



BETH MOORE

*Straight
Talk About
God's
Deliverance*

Get Out of
That Pit

Get Out of
That Pit

Straight Talk About God's Deliverance

BETH MOORE



W PUBLISHING GROUP

AN IMPRINT OF THOMAS NELSON

© 2007 Beth Moore

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, scanning, or other—except for brief quotations in critical reviews or articles, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Published in Nashville, Tennessee, by W Publishing Group, an imprint of Thomas Nelson.

Published in association with Yates & Yates, LLP, www.yates2.com.

Thomas Nelson titles may be purchased in bulk for educational, business, fund-raising, or sales promotional use. For information, please e-mail SpecialMarkets@ThomasNelson.com.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®, © 1973, 1978, 1984 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

Scripture quotations marked AMP are from the Amplified® Bible. © 1954, 1958, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1987 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Scripture quotations marked ASV are from the Authorized Standard Version. Public domain.

Scripture quotations marked ESV are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®). © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked HCSB are from the Holman Christian Standard Bible®. © 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission.

Scripture quotations marked KJV are from the King James Version. Public domain.

Scripture quotations marked NASB are from New American Standard Bible®. © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Scripture quotations marked NKJV are from the New King James Version®. © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

ISBN 978-0-7180-9582-6 (TP repack)

ISBN 978-0-7852-8973-9 (trade paper)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Moore, Beth, 1957–

Get out of that pit / Beth Moore.

p. cm.

Summary: "Helpful lessons for those who feel like they live in a state of confusion"—Provided by publisher.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-1-59145-552-3 (hardcover)

I. Christian life. I. Title.

BV4501.3.M6542 2007

248.8'6—dc22

2006033446

Printed in the United States of America

17 18 19 20 21 LSC 5 4 3 2 1

*To the Tates and the Weirs,
For resisting a handful of overwhelming temptations to the pit and
trusting the unseen hand of God instead.
Thank you for making me feel like part of your family and
inviting me into countless tender moments.
I am the better for knowing all of you.*

*And especially to my beloved Kendall,
who refuses to waste a moment of life—no matter how hard—in a pit.
You, Darling One, are my hero. Miss Beth loves you so much.*

Contents

Acknowledgments	ix
Foreword	xiii
Introduction	1
<i>Chapter One: Life in the Pit</i>	6
<i>Chapter Two: When You're Thrown Into a Pit.</i>	22
<i>Chapter Three: When You Slip Into a Pit</i>	48
<i>Chapter Four: When You Jump Into a Pit.</i>	70
<i>Chapter Five: Getting Out of Your Pit</i>	90
<i>Chapter Six: The Three Steps Out of Your Pit.</i>	112
<i>Chapter Seven: Waiting on God for Deliverance</i>	138
<i>Chapter Eight: Make Up Your Mind</i>	158
<i>Chapter Nine: Singing a New Song.</i>	182
<i>Chapter Ten: Our Pit-Less Future</i>	200
Endnotes	211
Scripture Prayers	213
Discovery Guide	229
About the Author	251

I waited patiently for the LORD;

he turned to me and heard my cry.

He lifted me out of the slimy pit,

out of the mud and mire;

he set my feet on a rock

and gave me a firm place to stand.

He put a new song in my mouth,

a hymn of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear

and put their trust in the LORD.

—*Psalm 40:1–3*

and
gave me

A
FIRM
PLACE to
STAND.

The Three Steps Out of Your Pit

You can opt for God. Pitching every other plan, you can opt for God. Thanks-but-no-thanks to every other deliverer, you can opt for God. Without having a clue how it works, you can opt for God. Without knowing the Old Testament from the New, you can opt for God. Not just for His help, but for His entire Person! The whole of God.

Oh, the wonder of the One who comes as Three! You can opt for the *Father* who reigns as King over every intricate detail in the universe and can micromanage a complicated life like yours and mine. He who could halt the sun in the noon sky if that's what your victory would take. He who could hurl a star like a stone at your enemy should he get in His way.

