

T H E
G L O R I O U S
C H U R C H

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W O R D O F F I R E

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INTRODUCTION

This book represents the compilation of a series of messages I preached under a very strong anointing. As I spoke, the words seemed to gush forth from my mouth. I found myself listening to words that were not my own. The words flowed from my inner being and seemed to come forth with a power and life of their own. My heart burned within me. I had a deep sense of God's presence. I felt as if the Holy Spirit was turning on a tap to wash us with the water of His word. I had one message: Christ. I had one text: holiness; and one cry: repentance. I think I had a taste of what John the Baptist must have felt like, crying in the wilderness, "*Prepare the way of the Lord, church prepare to meet your God.*" The burden was so great, the message so beyond me, that my physical body shook and trembled under the force of it.

I knew it was God's message for His church: His bride. I did not record the messages then. Somehow I could not bring myself to do it. I felt, at the time, that it would be an intrusion into something so personal and awe-inspiring. I have, however, since, decided to collect my notes and present them here in book form.

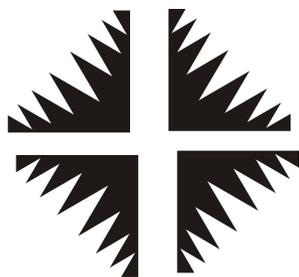
If the usage of some portions of scripture seems repetitive it is because the messages were originally presented separately.

I believe this message is for the church of Jesus Christ in these last days. The voice of the Spirit of Christ is calling forth His bride. Christ is calling forth a people, a remnant of believers, holy and separate. A people willing to die to self to reveal Christ through them, so that others might live. A bride willing to face the fire of God's purging word to become the reflection of Christ Himself. A people willing to face trials of persecution, misunderstanding, mocking and beatings for His name's sake. This is a call by the Spirit of God for a bride to begin to reflect the image of her bridegroom, to reveal His glory and be transformed into HIS GLORIOUS CHURCH.

Malachi 3:2

"But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is a refiner's fire And like launderers' soap.

Ronald J Brick



BRIDE BEHOLD YOUR GROOM

1

Many who attend church every Sunday, give faithfully, and live peaceful lives above reproach, will never enter into the kingdom of God. They will spend eternity in a Christless void where there will be *“weeping and gnashing of teeth.”* Many who believe they are good Christians will one day awake to the cold harsh reality that they have followed a false gospel of self, void of the cross, graven to please the flesh. A gospel where all is ease of mind and God exists to answer their every whim. A gospel where self reigns and God’s will is subordinate.

Matthew 7: 21

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

Read this and be warned! Many who call themselves Christians have no interest in doing the will of the Father. They have no interest in searching the word of God to find His revealed will. They do not spend time seeking Christ in prayer to hear the living WORD OF GOD. As a result their light of revelation has gone out. They are walking in darkness, yet believing they are living in the light. They have been duped into believing another gospel; a gospel of ease, prosperity and fleshly comfort. It has lulled them to sleep. The light they once had, revealing Christ, no longer shines. They have dozed off to sleep, unaware of the lateness of the hour, unaware that they are without His light. They are unaware that Christ, at the door, can only receive a bride revealing HIS LIGHT, HIS GLORY and HIS BURNING. These are the foolish virgins who have let their fire go out.

Matthew 25: 1-13

“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

“Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

“Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,

“But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

“But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

“And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’

“Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.

“And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’

“But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’

“And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

“Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’

“But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’

“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

In the above parable, the ten virgins represent the church, the bridegroom represents Christ, and the marriage, eternal life. Throughout the Old and New Testament we find man’s relationship with God likened to the marriage relationship. In the Old Testament, Israel is called the wife of Jehovah. In the New Testament, the church is called the bride of Christ. When Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, he said, *“I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”* (2 Cor. 11:2) The use of analogy is very common in Scripture to illustrate a spiritual point of truth. If we are aware of some of the more common similitudes, then we will quickly recognize the ten virgins to be a picture of the whole church of Jesus Christ. What we may find more difficult to understand is what made half the group of ten, foolish and the other half wise. Why did they need a lamp burning to be able to receive the bridegroom?

