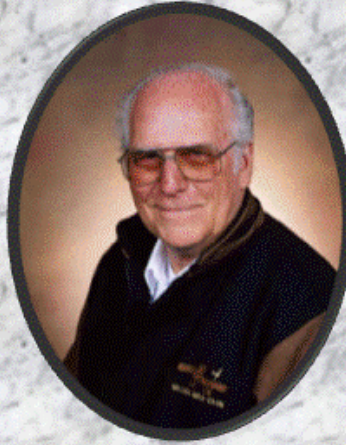


The Pearl Within



Journey 5 – Exchanging Anger with Love

***Special Testimony Journey Dedicated
to the Life of Clayton McClary***



THE PEARL WITHIN

A SERIES OF INSPIRATIONAL JOURNEYS AND JOURNALING

By: Pamela and Michael L. Mathews

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Note: All Bible Scripture References are from the New International (NIV) version unless otherwise labeled.

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

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 heart's 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.

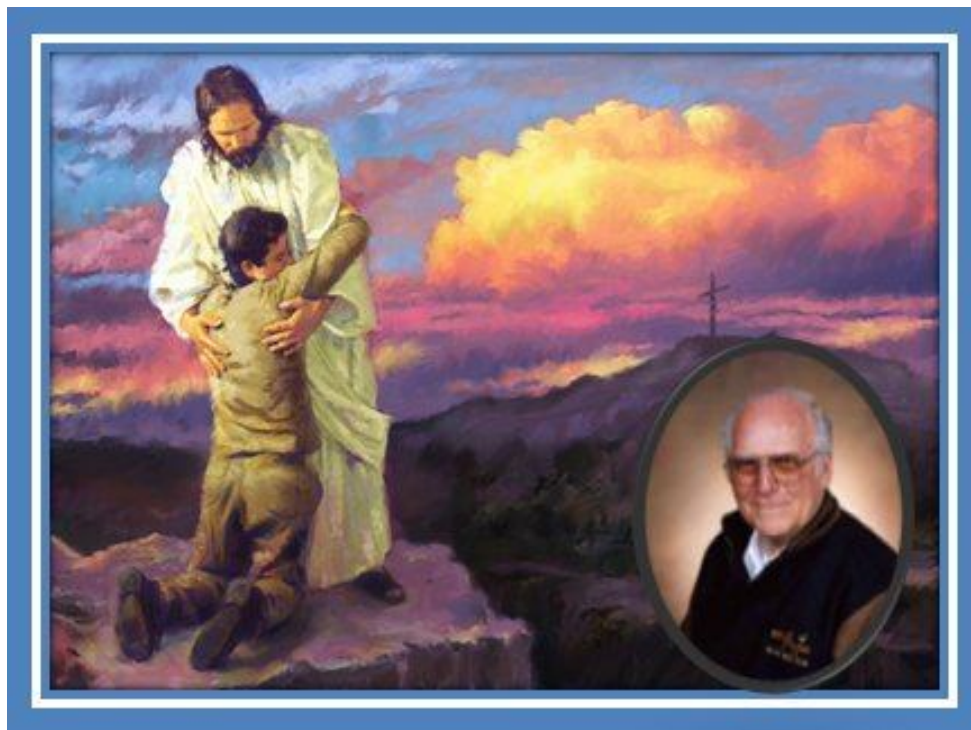
This process of exchange will be the basis for every chapter within the Journal. In other words, the keys to your personal healing and the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven cannot be used without an exchange that will take place. Are you willing to **exchange** in an effort to see God's full light come into 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!

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Journey 5 – Exchanging Anger with Love

See to it that no-one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. ~ Hebrews 12:15

"Watch your words they become words, watch your words they become action, watch your actions they become your character, watch your character it becomes your destiny." ~ Unknown



The Personal Testimony of Clayton McClary

A powerful and illustration journey of God's redemptive promises for anyone who feels as though there is no hope for change in their life!

Clayton McClary and Michael Mathews

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Forward

I first met Clayton (Clay) McClary in 1999 while preaching in a small church in Durand, Wisconsin. Clayton sat in the second front right pew with a pillow behind his back. Clay stood out as someone who was listening, yet slightly uncomfortable. After a few weeks Clay and I met for breakfast where he shared his fascinating testimony. He did not necessarily see his testimony as fascinating as I did. Part of the reason was that Clay had a tendency to go back and forth in his understanding and full acceptance of God's forgiveness.