You can opt for the *Son* who paid your debt in full, not just to deliver you from earth to heaven when you die, but also from pit to pavement while you live. In Him, you have the full rights of sonship or daughtership, including the right to live wildly in victory. Do you hear what I'm saying to you? I don't

care what kind of addiction you've had or what kind of places you've been, you have as much right to flourish in Christ's abundance as Billy Graham. He'd tell you the same thing. No head hanging is necessary unless Christ has crowned you with so much love and compassion that the weight of it sometimes bows your head in joyful worship and gratitude.

You can opt for the *Holy Spirit* who first hovered over the Genesis waters and brought order out of chaos. The One who infuses any willing vessel with throne-spilled power from the inside out. The One who enables a people bereft of holiness to be holy by His very presence within them. The One who—at our invitation—seeps like water under every closed door of our souls, filling each empty place with Himself until the flood rises and the door is swept from its hinges . . . and we are utterly open before Him.

The beautiful thing about opting for God is that you are opting for everything He brings. Because He is infinite, you will never reach the end of all He offers of Himself. Nothing on earth is like fully engaging with God. *Nothing*. Once you taste what I've tasted, nothing in the physical realm can touch it. Yet everything in the physical realm takes on brilliant color because of it. God's love is better than life. No one compares.

If you're willing to engage God as your deliverer from the pit, the full-throttle relationship you develop with Him will be the most glorious thing that has ever happened to you. Far

more glorious than the deliverance itself. If you will take God up on what He offers so that you can live in victory, you will find thankfulness in your heart for every person who let you down. For ultimately, their failure set you up for this most ecstatic relationship you will ever experience.

If you're willing. Here comes the challenge. You may end up closing this book after what you read in the next fifteen seconds, but if you decide to take the challenge, beloved, you are on your way out of that pit. Here's the deal: God wants everything you've got. Uncontested priority. Every egg in one basket. All your weight on one limb. This very moment He has His fingers gripped on your chin, saying, *Right here, Child. Look right here. Don't look right or left. Stare straight into My face. I am your Deliverer. There is none like Me.*

God will be your complete Deliverer or nothing at all. That's the one rule of divine rescue. This I can tell you from both Scripture and experience: God absolutely refuses to share His glory. Anyone who shares His position as deliverer in your life is sharing His glory. God won't stand for that. Sooner or later, someone's going to back off, and you don't want it to be God. He may use any number of people in your life—friends, a counselor, a family member, or fellow believer—to come alongside and encourage as part of His process. But He alone must deliver you . . . or you will never be free. How badly do you want out of that pit? And out of the cycle that draws you

back into it? If you take on the tunnel-vision determination of Isaiah 50:7, you're headed out. "Therefore have I set my face like flint, / and I know I will not be put to shame."

With that one unwavering rule established, let's get busy. To get where we want to go, we need a comprehensible, biblical how-to. My intent in the pages of this book is to be a whole lot more than just spiritual. Please, Lord, I'm asking to be practical. A staggering number of our American churches never even tackle issues of sin, addiction, and defeat. You can get such a steady dose of "feel good" sermons that you actually start to feel pretty good about that pit you're in. That's not the goal. Soothing words can become just another drug we swallow to dull our pain.

On the other hand, other Christian environments that actually do exercise the courage to call sin a sin can sometimes be tiresomely long-winded on what's wrong with us and pitifully short on what to do about it. In a typical forty-minute message, thirty-five of them are often spent pounding on our transgressions and shortfalls and five on what to do about them. Never confuse getting bruised at church with getting better at church.

Picture attending a weekly weight-loss meeting and hearing, "You're too fat!" echoed throughout most of the session, followed by a succinct two-word wrap-up: "Lose weight!" You'd leave really encouraged, wouldn't you? Empowered for the task? Or drawn like a magnet to the Krispy Kreme

drive-thru as you head home? Instead, and to their credit, countless weight-loss groups actually equip their participants for success, with victors candidly sharing what they discovered and those still in defeat standing on their tiptoes in a little ray of hope.