If we look at the parable in context, we find it taught by Jesus after a discourse between Him and His disciples, concerning the last days before His return.

Matthew 24: 3

... *“Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”*

If the ten virgins represent the church in the last days before the return of

Christ, then we, who believe we are that church, must realize that this parable is of extreme importance to us. For although the whole church was looking for the coming of the bridegroom and the time of celebration with Him, only five of the ten entered into His chamber. Fifty percent of the church was shut out. We must take a very sober look at this parable and ask ourselves why fifty percent of the church are in danger of being shut out of the kingdom of heaven? What is it that divides these two groups, causing one to be defined as foolish and the other wise?

All ten virgins started out with their lamps full of oil and their flames burning bright. All ten slept while the bridegroom tarried. At the midnight hour a cry was heard, *'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'* All ten virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. However, the five foolish had not brought extra oil. At the darkest hour, at midnight, their flame of light went out. They went for more oil but the hour was late. The bridegroom came and they missed Him. Shut out of His presence, it was too late to do anything about the situation. The time to prepare for His coming was past. They had let their flame burn itself out. The foolish virgins had no light, and because they had no light they were shut out. The light became the critical factor; they had to have light in order to meet the bridegroom. The crucial difference between the wise and the foolish became the light. The wise virgins had extra oil and therefore, the fuel to produce this important light. What is the significance of this light; what does it represent?

HIS LIGHT

The light is first just that: light. Without light, the foolish virgins could not see; darkness blinded them. At midnight they could not receive the bridegroom because they could not see Him. Without light, we have no spiritual discernment, no ability to see what is truth. We become victims of the dark environment in which we live. Spiritual enemies surround us and the darkness of this world shrouds us. Our vision is blocked and we are kept from seeing the bridegroom.

Christ revealed Himself as the light of the world.

John 8: 12

... "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

To see, the human eye must have a source of light bouncing off the object of

gaze and back to the retina. The light rays play over the surface of an object carrying information to the retina. The retina then sends that information to the brain. Through this process the brain quickly analyzes an object's size, weight, colour, and countless other pieces of information. Light becomes the critical vehicle transmitting millions of pieces of data. Without light, we cannot physically see. It is the same with spiritual vision. We must first have the light of life within our hearts illuminating our minds as to who Christ is. Without this work of illumination going on in our lives, we cannot see the light of the world: Jesus Christ. He remains a mysterious figure, someone we do not know and we cannot recognize. We become like the religious leaders of Jesus' time, who could not see Him. We will look for another. One who aligns with our vision, our mind's picture, our image of a coming Messiah. The light of life must first be the vehicle for analyzing and transmitting a true image of the invisible God to the retina of our hearts. When He appears, we who are seeing and beholding His image will reveal the same. The five foolish virgins could not behold the bridegroom or reveal Him because they could not first see Him without the light.

In John's gospel, we find Christ revealed as THE WORD OF GOD.

John 1: 1, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the WORD WAS GOD.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

In the book of Revelation, Christ is called THE WORD OF GOD.

Revelation 19: 13

He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called THE WORD OF GOD.

Jesus Christ, the Word of God, is a light; a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

Psalms 119: 105

*Your word is a lamp to my feet
And a light to my path.*

The light of the world, the Word of God, must first be in our hearts. Christ, the

light of life, must be shining. The light of our lamps is first a flame in our hearts. A revelation of Jesus Christ, produced through the ministry of THE WORD OF GOD.

Have you been born of the Spirit of God? Has the image of Christ been positioned in your spirit through the new birth? Have you been born of the Spirit by THE WORD OF GOD?

1 Peter 1: 23

...having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through THE WORD OF GOD which lives and abides forever,

If we are born of THE WORD OF GOD then the image of Christ becomes the image of our spirit man. The light of life burns in our hearts, revealing Christ, His character, His nature and His glory.