The next Sunday after our breakfast meeting I was preaching a sermon with the context of how God desires to use all people to share the Gospel. In the middle of the sermon I blurted out directly at Clay, *"God did not save you to sit in the front pew with a pillow, He called you to tell your testimony of salvation."* Clay spoke with me later and said he was mad about my direct words during the public sermon; yet he said I was right. As scripture says, God's word does not return void. Clay and I joined forces and went on to write his fascinating testimony in 2001.

During 2001, I began sharing with Clay that he had a unique tenderness that would connect with a lot of people. He would sheepishly say, "I'm just a truck driver, not a preacher." I confirmed through prayer that Clay was indeed called to preach the Gospel. Clay continued to dismiss this call to preach until the 2006 timeframe. Clay called me to confirm that he had cancer and confessed that back in 2001 when I had challenged him to preach that he knew deep down he was called to be a preacher. At that point Clay was broken and said "Mike, is there any way during the last year(s) of my life you could see if I could be a licensed minister as I was supposed to be?" My wife Pam and I, along with the head of a ministerial association prayed and confirmed that Clay was indeed called to preach. Within a few months Pam went to Durand, WI and held the ministerial license service; and Clay became Minister Clay McClary.

Clay went on to speed the last year of his life leading many people to Christ and baptizing others upon their confession of Jesus Christ. Clay confessed his call to preach, understood the essence and importance of time, and received his fullest redemption from God before dying in the Spring of 2007. Before Clay passed away he had asked me to give the message at his funeral, as he wanted a specific sermon about salvation; which demonstrated he had a new focus on not only his personal salvation, but also the salvation of his friends, family, and co-workers. Clay effected our lives so much on earth, that we came to recognize that he became one of the many heavenly members in our personal cloud of witnesses. (Hebrews 12:1-2)

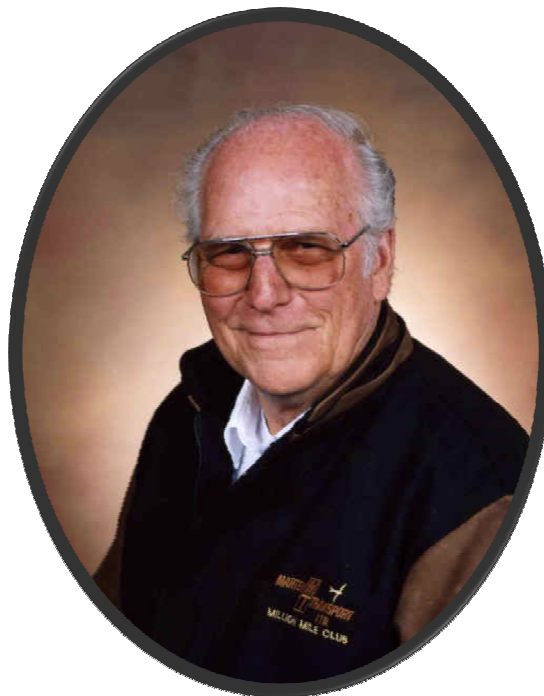
Please rejoice in Clay's redemptive journey as you read how an angry and misled man could be saved by Jesus Christ, became a licensed minister, and help lead many people into the kingdom. As you read his story imagine how each of us have the opportunity through redemption to be someone we never thought possible. God's grace had touched Clay's life earlier, but when he started exchanging/redeeming his fears, worries, and inferiorities he became everything God intended him to be. If Clay were with me today he would say the following words to each of you; *"Don't waste your time doubting yourself and believing the lie that you are no one! Rather start redeeming all aspects of your life including your time to be focused on Heaven and eternity. As you redeem who you are, God allows you to become who He sees you to be!"*

If you are interested in learning more about a personal redemptive journey of God's grace through Christ Jesus please visit [and](#) view the *Redemption Center* section. We have included a recently developed Redemption journal that allows you to start pacing through the many facets of your life and actively participate in the redemptive Journey.

In Christ's Love,

Michael and Pamela Mathews

**In Memory of
CLAYTON (Clay) MCCLARY
1936 - 2007**



Preface

This Journey is dedicated to the Glory of God for the people in all walks of life who struggle with anger, hatred, and/or resentment, who believe there is no escape from the worthless way in which they feel about themselves. We trust and believe that as you read the powerful testimony of Clayton McClary, along with God's promises, God will show you a way out of all the anger, bitterness, hatred, and self-worthlessness that you may be feeling at this moment in your life. This booklet has been written with the following verses in mind.