We Christians hold in our hands the incomparable Manual for life, bulging with instructions, reasons, and countless real, human examples to illustrate them. So why are we getting shown up all over the place? Painful irony. Many of us in sterner Christian circles have substituted equipping and getting equipped for weekly poundings. “You’re too _____! Lose _____!” And they’re probably right; we are too prideful, selfish, worldly, lustful, or whatever. And we do need to lose the root cause of those sins. But how do we lose it? We don’t even know how we found it! If we’re really convicted, we drag ourselves to the altar and tell God how sorry we are . . . *again*. And we do it for good reason. We are sorry. We’re miserable. We know something has to change, but we’ve got so many issues, we don’t know where to start. We don’t even know who we are without them.

Still, we keep coming back to church because we figure we deserve, if not hell, at least a weekly beating. We then drag our battered souls to our cars feeling more defeated and condemned than when we arrived. If we’ve got a fancy enough vehicle (I don’t), maybe it will purr when we turn the key, caress us with air conditioning, soothe us with music, and say

something nice to us when we start the engine. Perhaps even give us directions to a good place to eat. For crying out loud, we have cars today that do a better job of telling us how to get where we want to go than the Christian community does.

I don't mean to sound cynical. I love the body of Christ deeply and, goodness knows, I love church. I've seen God perform miracles in so many lives, but I'm jealous for the tens of thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands, who still make their bed in a pit. Not one of us has to be left there. Every one of us who authentically calls Jesus Lord has the right and power to be victorious.

Contrary to popular practice, walking an aisle at church won't cut it, regardless of how much weeping and gnashing of teeth accompanies the walk. Don't get me wrong: I'm a big believer in dropping to my knees at a church altar and washing the invisible feet of Jesus with my tears. But if I return to my pew without any notion of how to go on from there, how will I ever escape that pit and discover any semblance of abundant life?

We need lasting answers that don't just target our behaviors. We need answers that tap the power of heaven and change the thoughts and feelings that drive those behaviors. It fills me with joy to know that God is giving voice to a growing number of teachers and preachers willing to trek the length and breadth of Scripture to help deeply stuck people find healing and form new habits. My hope is to follow suit and offer some practical page-to-the-pavement answers. We never

know why, after a thousand voices, God suddenly causes one to pummel through the brick wall of our fixed minds and make sense to us. Give hope to us. Believing with all my heart that God manipulated your way into this message, I pray that this is your time. And this is my offering.

I believe the Bible proposes three steps out of the pit, and each involves your mouth:

- ❶ Cry out
- ❷ Confess
- ❸ Consent

Repeat these steps over and over until they fall effortlessly from your tongue and stitch their way into your gray matter. If you'll let them, they will be life to you. Let's take a look at each step. Our part of the process begins and extends in a very specific action described in Psalm 40, a portion of the Scripture that became the inspiration for this book:

I waited patiently for the LORD;
he turned to me and heard my cry.
He lifted me out of the slimy pit,
out of the mud and mire;
he set my feet on a rock
and gave me a firm place to stand.

(Psalm 40:1–2)

In this passage, the pit-dweller's deliverance began with a cry. I'm not talking about tears. Yes, weeping may accompany this cry, but tears alone mean little. You've probably heard the saying: "Sentimentality is no indication of a warm heart. Nothing weeps more copiously than a chunk of ice." We can cry our eyes out over the pain of our situation and still refuse to change. Those kinds of tears often flow from our desperation for *God* to change and our frustration that He won't. If you're like me, sometimes you want Him to bend the rules for you and bless your disobedience or half-heartedness. Who doesn't want a shortcut? Don't we all want God to bless our marginal cooperation with mammoth results? A powerful anointing? A stunning harvest? An entirely altered family life? A final farewell to addiction?

His refusal to bend to our will may at first seem uncompassionate in light of all we've endured, but He's pushing for the best thing that will ever happen to us. God will never be codependent with you. He will never pat your broken back and say, "Who could blame you for all of this?" He wants you up on your feet, living abundantly, profoundly, effectively.

And it all begins with a cry. The kind the psalmist was talking about erupts from the deepest part of a person's soul as if his or her life depends on it. This cry from the depths makes its first good use of the pit, aiming the petition straight up those narrow walls to the throne of God as if shot like fireworks from the cylinder of a Roman candle. No random

ear will do for this crier. He is aiming at the One who made all things, rules all things, and can change all things. The One who says nothing is impossible.