2 Corinthians 13: 5

Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? -unless indeed you are disqualified.

The lamps first produced the light of life, Jesus Christ, in the lives of the wise virgins. This light reveals the image of the bridegroom, enabling the wise to see Him, behold Him, and receive Him, at His coming. The light produced by the lamps of the five wise virgins, is revelation light. It is the light of the world, Jesus Christ, THE WORD OF GOD.

HIS GLORY

Isaiah 60: 1 - 3

*Arise, shine;
For your light has come!
And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.
For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth,
And deep darkness the people;
But the Lord will arise over you,
And HIS GLORY will be seen upon you.
The Gentiles shall come to your light,
And kings to the brightness of your rising.*

Colossians 1: 27

...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

A revelation of Christ, the light of our lives, the living WORD OF GOD, burning bright in our hearts and through our lives, is like Paul said, “*our hope of glory*”.

2 Corinthians 3: 18

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

We behold the image of the bridegroom. Christ is painted on our hearts by revelation, received through the WORD OF GOD. When we behold His image through His word, we behold His glory, and we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory.

James 1: 22 - 25

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

For if anyone be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;

for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

When we look into the perfect law of liberty, we are looking into the indwelling Christ. James, like Paul, compares it to looking into the mirror: “*beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord*”. James tells us that we must not just look into this Word, but we must do the work. We must act on the revelation of this reflection. The image we behold is no longer our own, but the image of Christ within. To maintain a revelation of that image we must be doers of the Word and not forgetful hearers. We must act on this revelation by faith. As we behold Christ, the light of life, we must do His will. We must live in this light. We must walk in this light of revelation. We are changed into the image of Christ by first seeing Christ. When we see Him we behold Him. We behold His will through the Word of God, and in doing His will we walk in the light and we are transformed by that light of glory into His image.

Galatians 2: 20

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but CHRIST LIVES IN ME;

Luke 11: 33 - 36

"No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts it in a secret place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, that those who come in may see the light.

"The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is good, your whole body is full of light. But when your eye is bad, your body also is full of darkness.

"Therefore take heed, that the light which is in you is not darkness.

"If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, the whole body will be full of light, as when the bright shining of a lamp gives you light."

The wise virgins have a single eye. They have fixed their gaze on the bridegroom, to behold Him. With their eye single, their whole body becomes full of light.

The lamps of the five wise virgins were first producing the light of Christ. This light enabled the wise to behold the glory of the bridegroom and be transformed from glory to glory.

HIS BURNING

The foolish virgins allowed the flame of their lamps to first grow dim, and then go out. Without the flame, they have lost His burning.

The word fire appears over five hundred times in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. In the book of Hebrews, the writer calls God a consuming fire. From the first book, Genesis, to the last, Revelation, the very pages seem to be aflame with fire. Fire consumes the sacrifices of the patriarchs, from Adam's son, Abel, to Noah. The prophet Elijah reveals his God to the prophets of Baal, as the one who answers by fire. Jehovah introduces Himself to Moses, in the wilderness, in a burning bush. Moses receives the law on Mt. Sinai, and the mountain quakes with smoke and fire. A pillar of fire leads the children of Israel from Egypt and through the wilderness. The worship in the tabernacle, and later the temple, consists largely of sacrifices consumed by fire. The coming of the Messiah is prophesied in Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament. He is called a refiner's fire. John the Baptist introduces Jesus Christ as the one who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. Fire throughout the holy book becomes a picture of the burning of God.

An intense quality of His character: a consuming, burning, blazing fire. A fire that demands a sacrifice. A fire that burns to purify, to refine and finally reveal the holy character of God.

Leviticus 6: 13

'A fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out.

In the New Testament the church is called the temple of the living God. The fire of God must be continually burning on the altar of our hearts.