Revelation 12:10-12

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death. Therefore, rejoice ye heavens and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

These powerful verses in the book of revelation speak volumes about the end times and how God's desire is to use people's testimonies along with the precious **blood** of His only Son Jesus Christ to spare people from the hands of Satan. There are literally millions of people with so much anger and hatred in their heart, due to unfortunate circumstances that may have occurred in their lives. Satan's plan is to use these circumstances to destroy you, along with everyone associated with you. But praise be to God... His plan is to release you from Satan's snare and allow you to live a life of forgiveness and love. This will come by the words of this testimony and the acceptance of the Blood of Jesus Christ that was given for every human being.

It is my faith and belief that my life has not been wasted. Rather my life was simply **clay** that the Master decided to mold and use many years later to reap a great harvest of souls, by calling home all people who cannot in their own strength accept their past. The world may classify us as dysfunctional people with little hope, but God sees us as imperfect people ready to be made whole because of His love toward us.

I simply ask that you read my story and listen as the Master, Jesus Christ, knocks upon your heart's door (Rev. 3:19-21). As you listen to this testimony of God's love and hear His Word, He will reveal all the pent up feelings from the hard knocks of life that have allowed you to ignore God's love. Once you accept your past and allow God to forgive your past, you will experience a new life. Are you ready?

In the Love of Christ,

Clayton McClary – (Once a proud man with nothing but anger, but now a humble man with nothing to lose, and everything to gain for Christ.)

Chapter 1: Facing the Forming Years

“As a man believes in his heart so is he”

It is amazing how through the years that we learn from our parents, neighbors, and other influential people in our lives, usher us into adulthood. This is the very reason that the Bible says in Proverbs 22:6, *“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.”* The Lord himself realizes that we all become products of our environment...or in other words, we become how we are trained.

Our environment, along with our upbringing starts to form our thoughts, our words, and our behaviors. These behaviors become actions that start forming our character, which in turn defines our destiny. This whole process starts when we are small children learning the words and thoughts of people in our surroundings, and continues on in such a slow and gradual manner, that our destiny is formed without us really understanding that it all started in the forming years of our lives.

“Watch your thoughts they become words, watch your words they become actions, watch your actions they become character, and watch your character it becomes your destiny.”

The Bible indicates the real problem by stating, *“As a man believes in heart so is he.”* God knows that as we view ourselves, so we behave, and we either realize there is no hope, or that our life is good the way it is. Due to the fact that a person's life and perception of one's own self was developed earlier in life, one must realize that how they view themselves is much related to how they were raised, and the thoughts and habits they learned or were taught.

This truth in God's Word, which has been proven in millions of lives, means if a person starts realizing that they are bitter, full of anger, can't love themselves, or can't love other people, they should look back upon the forming years of their lives. They must look back to realize where the pattern of sin started before they can look at what they need to ask God to change. This is simply called acknowledging or confessing who you are. Unfortunately, many people do not want to look back and view their lives. It is much the same as asking the question, *“Who likes seeing themselves on video, or on a photo, or on audio tape?”* Human nature generally does not want to view or replay our lives in our mind. Doing so would mean that we would have to admit, (confess), who we are, or worse yet, who we are not. However, this is the first step that God requires to help us. This step is simply called confession or admittance of who we are, and acknowledging that we need help. It is painful, but free and simple if we are willing.

The simple fact that one will not look back on their life indicates the pain from the past is more painful than they want to admit, or they have built themselves up to be someone in their mind that they really are not. This would cause them to have to face reality, and reality may not be appealing. This is why many addicts were liars before they became addicts. It is because they did not want to face reality and lying was the way to escape reality. After a

period of time, the reality can be also hidden by abusing things or people, as a means to feel in control of the false world they began building to escape reality. These areas of control allow one to be able to lie to them self to even a greater degree. These vices begin to be a tranquilizer that allows the person to ignore the past that they chose to forget. The problem is, the influence from these vices usually cause more guilt and shame. What a tangled web one weaves when we will not face the reality of our past. Or as the old saying goes, *"Oh, what tangled web we weave when we practice to deceive."*

Facing my Forming Years

As a person who was eventually changed by God's grace, I can clearly see that my childhood years were indeed the forming years of my life that would bring me into a very distorted view of how to treat others, as well as how I would end up viewing myself.