You will be hard pressed to find a more repetitive concept in Scripture than God's intervention coming as a direct response to someone crying out. Here are a few samples pulled like fish from a sea full of them:

- ❶ "For he will deliver the needy who cry out" (Psalm 72:12).
- ❷ "But he took note of their distress / when he heard their cry; for their sake he remembered his covenant / and out of his great love he relented" (Psalm 106:44–45).
- ❸ "The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed / a stronghold in times of trouble . . . he does not ignore the cry of the afflicted" (Psalm 9:9, 12).
- ❹ "I love the LORD, for he heard my voice; / he heard my cry for mercy. / Because he turned his ear to me, / I will call on him as long as I live" (Psalm 116:1–2).
- ❺ "To the LORD I cry aloud, / and he answers me from his holy hill" (Psalm 3:4).

Why does the process start with our cry? Why can't it just begin with our need? I mean, God is all knowing, for heaven's sake. He knows what we need before we ask Him, so why does He make us bother? Talk about a control freak!

Oh, come on; don't act so shocked. Be honest. Isn't that what we sometimes think? Mind you, God can do whatever He wants. He can run to the rescue of anyone, regardless of her awareness or acknowledgment of Him. No telling how many times He's done it for us and we simply never knew what trouble we avoided. However, Scripture proves that God more often waits until the challenge comes and the hurting cry out, just as we see in Exodus 3:7-8:

The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey."

God is sovereign and has His own reasons for responding in the ways He does. But from what I can tell about Him, I think He usually waits for us to cry out so He can remove all doubt about who came to our rescue. If we never cried out and had no human to credit when the raging fires of our trials turned to embers, we'd likely chalk our deliverance up to circumstantial happenstance or saccharine philosophies like "Things have a way of working out, don't they?"

Things don't just work out. God works them out. Blessed is the one who knows it.

Further, God sees great advantage in awaiting our cry because He is unequivocally driven by relationship. Throughout your ascent out of that pit, never lose sight of the fact that God will forever be more interested in you knowing your Healer than experiencing His healing, and knowing your Deliverer than knowing your deliverance. The King of all creation wants to reveal Himself to you. His Highness is willing to come to us in our lowness. Our cries blow the lid off the cistern we're trapped in. They voice openness. Readiness. That's what God is after.

The kind of cry the psalmist describes can come either from the desperate (*I need* God and God alone) or the deliberate (*I want* God and God alone). Remember, we don't always have to wait until we're desperate. We can wise up enough to know how desperate we're going to be if we don't cry out immediately. Either approach, regardless of how it sounds to human ears, rises to the Throne with the volume of a foghorn in a shower stall. *Cry out*. Open your mouth, say, "God, help me!" and mean it. Not as a figure of speech. Not with half a heart. With everything you've got, look up and cry out. Bring heaven to a standstill. Get some attention.

Maybe you should do it like a guy I encountered not too long ago. I see the weirdest things in airports and on planes. A diehard people watcher, few things amuse me more than

human idiosyncrasies. I guess I like the company, wad of weirdities that I am. Recently I sat in the middle seat of row six on a packed aircraft. Despite a jillion air miles, I didn't get an upgrade, but I did get a seat in, what I like to call, the "getting classier" section just two rows south of the heavy veil. A thirty-something couple—attractive and knowing it—moved into the bulkhead seat right in front of me with an adorable toddler. Unless I don't know my head from a hole in the ground, the couple was successful and, boy, were they crisp in their Italian couture.

With all of our carry-ons in the overhead compartments, our tables in their upright and locked positions, our seatbacks forward, and our aisles clear, we taxied the runways so long I thought we might as well merge onto the freeway and drive. Finally the pilot told the flight attendants to be seated, as we'd been cleared for departure. We were just beginning that G-force feeling of the pedal-to-the-metal when the dashing young husband began to scream. And I mean *scream*.

I sat straight up in my chair, scrambling to see if he'd been stabbed and we'd been hijacked. His screams turned into bellowing booms I could make out even over the roar of the engine. "I hate flying! I hate it! Ohhhhhh! We're going to crash! Help me! Awwwwh! I hate this! I hate flying! Get me out of here!" On and on for five disturbing minutes.