1 Corinthians 3: 16

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

The prophet Jeremiah said, *"His word was in my bones like fire."* THE WORD OF GOD, JESUS CHRIST, is revealed as fire.

Hebrews 1: 7

*... "Who makes His angels spirits
And His ministers a flame of fire."*

On the day of Pentecost, the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out on a hundred and twenty disciples, waiting in an upper room in Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit was revealed in tongues of fire that rested on each one. Peter left that room to preach the word of God. The word of God came forth as a burning, convicting, purifying fire.

Acts 2: 37

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Three thousand souls were added to the church on that day. They repented and were baptized according to Peter's instruction.

The word of God, on the lips of the prophets and the ministers of God, becomes a picture of a fiery judgment on sin.

John 12: 47, 48

“And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.

“He who rejects Me, and does not receive My WORDS, has that which judges him - the WORD that I have spoken, will judge him in the last day.

Christ said His word would judge. Those who disbelieve the word of God and reject it, reject Christ. To reject the word of God is to reject His burning; the fire that shall test every man's work.

1 Corinthians 3: 13

... each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.

The wise virgins are those who fan the flame of this burning. They embrace this burning and allow its work of convicting and sanctifying to go on. They submit to the fire's claim of judgement on sin.

In Matthew, chapter 24, Jesus is speaking of the last days before His return.

Matthew 24: 12

“And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall WAX COLD. (KJV)

Matthew 13: 15

For this people's heart is WAXED GROSS, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; (KJV)

WAX COLD - WAXED GROSS - The Greek word used here for these two expressions is PACHUNO. It means to thicken or to fatten, to render callous, to stupefy. It is the picture of the wax around the flame of a candle. The wax immediately begins to become callous, or thick, after the flame is extinguished. Without His burning, our hearts become cold and hard; we soon become callous and stupefied.

Revelation 3:18

18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.

Christ counsels us to buy gold tried in the fire, that we may be rich. The word of God, pure and tried in the fire of His burning, is our real wealth. In these last days Christ will have virgins who fan the flame. Virgins who offer the pure light of His glory to a dark world because they have submitted all to His burning. Virgins who hold forth a holy flame to behold the bridegroom. Will you be counted with the wise? Now is the time to fill your vessel with oil, trim your lamp's wick, behold the bridegroom and go forth to meet Him.

John the Baptist declared that Christ would baptize in the Holy Spirit and in fire. To be baptized is to be immersed, totally engulfed and completely buried. When we come to Christ, we come to an immersion in the Holy Spirit and fire. We are immersed into the fuel of God which is the oil of the Spirit, and the fire of God which is His word.

Matthew 3: 11, 12

... He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

“His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

Have you ever sat staring into a camp fire? Watching the flames lick around the twigs and branches you have gathered to be fuel. After a while you start to throw in wrappers and pieces of garbage. The flame quickly devours these unwanted pieces of garbage. The fire becomes a great tool for cleaning up the camp. The wheat that Christ will gather into His granary will only be wheat. The chaff will be separated from the wheat. The chaff of our lives, the sin, must be given over to the burning holy flame of God. As the chaff is burnt up we will be made ready for His appearing. We will see Him and be ready to meet Him. If we refuse to submit to His burning and continue to cling to the chaff (the sin in our lives), then when He appears, our light will have lost its burning, its convicting, sanctifying ability. It will have gone out and we will not be ready to meet the bridegroom and enter His chamber.

Matthew 13: 43

“Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Proverbs 4: 18

*But the path of the just is like a shining sun,
That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.*

THE OIL

There is a night coming, a midnight hour and a midnight cry. Bride, “*Behold, the bridegroom is coming, go out to meet Him!*” Have you slumbered and slept? Are you at ease in Zion? Have you run out of oil? Has your flame gone out? Have you lost your first love? Now is the time to buy oil!

The oil in the parable represents the ministry and work of the Holy Spirit. Throughout Scripture, oil is used as a type of the Holy Spirit. In First Samuel, we find the account of the prophet Samuel anointing David with oil.