From the ages of one to six, I was with my father all the time. During these years and intimate contact with him I was exposed to all the things that my father did that were dishonoring to God. If God's Word indicates that to, *"Train up a child in the way of the Lord,"* helps them and allows them not to depart from the truth, than the converse is also true. *"Train up a child in the way of sin and when they are old they will not depart from it."* I believe that this is a true statement, with the caveat that God can break the chains of sin that have formed a man into a sin believing lifestyle. However, this means that I have to realize and confess my forming years' experiences, so I can move away from the ramifications of these negative experiences.

I desire to share the experiences of my forming years with you in the hope that you can fully understand that you must acknowledge the past before you can move on to God's brighter future for you.

My father was a man that had sexual aggressions, dealt with everything through anger, and believed that women were a product that he had the right to abuse. His attributes combined together to produce a father that taught his son the wrong way to behave and treat others. My training was to see women as a vehicle in which men use to take out their aggressions, while a wife and mother is supposed to standby faithfully. On numerous occasions, I knew my dad would get intoxicated and have affairs with other women and my mother stood by him throughout this behavior.

I look back now as a changed man and see how these training sessions, even though not direct, allowed me to think it was normal to have numerous, simultaneous relationships with women, all for my own selfish needs. It is amazing how my distorted view caused so much pain in other people's lives.

My own forming years not only caused me to abuse other people, but also caused me to learn to doubt my own self worth. My father's anger spewed over into the words in which he would speak to me. My dad's lack of knowledge and love caused him to see me as a threat to his own manhood. This became evident to me by the numerous times he would distance himself from me and say hurtful words that would end up affecting my own self worth.

After telling my mother about some of my dad's misbehaviors at the age of six (ignorantly), my dad quickly viewed me as a threat and stopped his fatherly relationship with me. The relationship was damaged until much later in life. The few words that my dad continued to speak to me, until his death, were words of pain and selfishness.

I must be careful that through my testimony I do not portray the thought that you must look back and hate your parents because of what they did or did not do. More importantly, I must

I wish I would have had this knowledge earlier in life, as I would not have tried so desperately to earn my father's love, only to come up empty handed. How frustrated so many young men and women are because of their fathers' or mothers' inability to show forth love to their children. People must realize that their past will affect their future when they do not allow God to hear their confession of the past hurts, and give Him the privilege, (as the ultimate father), to hold them in the gentle ways their father may never have. The Bible says that is God is the father of the fatherless. (Psalms 68:5). Some of the most basic truths are so often hidden from a man's heart, due to ignorance. One such truth is that the reason for our confession to God is simply to allow Him to hear from you that you acknowledge Him as someone who indeed loves you.

Personal Pearls of Wisdom

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Chapter 2: The Storming Years

What a tangled Web We Weave!

The Bible indicates in Galatians 6:7-9 that, *"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."* The forming years of my life, without the influence of God, caused me to begin reaping what I began to sow in my life. My whole life would have been much different if I would have allowed the influence of God to form my early years. This kind of influence would have been greater than the influence of my father or my own personal insecurities.

Looking back on my life and realizing all that I shared with you in chapter One of this testimony, I now realize that my forming years could also be called my sowing years, or planting years, which started impacting how I lived. Again, without God, I knew no other way to respond to the things in life. Other than what came natural. And what came natural was to take out my disappointments and anger on other people, in what most would say would be selfishness.

As I was growing up and saw my dad in taverns, fights, and with other women, (rather than my mother), I began storming through life the only way I knew how. I started walking out of my classes at school, getting in my own fights, and eventually dropped out of school at age 16. This truancy and vacancy of learning in my life, gave me more time to take out my anger and storm through life with alcohol as my best friend.