Houston's bruised and swollen sky didn't help matters. We bounced all over the atmosphere looking for some smooth

airspace, and with every jolt our fellow comrade belted out how he really felt about flying. My chin, along with those of my fellow passengers, had dropped to my seat belt. I knew nothing to do but pray for the poor guy, and for some reason I thought it might be more effective if I stretched forth my hand toward him as we sometimes do in particularly demonstrative prayer circles. You know, kind of Moses-like.

My gesture put the man sitting beside me over the edge, and he nearly hyperventilated, eyes darting back and forth, searching for an exit row. I think he thought I was putting a hex on the wailing dude and he was next.

The flight attendants were safely buckled out of sight, and when they finally emerged, they appeared strangely oblivious. So did the toddler, but I chalk that up to Benadryl.

The demonstration ended as abruptly as it began. In retrospect, I wonder if he'd done it before. Not once did his young wife pat his arm and say a soothing word, nor did she ask the more pointed question: "What in heaven's name is wrong with you?" Instead, she glared at him unsympathetically with a look that said, "Are you almost done?"

Once we hit smooth air and the pilot turned off the fasten seat-belt sign, the husband wiped off his face, blew his nose, opened his novel, and acted as cheerful as a chimp for the remainder of the trip. The strongest thing he drank was a Diet Coke, but I can't say the same for the threesome right across from him. They never did get the color back in their faces.

Time flew by until the pilot asked the flight attendants to prepare the cabin for another on-time arrival. All of us in the three rows around Mr. Crybaby braced ourselves for an emotional landing. He was as tranquil as a cat in a patch of sunshine on a nippy day. Go figure.

But wait. Surely he'd be a bit embarrassed when we pulled up to the gate and got up to retrieve our carry-ons. Nope. He was completely comfortable in his beach-tanned skin. Acted like nothing on earth could be more natural than venting your fears when you have them. I bet he outlives the rest of us. If his wife lets him.

You can cry out like that. Loudly and demonstratively. Done it myself. Or you can do it face down on the ground making no sound at all, except for a groan you yourself can't even interpret. However you do it, just do it. And mean it. If you don't have it, if your throat is too parched from pain and your soul is too drained of the needed energy, ask God to give you what it takes. Cry out to the one and only God who can deliver you.

After you cry out, *confess*. Think sin, but then think wider. Though it's absolutely vital, confessing sin is not the only way we practice confession. Confession in its widest sense is our means of baring our hearts and souls before God. Confession is a way we agree with what God says about Himself and about

us. Confession takes place every time you tell God how much you need Him. Tell Him what's on your mind. What kind of mess you're in. Who's in it with you. What's holding you back. What's on your heart. Who's on your case. Who's made you mad. Who's on your nerves. Who's broken your heart. Even if your first impulse is to think it's Him. As long as you can feel it, spill it. Psalm 145:18 says, "The LORD is near to all who call on him, / to all who call on him in truth."

All these things are confession, but whatever you do, don't overlook the unparalleled benefit of also confessing sin. Lay it right out there and hold your chin up while you do it. Let the light of God shine all over your sin so the two of you can sort it out and He can heal you. Everybody's got stuff to confess. We will never get so hyper-spiritual that we can authentically go days upon end without anything to confess, especially considering that God places our attitudes and motives on a level with our actions.

And while you're at it, don't forget to spit out sins of pride. Nothing contributes more to the length of our stay in the pit. Pride is the number one reason why a person who knows better remains reluctant to cry out to God. As you prepare for your ascent out of that pit, confess every sin of your own actions, words, or thoughts that you believe contribute to your defeat. In my own personal journey, God showed me that I'd never break the pit cycle if I didn't name every contribution I made to it and let Him deal with my self-destructive tendencies.

Even if you were thrown into your pit, search your heart to see if bitterness has taken root, if anger, lack of forgiveness, or coldness is building you a home down there under the ground. Examine your heart and see if, somewhere amid your loss of control, you sought to regain it with manipulation. Ask yourself if you use your love as a weapon. I had to ask myself every single one of these questions. Get as specific as you can, and when you think you've thought of everything, ask God if there is anything you're overlooking. This process may take days as God reveals things layer by layer. Keep responding when He does.