1 Samuel 16: 13

Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.

The Holy Spirit came to reveal the ministry of the WORD OF GOD. Jesus promised to send the Comforter to His disciples after His death and resurrection. The Holy Spirit would come to lead them into all truth.

John 14: 26

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

John 16: 13

... He will guide you into all truth;

Christ’s words would be revealed by the oil of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit would be the oil of His burning; the fuel that would cause the spark of the letter of the word to burst into the flame of life.

John 3: 5

Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water, (the water of the word - Eph. 5:24) and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

1Peter 1: 23

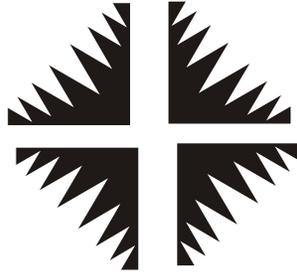
... having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the WORD OF GOD which lives and abides forever,

The Holy Spirit is the fuel for the flame, working to illuminate the WORD OF GOD to our hearts and make Christ and His words come alive to our spirits. Paul commands us to be filled with the Spirit.

Ephesians 5: 18

... be filled with the Spirit,

Will you be filled with the oil of the Spirit? Will you be baptized in His oil: completely immersed? Will you surrender to Him completely, seek Him and His will before everyone and everything else in your life? Will you seek Him with all your heart? Will you wait in His presence and allow Him to fill you? Will you be saturated with His oil and let His holy fire burn within you? You must, in order to be counted among the wise fifty percent: among the five wise virgins. Hear now, this midnight cry, BRIDE, BEHOLD YOUR BRIDEGROOM, GO OUT TO MEET HIM!



A PEOPLE PREPARED FOR THE LORD

2

Malachi 3: 1 - 3

“Behold, I send MY MESSENGER, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming, Says the Lord of hosts.

“But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like A REFINER’S FIRE and like a launderer’s soap.

He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the Lord AN OFFERING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.

The Lord we are seeking will suddenly come to His temple. Christ is sending His messenger to prepare the way before Him, the spirit and power of Elijah calling the church to holiness and repentance. The living word of God will be preached. It will be a refiner’s fire, like a launderer’s soap. It will come to purge and purify the sons of Levi: the church. It will separate the chaff from the wheat, setting forth a people prepared for Christ to inhabit and use for His purpose. They will be A PEOPLE PREPARED FOR THE LORD, bringing forth an offering in righteousness. They will reveal Christ. They will be His living house, His holy temple.

MY MESSENGER

Malachi 3: 1

“Behold, I send MY MESSENGER, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming, Says the Lord of hosts.

In chapter three, verse one of the book of Malachi, the prophet tells us that God

would send a messenger to prepare the way before His coming. In this passage of scripture we find two messengers being discussed. The first would prepare the way for the second: *“And he will prepare the way before Me”*. The first is revealed in the New Testament as John the Baptist. The second is revealed as Jesus Christ, the Messenger of the covenant. *“And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to his temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant,”*.

Malachi’s prophecy also refers to both advents of Christ. In chapter three, verse one, Christ’s first appearance identifies the messenger of the covenant as coming to His temple. In chapter four, verse five, His second advent is called the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Common to both advents, a messenger would precede Christ’s coming to prepare His way. In chapter three, Christ’s first advent, the messenger is identified as one with a ministry of preparation. In chapter four, Christ’s second advent, the messenger is called Elijah the prophet.

Christ identifies John the Baptist as the messenger preceding His first coming.

Matthew 17: 11 - 13

Jesus answered and said to them, “Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things.

“But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatsoever they wished. Likewise the Son Of Man is also about to suffer at their hands.”

Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist.

Malachi’s prophecy ends in chapter four, with the declaration that Elijah the prophet would come before the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Jesus identifies John as Elijah come already. These seemingly contradictory statements become clear as we realize the prophet is speaking of the two advents and one preceding messenger or ministry, *“the spirit and power of Elijah”*, and not the actual return of Elijah.