Looking back on my life I can quickly be embarrassed or ashamed. Yet, God has allowed me to see that I simply did what came natural to a young man who was formed in his earthly father's image, rather than his heavenly father's image. Some of you may have had a better role model that shaped you with good moral behavior, but, nevertheless, the image of your morally good father cannot produce a forgiven man who recognizes that all men are born sinful. (Romans 3:23, 24; 6:23)

God's word shares the truth of the matter that helps explain why today I cringe at the things I did, and yet had no clue that my anger was ruling me. Matthew 6:22-23 says, *"The light of the body is the eye, and if the eye be clear that whole body shall be full of life, but if the eye be evil, the whole body shall be full of darkness and how great is that darkness."*

What I saw during the forming years of my life entered my eyes and formed thoughts and beliefs into my soul that could not allow me to see the light that God would desire. However, the evil that I was exposed to, and enjoyed to a certain degree, created in me a darkness. And that darkness was to get even darker. The Bible is clear, *"Oh how great is that darkness."* Praise God! His word holds true and has allowed me to see that the pain and anger were unpreventable until I allowed light to shine through my eyes.

Before I continue on with my story, I want to stop and consider what things in your life have been seen through your eyes and have entered your soul. Have you seen godly things, or have you seen more evil things? The godly things allow our body to be full of light, the evil things cause us to be full of darkness, and oh how great is that darkness, So don't be shocked that you are full of anger, bitterness, envy, or rage, if you have exposed your eyes to the evil things of life through your forming and storming years. Rather, hang-on, because there is hope for people like you and I.

After getting accustomed to being out of school, my time was consumed with drinking and pleasing my lustful desires through the women who would come and go in my life. I used one woman after another, trying to quench a hunger in my soul that would replace the great darkness that had formed through the storming years and forming years of my life.

By the age of 20, I thought that I could settle down and be married and faithful to a woman that I began to love. However, the darkness that was in me allowed me to stay faithful to my new bride for only weeks. Yes, that's right. Within four weeks I had more women that I was cycling through, thinking it was just normal.

This pattern of using women that I saw in my father's life, and I thought was natural, continued until I was 50 years of age. Imagine the women and children I hurt. All because I was living a normal life as defined by the many men who think it is natural to cheat on their wives to fulfill the lust or anger within their own lives. You can't imagine how many times I have asked God to forgive me for my actions. Imagine with me for a moment why America and the family is in turmoil when there are literally millions of men, like my father and me, who have maimed other people simply because of our own darkness, that was never brought to light. Oh how I pray that millions of men would begin to see the light and realize that they do not need to prey upon others, drugs, gambling, or alcohol to quench their emptiness caused by anger and bitterness. All this kind of quenching does is to create a greater hunger and thirst for more of what is blinding you. Are you like many others, lying about your past and doing whatever it takes to hide the truth so it does not need to surface?

This blindness is why so many addicts can never defeat the addiction. It is not the addiction to what they are consuming that is the problem. Yes, there are consequences to this consumption or addiction, but the problem is that the emptiness that is caused by anger is being filled by the addiction; therefore, it is the emptiness or anger and bitterness that really needs to be fixed.

It is interesting that darkness can only be quenched when light is brought into the darkness. In a dark cave or room, the darkness is quickly removed when the light shines in, even, if it is a small flicker of a candle. The fact is, the Bible calls Jesus Christ "The light of the World" and He, as "The Light" was sent into the world that He might become that Light. This is great news and helps explain the simple message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If He is "The Light", as the Bible proclaims, this means that if I receive this Light, "The Light" will replace the darkness. This is why the Bible proudly proclaims that men as dark as Clay McClary can become a new man. *"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away and all things become new."* II Corinthians 5:17.

The darkness grows when no light comes in:

The years of storming, caused by the years of forming, can lead one to want to blame someone else for the problems. As the darkness grows in one's life, it is amazing how things progressively get worse and you don't know what to do but to withdraw, or begin to blame others. Through this process many people find that they increase their addictive behaviors.

Let me quickly summarize some of the major, dreadful events of my life that were incredibly hard to cope with. My wife and I, whom I was unfaithful too, had a daughter who was born blind and mentally handicapped due to the practices of the doctor who delivered her. A short time later we lost a set of twins before they were born. My wife, who had been through all this, ended up needing surgery for a broken back, had breast cancer, and eventually lost both breasts. But the final blow that sent me to the darkest hour of my life and made me realize that the blame game is at the center of so many of our lives, is picked up in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: The Blaming Years

Who Can I Blame?

"To error is human, but to blame someone else is even more human."

As you are reading this story, you may doubt all the things that were going wrong in my life, thinking that this is too hard to fathom, or how could all these things happen to the same person. But let me tell you, I am only one out of millions of people that these types of things happen to. You would be amazed at the number of people who die daily, get divorced daily, commit adultery daily, and lose children to drugs every single day. Yes, there is much pain in the world and most people like me want to know whom we can blame or transfer our problems to.