Not once does God convict us in order to make us feel like wretches. He's out to restore fellowship and to flip the breaker that shut off the power. Remember, God's pursuit is relationship. Confession is one way we talk back after He speaks. He initiates conversation through conviction, and we answer back through confession. Meanwhile, a miracle takes place. Heaven and earth, Immortal and mortal, Perfect and imperfect engage in dialogue. Conviction is a hand-delivered invitation to meet with God, and confession is an RSVP with immediate arrival.

As much as anything else, confession clears the path so the King of glory can come in. In order to get out of that pit and stay out, you and I need the unhindered power of the Holy Spirit. Unconfessed sin clogs the pipeline between God's throne and our vessel. If you hold nothing back, neither will God.

Confession, by the way, is incomplete until we actively accept God's certain forgiveness. Take a fresh look at 1 John 1:8–9: "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." And 1 John 3:21–22: "Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him."

If our hearts do not condemn us. Our self-condemning hearts can't block our forgiveness, but they can keep us from feeling it. The result will be a twisted resignation to our own capacity to sin rather than confidence in God's capacity to restore us. The conversation God began through conviction doesn't end with our response of confession. It continues with God telling us through His Word that He forgives us (1 John 1:9; Micah 7:18) and completes the process in our appropriate and freeing response of grateful acceptance. We will never stay out of that pit until we believe all the way to the marrow of our bones that God has forgiven us. Take a look at King Hezekiah's words to his God in Isaiah 38:17:

Surely it was for my benefit
 that I suffered such anguish.
 In your love you kept me
 from the pit of destruction;

you have put all my sins
behind your back.

Mine too! Music to my ears!

Here's how confession works: we lay all our sins at God's feet; He picks them up and throws *all* of them behind His back. In our Christian circles, we constantly talk about putting our past behind us. That's not good enough. It's too easy for us to turn around and pick it up again. We want our past behind God's back. That way we'll have to go through God to get back to it. Come let us reason together, beloved. Admit that you can't beat a deal like that.

The religious police warn us away from adopting that marrow-deep belief that we are forgiven. They're afraid God's complete removal of our debilitating load of guilt will make us feel so free that we'll throw caution to the winds and wander right back into that pit. Not so! In fact, the opposite is true. Our tendency to return over and over to the pit is driven by our deep conviction that we'll never be anything but trash. Never be anything but defeated. Not feeling forgiven is a far more powerful motivator to re-enter a pit than feeling forgiven will ever be. Few thinking people who feel squeaky clean for a change are compelled to dash right back into the mud. Almost always, those who jump back in never really believed what God said about them: I have put all your sins behind My back.

Cry out.

Confess.

We're considering three steps out of the pit. The third step is *consent*. I love this one. We're talking action verb acquiescence here. A glance at a definition of the noun form of *consent*, however, will shed some light on what this step is all about: "Compliance in or approval of what is done or proposed by another . . . agreement as to action or opinion . . . voluntary agreement."¹

Consent is the most beautiful part of the process of getting out of a pit. There is no ambiguity about this step: it is definitely God's will. Determining God's will in so many other areas is less than certain. Like where He wants us to work. Where He wants us to move. Where He wants us to serve. Who He wants us to date. Whether or not we should marry. This is not one of those uncertain areas. This one's black and white. God wants you out of that pit. He wants you in victory. Out of defeat. Period. So all you have to do is *consent* to what He already wants.

Can you celebrate the simplicity of this step? Once you get the hang of it, I believe you will. First John 5:14–15 says, "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him."

Beloved, God's will is for you to get out of that pit. If you will consent to the process, waiting upon God as He begins shifting, shoving, and rearranging things for your release, you can go ahead and start getting excited, because it *will* happen. Just as God promises in His Word. If you're ready to start actively consenting, I'm ready to tell you the most effective way to do it.