In looking at the prophecy of the angel Gabriel concerning John’s life and ministry, we find that John is revealed as coming in this ministry: the spirit and power of Elijah.

Luke 1: 13 - 17

But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and

your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.

“And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.

“For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.

“And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.

“He will also go before HIM (Christ) in THE SPIRIT AND THE POWER OF ELIJAH, ‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’ and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready A PEOPLE PREPARED FOR THE LORD.”

Elijah was not to actually return in the flesh. The ministry of Elijah was to be recognized through John. He would call Israel to repentance. Like Elijah, John would burst forth onto the national scene as an unknown out of the wilderness. He would preach repentance to the nation just as Elijah had so many years before him. John would be great in the sight of God, and he would turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He would do it in the same spirit and power of Elijah.

Jesus called John a burning and shining lamp.

John 5: 35

“He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.

With zeal John preached repentance and holiness. His words came forth with great convicting power. Elijah tore down the altars of Baal and destroyed his prophets. John tore down those same altars in the hearts of the disobedient sons of Israel.

Matthew 3: 3

For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying:

Isaiah 40: 3 -5

The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the Lord; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God.

Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth;

The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

Christ’s first advent was preceded by a ministry of preparation. John called

Israel to prepare for the Messenger of the covenant: the Lord they were seeking, would suddenly come to His temple.

John called forth a highway of holiness, a highway of prepared people. The lowly were exalted, the proud were abased. The crooked were made straight, the rough smooth. Christ had a people prepared to receive Him and reveal Him at His coming. They were a people prepared for the Lord.

Christ's second advent will also be preceded by the ministry of the spirit and power of Elijah. The spirit and power of Elijah is a spirit of holy zeal, calling the church to holiness, separation and preparation. It is calling the church to repentance. It is turning the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. A company, formed in the wilderness of obscurity, will come forth before Christ's second advent. They will represent the ministry of the messenger, sent in the spirit and power of Elijah. They will call the church to preparation first and the world through the prepared church to repentance. The church is receiving this call first. There is a travailing, a groaning by the Spirit of God. It is being exercised through His body, the church. Christ shall see the travail of His soul. Christ will have a people prepared to reveal Him; a people prepared for His coming.

A REFINER'S FIRE

Malachi 3: 1,2

... And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple ...

"But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when he appears? For he is like A REFINER'S FIRE And like a launderer's soap.

Malachi declares that the Lord whom Israel was seeking would suddenly come to His temple. However, with His presence would come judgment on sin. Malachi calls the Messenger of the covenant, (Jesus Christ) a refiner's fire. He asks, *... who can endure the day of His coming?" ... who can stand when He appears?* At the appearing of Jesus Christ, sin is judged by His word. Christ is pictured as a refiner's fire, separating the precious from the vile.

Isaiah 1: 25

I will turn My hand against you, And thoroughly purge away your dross, And take away all your alloy.

Jesus Christ, the word of God, is a sharp two-edged sword. He came to the temple in Jerusalem first with a whip; He came daily with His word.

Matthew 26: 55

... I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, ...

John 15: 22, 23

“If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

“He who hates Me hates My Father also.

Christ’s word became a sword, cutting between those who received it and those who rejected it. Those who hated Christ and rejected His words, hated and rejected the Father also.

Those who received John’s baptism, received Christ’s. Those who received John’s words, received Christ’s. The prepared are those who hear the word of repentance and REPENT.

Matthew 3: 8, 10

“Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance,

“ And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

John introduced Christ as One who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. He declares Him as One who would thoroughly purge His threshing floor.

Matthew 3: 11, 12

“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

“His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire”.

Christ would come to His temple to purge, purify and refine. He would have a company of people bringing forth an offering in righteousness; a holy nation

bringing forth fruit befitting repentance.