The final blow in my life that brought me to my lowest point was when my oldest son was run over by a known drug user and alcohol abuser. My son was out riding on his motorcycle and was run over by a driver of a pick-up truck. My son was pronounced dead, and I could not bare this final blow to our lives. Even though the police said it was an accident, I believe that this man deliberately ran over my son.

A few days after the funeral, my youngest son came home and informed me that the driver of the pick-up said, *"The death of your brother will teach motorcycle drivers to stay out of my way."* My son was devastated, and I went off the deep end. I would like to say I was justified by all my actions that were to follow, but this last crisis threw me over the edge.

I immediately became furious and vengeful toward the man who murdered my son. I blamed him, my father, and God for this perceived final blow to my life. This blame caused me to whittle out eight more years of my life in anger, bitterness, and resentment. I was on a rampage for eight years trying to bring justice to my son's life. In hindsight, I can look back and see I was also a murderer by my own actions...a murderer of others, myself respect, reputation, and hope. I was looking through such a narrow view of my life that I was trying to hate and kill my son's murderer, when I myself was a sinner and hypocrite that literally destroyed other people's lives.

How does anyone learn to deal with things that go wrong in life? They generally start to blame others and God for all that has gone wrong. Why not? It is easier than owning up to who we really are. I did not want to confront who I was. Rather, I wanted to blame someone and have enough blame to remove all the pain of the past. Little did I know, that this mentality was incorrect and never really solves the deeper problems that exist.

I had to blame someone else; otherwise, I would have to admit that the way I felt was due to my own self. I would have to admit that my upbringing, my forming years, and my storming years, were really the culprit that brought me to the point that I wanted someone to blame and hate for all the things in my life. This man who killed my son gave me the very excuse I needed to pour my whole life into hating someone, and in fact gave me a purpose in life, so I thought.

I, like so many other men, had reached a point that I was running away from who I had become and found something to take everything from my past out on. The saying is true, *"To error is human but to blame someone else is even more human."* It was time in my life for me to begin accepting responsibility for what I had become. Despite all things that had happened to me, I had to deal with the fact that my anger was controlling my life.

I wish I could say that I have some secret formula that got me to this point of self-realization, or how I arrived at the conclusion that there was no one to blame for all these feelings of anger and frustration, but, I can't. However, I can share with you what happened to me so you as well can step back and evaluate if you have anger and bitterness that is forcing you to blame other people and/or God. This mentality and false belief will only get you to a deeper point of resentment or anger.

It was becoming clearer to me that all the forming and storming years were about ready to come to a head. All the blaming I was doing was not helping to remove my anger, but actually making it worse. It was like a beast that needed to be fed with more anger.

Before we move into the next chapter, I want to share what the Bible says about the whole issue of bitterness and anger. Hebrews 12:15 says, *"See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many."* God is hinting to all of mankind that we may miss out on his grace if a small root of some bitter experience begins to fester in our hearts and lives. Oh my, a lot of roots had sprung up in my life and defiled my life. The word "defile" means *to make corrupt*. My life was corrupt because I chose to let the unfortunate circumstance in my life rule me, and make me bitter against others.

This is why God encourages us in His Word. Ephesians 4:26 says, *"Be angry and sin not, do not let the sun go down upon your wrath."* God does not want us to hold any anger or bitterness, even if it is just overnight. God understands that anger becomes like an anchor around our neck. It is much like a quote of old says, *"Resentment is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die."*

"Resentment is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die"

My bitterness toward the man who killed my son haunted me, and I began my search for this man with a loaded gun, to repay evil with evil. Looking back, I was fortunate that I never found him, because this bitterness would have truly ruined my life. In my efforts to find and murder this man, I turned to more alcohol and then drugs to deal with my anger and hurt. In the meantime my wife turned to work and spent her time consumed in her job, giving me the right, (in my corrupt mind), to pursue more relationships with other women. What a shame to know that I could have known God's Word much earlier in life and prevented so much pain and suffering.

The desire to find this man cost me my wife, my home, and everything I owned. I was back to square one in life because of my desire to get even with someone. I have become a firm believer that a person often times must hit rock bottom before they are willing to start the reforming process.

Chapter 4: The Reforming Years

Who Will Forgive my Past?

