rule #6. Get a good night's sleep. Find your particular sleep need. We are said to be a sleep-deprived nation because of stress. When you are overtired, your immunity is down, leaving you susceptible to a variety of illnesses. Regular sleep repairs the damage of yesterday.

Rule #7. Exercise regularly. This may mean a brisk walk for you, or running or jogging, or rowing, skiing, bicycling, or swimming. Any sort of activity is better than none. We were born to be active. The demands of society now reduce us to inactive lives and we must make a special effort to get in 30 to 40 minutes of activity to counteract the unwanted stresses our lives bring us.

As you see, if you don't smoke or use alcohol, these 7 rules land squarely on three issues that lie at the bottom of about 80-90% of all illness:

1. Control of stress, which causes loss of sleep.
2. Control of eating patterns and weight.
3. Regular exercise.

Research confirms that you can live longer by following these rules. A long life is fine if its filled with action, otherwise it could be very boring. Instead of length, focus on vitality A committed life is a life of energy.

Our purpose of energy is the self-development of our own skills in 7 areas of the born again lifestyle:

- physical health
- spiritual health
- emotional health
- intellectual development
- management of relationships
- management of money
- management of time

The believer who strives for continuous self-development must be highly motivated. The web of society tends to hem us in, forming channels of easy living. If you stay in the channels, all is easy. To get out requires extra drive, enthusiasm, and energy.

Actually, to tear down society's web of mediocrity requires sheer physical energy, no matter how spiritual we are. Immense physical efforts are required to learn, to grow, to recover from setbacks, and to overcome deep trouble. Anyone who claims the born again lifestyle must have the deepest respect and concern for the marvelous and intricate body and mind the Lord gives. It is very able.

Astonishing sources of energy are available to us when we enjoy and find meaning in what we're doing. If you have no great conviction about your work, it may be time to wipe the slate clean and search for a part-time activity or a career that you can do with burning conviction for your health's sake.

The conventions and artificialities of life, to say nothing of habits, routines, and simple busyness, carry us far from the focus of our true being. The believer who wants

to renew the source of his or her vitality must cut through the false fronts of society and strive to get more from what he has put his heart into.

Society tends to over organize us. The media tends to drown us with words. Spectator events tend to rob us of time. These influences and others confuse us and cause us to drift from our beliefs and convictions. Most of the things of society were designed to serve us in some important way. But, wise men and women must analyze the influence of society on their health, their vitality, their energy and their purpose and when necessary turn their back on the influences that would prevent their acquiring the born again lifestyle.

We must be motivated to look beyond the tendency of society to capture our attention. The born again lifestyle is too important to allow it to fall prey to our inattention or indifference.

Actually, the case can be strongly made that the born again lifestyle should be a major part of child-rearing. Research shows that a home atmosphere that encourages effort, striving, and vigorous performance, will produce young people who know what to expect in life and who will be able to perform well under all circumstances.

If much is expected of a child, the chances are very good that he or she will expect much of himself or herself and choose the vigorous life. And, if parents choose the born again lifestyle, the children are likely to make the same choice.

Secrets of the Born Again Lifestyle

The teachings of Jesus sum up the character which should always mark a believer and which must be true of him or her if the believer wishes to be distinguished from the non-believer.

Many people, however, who make no religious profession whatever, are much more humble-minded,

gentle, merciful, and peace-loving either naturally or by self-discipline than many who turn to Christ.

Jesus' beatitudes give us goals to shoot for after we are born again. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit we can recognize our spiritual poverty and our sinfulness, and accept God's diagnosis of our condition. Then, we will hunger and thirst for the cure which only he can give.

Jesus tells us we are to be "salt to the world" and "light for the world." Then, he showed us how to "come and learn" from his example. Thereupon he went to the parties of tax-collectors and sinners and met women of loose morals without embarrassment. He was no kill-joy. His attitude was not stern or exclusively negative and he spoke to them in a "gracious way." But, he didn't lower his standards to their's. Nor did he hide his real self which he revealed to the religious hypocrites in scathing terms. In him we see grace and truth uniquely.

When Jesus taught, he said "you", speaking to his small hand. He declared that they and they alone could provide the cure for the ills of human society Through them he says the same to us today.

As individuals our lifestyle is played out as salt and light in the communities in which we live. And it is played out as love because Jesus told us to "love one another." Paul picked up on the theme of love. Listen to what love is:

- Love is patient.
- Love is kind.
- Love envies no one.
- Love is never boastful.
- Love is never conceited.
- Love is never rude.
- Love is never selfish.
- Love is not quick to take offense.
- Love keeps no score of wrongs.
- Love doesn't gloat over other men's sins.

- Love delights in the truth.
- There is nothing love cannot face.
- There is no limit to love's faith, hope, and endurance.

Lifestyle is how we choose to live and how we design our lives. You may have learned to earn well but not to live well. You may have a poor attitude about life because of a low income level. Sickness may have plagued you. The born again lifestyle can still be a reflection of what you believe, no matter what your cir- circumstances are.

The Born Again Lifestyle Reflects Ethusiasm

The born again life is filled with spiritual energy, called enthusiasm. When enthusiasm is low the energy of the spirit is low. When enthusiasm is high, the energy is contagious, filling us and those around us with determi- nation and plans and goals and endurance and courage and passion.

We need passion to become what we can become. Non-believers may think of you as a fanatic. But, to move anyone else to action, you must first be moved yourself.

It is the spirit that moves you to action and the power of the spirit can move you even when excitement is low or missing. The spirit can get you through when all else fails by inspiring you to rise above yourself, to become what you can become.

The mind can stretch the body to go to the limit and beyond. Where this counts most is in the prevention of disease. We can all be more hardy. Hardiness prevents disease. It depends on fitness. It depends on wise use of the will. We can choose. We can decide. We can will to exercise or not, or to eat healthily or not. When we will to embrace the born again lifestyle, nothing can prevail against us.

Lifestyle is a Reflection of Our Attitudes and Values

The exciting thing about the born again lifestyle is that we can have the joy, the graciousness and the optimism regardless of our circumstances. We don't have to wait until we're better off financially. We don't have to postpone our appreciation of the finer things of life. We already have them.

We can live a life that is as joyful and rewarding as we wish, starting right now.

Lifestyle is a Reflection of Who and What We Are.

Our lifestyle communicates a clear message about who we are and how we think. Lifestyle is where we go, what we do and how we feel about it once we're there. Lifestyle is how we dress, what we drive, and the type of entertainment we choose to enjoy.

Lifestyle is the emotional control we exhibit during tough times as well as the emotional release in times of joy and happiness.

Our lifestyle is the intensity we demonstrate for developing our talents to the highest levels of competence and using those talents in the marketplace.

Everything about us sends a message to others about our level of intensity for the life we've selected. The things we do, the things we say, how we eat, the restraint we exhibit, our appearance; everything is suggestive of our inner attitude about life.

Whether we spend more money on donuts than on books or whether we spend an evening with our families or in front of a T.V. screen or having fun with the "pals from the office", everything is a reflection of what we value and our attitudes about life.

Lifestyle Must Be Studied as Well as Practiced

Finding your born again lifestyle pattern means that you must think about what you're doing and going to do. Life is an art, not an accident. Happiness is yours to

experience whenever you wish by virtue of your rebirth, regardless of your circumstances.

Now, let's move on to discover how to get power from prayer — the world's most powerful alternative medicine.