AN OFFERING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Malachi 3: 3

He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the Lord AN OFFERING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Immediately before the coming of Christ, an end-time holy priesthood will arise out of the Christian church to offer up to God a sacrifice acceptable to Him. The sons of Levi, purged like gold and silver will offer an offering in righteousness. It will be a holy savor, an aroma pleasing to the Father. It will be an offering acceptable to God: a pleasing sacrifice, an offering in righteousness.

When God established the tabernacle worship in the wilderness, He appointed the tribe of Levi, through Aaron, to officiate as priests. They were to be a tribe set apart, separated for the express purpose of the temple worship.

In the New Testament, Peter identifies the church as a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, the spiritual sons of Levi.

1 Peter 2: 5

you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2: 9

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

The Father is looking for an offering in righteousness. However, the prophet Isaiah declares that all our righteousness is as filthy rags before Him. Our own righteousness is corrupt. Our works will be dross before the refiner's fire. Our righteousness must be His, an imputed righteousness. Our works, His works, manifested through us.

Isaiah 64: 6

But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our RIGHTEOUSNESSES are like filthy rags;

Romans 4: 5, 6

*But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,
just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes RIGHTEOUSNESS apart from works.*

2 Corinthians 5: 21

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the RIGHTEOUSNESS of God in Him.

1 Corinthians 1: 30

But of Him are you in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God -and RIGHTEOUSNESS and sanctification, and redemption -

Our offering unto the Father, that is pleasing to Him, is Christ in us. It is not self. It can not be carnality, our ambition, or great works of ministry. It is spirit; it is Christ. It is His character and His righteousness.

Colossians 1: 27

... Christ in you, the hope of glory.

John 4: 23, 24

True worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

Galatians 2: 20

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I that live but Christ lives in me;

Paul, declares, "It is no longer I that live but Christ". The Father is looking for His spiritual house, His temple, to bring forth an offering in righteousness, "Not I but Christ". Self, or flesh must give way to spirit. Paul said, "I have been crucified".

2 Corinthians 6: 16

For you are the temple of the living God. As God hath said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be my people".

Paul writing to the Ephesians, states why Christ gave spiritual gifts to His church.

Ephesians 4: 12, 13, 15

For the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to THE MEASURE OF THE STATURE OF THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST;

... May grow up in all things into Him who is the head - CHRIST -

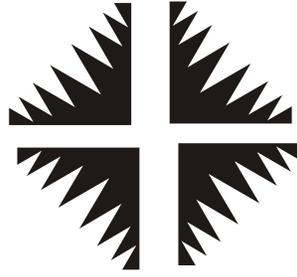
The offering that is pleasing to the Father will come forth to Him as THE MEASURE OF THE STATURE OF THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST. John the Baptist preceded Christ's first advent with a ministry of preparation. In these last days before the second advent of Christ, there is another ministry of preparation at work. The spirit and power of Elijah is at work to reveal THE MEASURE OF THE STATURE OF THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST. The word of Christ is separating, purging and refining a people. This people will reveal Christ to the world before His second advent. They will be His spiritual house. They will present an offering in righteousness unto the Father; Christ coming forth in and through His temple. The offering of Christ will come forth. Flesh will give way to spirit, and Christ will be revealed. The world will see Him first through a people prepared for the Lord, through His body the church. They will receive Him or reject Him here first, before His second advent, the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

Malachi 3: 4

"Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasant to the Lord,

Malachi 4: 5

Behold, I will send Elijah the prophet; before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.



DIVINE DIVISION

3

Matthew 21: 42

. The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes'?

To reject Christ is to reject His word. When we hear His word we are confronted with an awesome choice: will we receive His word and live, or reject it and die?

Jeremiah 21: 8

... "Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death.

His word is a divine divider; a great separator. It contains the power to divide us unto son-ship, oneness with the Father and eternal life. It also holds the power to divide us unto spiritual death, separation from the Father. The choice is ours. The way we choose to handle the word of God determines our fate.