After losing everything I had in pursuit of trying to kill the man who killed my son, I made one last attempt to get even with the man. I traveled through town where the man lived and tried to make a deal with the devil. I told the devil that I would sell my soul to him if I could find this man. I could not figure out why this man was so hard to find. It may be that Satan already knew that I belonged to him and he did not need to do anything to get my soul. Or it was the love of God that spared me from lashing out with every bit of anger, only to bring more shame into my life.

After this last attempt to find and kill the man who killed my son, I decided I would begin to attend church with the lady I was dating at the time. She attended a wonderful little church. After about six months of attending and not apparently getting anything out of church, the pastor asked me to become a member. For all he knew I was just like anyone else looking for a church. I told him that I could not become a member because the Bible he believed in said that I would need to forgive before I became a member; and there was no way I could forgive the man that killed my son.

The pastor was a man who cared for my soul and he made many efforts to get me focused on God. The pastor and I went fishing where I was able to share some of my past experiences. After a short time he asked me to tell my story to the congregation, upon which I refused. After more pleading, I eventually shared my life story with the church members. Before I could tell the whole story an elderly lady stood up and informed me that she led the ladies Bible study, and that she and her 25 ladies would be praying for me to forgive my son's murderer.

About three or four weeks later I was driving my 18-wheel truck down Highway 97 in Central Oregon. I had my son on my mind. Suddenly from the sleeper area of my truck I heard a voice say, "**Forgive.**" I ignored the voice and I kept driving and then heard the voice again, "**Forgive.**" This time I turned on the cab lights and turned to see where this voice was coming from. When I turned around I saw no one was there. I continued driving and again heard the voice, this time saying, "**Just Forgive.**" This third time I acknowledged the fact that it had been eight years since I have cried and shared the pain from my son's death. Something inside me allowed me to pull the truck on the side of the road and began to weep over my son's death. During these quiet moments, and without knowing how, I said, "**I Forgive the man that had killed my son.**"

Upon this simple confession of forgiveness, God fulfilled His promise by setting me free from hatred and anger, and began building a loving relationship with me; thus, the title of My testimony, "**Exchanging Anger For Love.**" God's promise was something that I did not know at the time, but I started to see living proof of the promise since that evening of confession and forgiveness. Ever since that night, I have not had any anger toward the man who killed my son.

The fact is God's Word holds 100 percent true when it says in 1 John 1:9, "*If we confess our sins, God is faithful to forgive our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*"

This may sound too simple but that is the God I have now grown to love. A God who understands what I was going through and somehow prompted me in the evening hours one night to simply forgive, (acknowledge my sin of anger), and He would give me a fresh start.

You too can have a fresh start, this very day, if you would allow God to forgive you of any anger, resentment, or bitterness that you have hid within your heart. You do not have to allow anger to continue ruling your life, hopefully as you have gotten to this point in my life story the verses I shared back in chapter 2 are now making more sense. Those verses were Matthew 6: 22-23, *"The light of the body is the eye, and if the eye be as clear thy whole body shall be full of life, but if the eye be evil, the whole body shall be full of darkness and how great is that darkness."* Oh how great was my darkness, but how the light became when I accepted "The Light" and made my eye clear, by letting God cleanse me.

As I stated in the previous chapter, I do not have a secret recipe or formula that will allow you to release and forget any anger or resentment in your life. However, I can share what I do know; that my God cares for your life and more importantly the eternal direction of your soul. God knew all along who Clayton McClary was, and He was not willing that I continue throwing away my life. However, God also knew my hard-heartedness would require that He form me, as a potter forms clay to make a better vessel that could be used for more than just hating people.

In summary, God was willing to use everything at His disposal to not throw this chunk of Clay away.

1. God used Christians within the church to pray for me. That elderly lady in the church with her 25 praying friends were praying for my salvation. God heard their prayers.
2. God used that kind preacher who wanted me to share my story. He was being used by God to allow me to reflect and verbalize my past so the healing process of forgiveness could begin to take place.
3. God used His Bible, (His Holy Word), to prepare me with the fact that I needed to seek forgiveness before I could be a part of the Kingdom of God
4. God also used his still small voice to speak the words, "Just Forgive," in my truck that lonely evening. (Reference: 1 Kings 12: 19)

Looking back I am now assured that God had a plan for my life, and He was using people, His Word, and His still small voice to bring reconciliation into my life. God knew that I could no longer go on living with the hatred and anger that consumed my life and brought so much darkness into my life.