When I first introduced the three steps to you—cry out, confess, and consent—I told you that each of them involved your mouth. The ironic part of the process will be that you will most likely use your mouth before you use your faith. Here's why: for most of us who have failed over and over, our faith nearly disintegrated because somewhere along the way we confused faith in God with faith in ourselves. We've let ourselves down so many times that now we're nearly hopeless. In reality, however, we've given ourselves way too much credit. We think we're too much for God to handle. That the strength of our personal draw into the abyss exceeds the strength of God's draw to pull us out. Hence, we've rendered ourselves virtually faithless. The process can't just begin with our faith, because our faithlessness is our biggest problem. It's got to begin somewhere else.

Like with our mouths. We're going to learn to speak it out. And I don't mean mumbling under your breath. I want you to learn to cry out, confess, and consent using God's Word. And to do so, when at all possible, *out loud*. Volume is not the point.

All you need is to have your own ears hear it. Why? I feel so strongly about this concept that I'm almost standing up at the keyboard to write it. Listen, beloved, "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17 NASB). Your faith will be built by hearing your own voice speak the words of Christ.

I have never come up with a more powerful way to pray than using Scripture. I will teach this method in appropriate contexts as long as I live, because I've seen such results from it. I don't always pray using Scripture, but when a serious situation arises, and particularly if it persists, I turn to God's Word every single time.

One reason Scripture is such a big help in prayer is because our challenges are often so overwhelming that we can't think of the right words to say. Another reason is because we can shift the burden of responsibility to God and His Word rather than ultimately crumbling under the weight of it ourselves. God's Word carries its own supernatural power. It's His very breath on the page that, when you voice it, you release into your own circumstances (2 Timothy 3:16).

I can feel totally hopeless over a situation, but when I begin to cry out, confess, and consent according to God's Word, I soon feel the power of His Spirit start to fill me up from the tip of my feet to the top of my head. *Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.* My faith returns and holy passion burns. God loves His Word; therefore, if God's

Spirit that lives inside a believer has not been quenched by unconfessed sin, God responds every time He hears it spoken. Yes, faith is absolutely critical to the process, but you can't just sit in that pit until one day, out of the blue, you suddenly have the faith to get out. Let God use your mouth to build up your faith.

If you'll allow me, I'd like to give you a jump start so that you can get on with the process. At the back of the book you'll find Scriptures I've rewritten into prayers for you. You'll see that the Scripture Prayers don't have to be used word for word. What's vital is that we echo the principles of Scripture so our confidence can grow in the certainty that we're praying God's will.

You'll also see intervals where I encourage you to use your own words, pour out your own heart, and get very specific with God. You'll find a set of Scripture Prayers of the cry out/confess/consent order for every day of the week. I'm asking you to use them over and over for as many weeks as necessary until you're off and running on your own with at least some of the concepts in play. Don't let up when you begin to feel better. Feeling better is not what we're after. The goal is freedom from the pit *for the rest of your life*.

On days when you feel down, overwhelmed, or discouraged, get to your Scripture Prayers all the faster. On the days when you want to do it least, do it most. Be onto the enemy's devices. He knows that if he can make you quit praying, he

can make you stay in the pit. When the battle heats up, rest assured that you're worrying your enemy, and he's trying to distract or discredit you.

Also expect your flesh to balk. It's been in control a long time, and it's not going to give over easily. No matter how resistant you feel, practice your steps anyway. In fact, on the days you feel most defeated, most intimidated, consider doing several sets instead of one. Do the *crying out* segments together, then the *confessions*, then the *consents*. Whatever you do, don't quit. Show the enemy that if he messes with you, you'll just call out God's Word all the more. Nothing does him damage like the Sword of the Spirit.

I'm so proud of you for getting this far into this book. I want so badly for you to be victorious, and I know you can be. God's Word tells me you can. I also know that this system works. You have the power of the entire Godhead behind you. You have the Father's will, the Son's Word, and the Holy Spirit's way. What more could you need?

And, anyway, what do you have to lose except a pit? So start making some noise. I bet when all is said and done, you end up having a mouth as big as mine.

Praise the LORD, O my soul;
 all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
 Praise the LORD, O my soul,
 and forget not all his benefits—

GET OUT OF THAT PIT

who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases,
who redeems your life from the pit
and crowns you with love and compassion,
who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like the
eagle's.

(Psalm 103:1–5)