I thank God that he was not willing to throw away this "Clay." God uses the metaphor of clay in the Bible to illustrate that He molds our lives, Jeremiah 18: 4 states, *" But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him."* Below is a song that illustrates God's love and compassion for me and for you. Again, I thank God that He did not throw away the "Clay," and that He sees you as clay that is still moldable, if you would be willing. My heart goes out to you if you even come close to the anger that I once held. Please consider the opportunity that is being presented to you.

Are you weary and tired of letting anger control your life? Rest assured that God wants to use people, His Word, and His still small voice to bring you into His family, where He can share his love and plan with you. However, as I had to, you too will reach a point where you will have to ask for forgiveness for your sins and accept his Son Jesus Christ into your heart. The following three verses explain the process that God has used in literally billions of people's lives throughout history.

1 John 1: 9, *"If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

II Corinthians 5:17, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature, old things are passed away and behold all things become new."

1. Confess that your past has not been perfect, and that your past has included sinful activities.
2. Acknowledge that God's Bible is true, that Jesus Christ gave His life for your sins, and believe that upon your acknowledgment of His death and resurrection you are a new man. (You are accepting Jesus Christ into your heart at this very moment; "YOU ARE SAVED.")

Personal Pearls of Wisdom

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Chapter 5: The Hopeful Years

God Does Not Throw Away the Clay!

Upon God's willingness to save people like you and I, God desires that you and I be used to help other people to be brought into a right relationship with Him. It is never too late to allow God to use your life. What a blessed feeling it is to be used to share the love of God with others. As a matter of fact, the verse following II Corinthians 5:17 where we are told that we are a new person in Christ, we are told that these things were given to us that we could bring others unto Christ. (II Corinthians 5:18) Please read and meditate upon this truth.

God desires us to all become productive and reach the multitudes of people who are lost in sin. Imagine with me for a moment that through sharing my testimony that even 10 people in the area I live have come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and in return they share their testimony, and 10 more people receive Christ based on each of their testimonies. In a short matter of time there will be 1,000 people in our area that would be released from their sin and be eternally saved. This is a small number, but it is the process that God used in the early church as recorded in the book of Acts. It is also the process God is using today in countries such as India, China, and South America where millions of people are being saved from their past.

This simple principle of multiplication could help out thousands of people who have so much bitterness and anger in their lives. What a better life that you can choose to live this very hour! Now imagine the impact that these thousand people have on their own two or three children, who in turn learn to live a better life because their forming years are not as negatively impacted by a father who demonstrates anger.

I desire to replicate the purpose of writing this booklet that includes my testimony. In the last book of the Bible, God shares how important the words of men's testimonies have been. Looking in Revelation 12:10-11:

*Then I heard a loud voice in heaven saying,
"The salvation and the power
And the kingdom of our God,
And the ruling authority of his Christ, have now come,
Because the accuser of our brothers,
The one who accuses them day and night before our God,
has been thrown down.
But they overcame him
By the blood of the Lamb
And by the word of their testimony
And they did not love their lives so much that they were afraid to die."*

In this passage we see that the enemy, (Satan), accuses you and me day and night so that he may be able to deter us from God's plan. But God says that he was not able because of the Blood of the Lamb, (Jesus Christ), and by the words of their testimonies. Yes, that is your words and my words, once we get saved. These very words are used to bring other people through the struggles in their lives, unto salvation.

For this reason I do not take lightly this testimony may be God's way of speaking to your heart at this very moment. It may be the exact method God chooses to use to speak to you.

He Didn't Throw the Clay Away

Empty and broken, I came back to him,

A vessel unworthy, so scarred with sin

But He did not despair, He started

over again.

And I bless the day, He didn't throw

the clay away.

Over and over, He molds me and makes me

Into His likeness, He fashions the clay.

A vessel of honor, I am today,

all because Jesus didn't throw the clay away.

He is the potter and I am the clay

Molded in His image He wants me to stay.

But when I stumble and fall and my vessel breaks,

He just picks up the pieces,

He doesn't throw the clay away.

Over and over, He molds me and makes me

Into His likeness, He fashions the clay

A vessel of honor, I am today

all because Jesus didn't throw the clay away.

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.

Michael and Pam Mathews live in Ozark, Missouri. They have two wonderful daughters, Jessica and Tiffany