Mark 4: 23 - 25

"If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

Then He said to them, "Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given.

"For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."

Christ is calling us to be careful how we hear. How we hear determines whether or not we receive. Too many times the word of revelation is presented to us through a member of the body of Christ and we reject it. When we reject His word, we reject Him. When we reject His servant who comes in His name and speaks His words, we reject Him.

Matthew 10: 40

“He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

Matthew 25: 40

... inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’

When we reject the word of life, we reject life and move into death. The word of God is revealed in scripture as the light of the world. When we reject the light we embrace the darkness.

1 John 1: 5

... God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

John 1: 1, 4, 12, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right (power-KJV) to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Christ is the incarnation of the Word of God. The words He spoke were with power. The word He speaks through His servants manifests the revelation of Him. Christ tells us that He is the way, the truth and the life; Christ is truth. Truth is the revelation of who He is. When we reject truth we immediately embrace the lie; the result is our own demise. Many times Christ has been presented to the world, but a world in love with the lie rejects Him. If we love darkness we will reject the light when it is presented to us through the truth of His word.

John 1: 10, 11

He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

The heart that hungers after truth will find it in the person of Jesus Christ. That heart must be unwilling to settle for only half the truth, for a half-truth is akin to a lie. We must hunger for all the fullness of God in Christ Jesus. We will not stop

short, as we search for Him, if we love the truth with all of our hearts.

Matthew 22: 37

. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'

When the truth is revealed, through a servant of Christ, we will know it, if the unction within us is leading and guiding us into all truth. The revelation will be confirmed by the Spirit of Christ within us, His temple. The Spirit will bear witness with our spirits. The difficulty arises when we are in love, not with the light of truth, but the darkness of our own erroneous set of lies.

John 8: 44, 45, 47

"You are of your father the devil, ... for he is a liar and the father of it.

But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.

"HE WHO IS OF GOD HEARS GOD'S WORDS;

The division that is coming to the church is divine, in the sense that as God reveals Christ through His church, as the truth, some will reject and some will receive Him. He is dividing forth a people who, when they hear the truth, follow after Him with all their hearts. They are willing to allow the holy truth of God's word to purge them of what is not truth or Christ. Those who cling to error or the deceit of their own hearts will be left shamefully without. The light will break forth to reveal the light. Those in the darkness will not know Him or recognize Him and will continue to hide in the darkness. The shame of this darkness will be witnessed by all who see glory, power and majesty rise over the true bride. The lamps of the wise will be blazing; the lamps of the foolish will have gone out. When Christ, who is the truth, is revealed from heaven only those who have set their affections on Him will appear with Him.

Colossians 3: 1 - 4

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

We must be willing to allow the light of the world to shine into our hearts and

reveal all that does not completely reflect His image. The fires on the altars of our hearts must burn continually. We cannot hold to the hidden areas of a deceitful heart. The living word is a washing word.

Wind and fire manifested the presence of God on the day of Pentecost. The wind represented the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The tongues of fire represented the burning, purifying word of God: Jesus Christ.

Acts 2: 2 - 4

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit ...

This mighty rushing wind is blowing. If we will embrace the wind, the fire it brings will purge, refine and purify Christ's body. The fire will equip us for God's holy service.

Matthew 3: 11

... He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

The fire is the word of God revealing its burning, purifying quality. When the word of God is rejected, our means of sanctification is rejected. We end up choosing death. We must be holy to see God.

Hebrews 12: 14, 29

... and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

For our God is a consuming fire.

This fire that burns to consume, consumes all that is not His image. The church must embrace the word of God to behold the glory of God and to be changed into the same image. I am afraid that many will reject the living word, and as a result, reject Christ. They will not know the hour of their visitation.

Matthew 23: 37, 38

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks

*under her wings, but you were not willing!
See! Your house is left to you desolate;*

The wind that blows is always accompanied by the fire that burns. It never originates from man. It is a gift from heaven. It is not the work of a denomination of men. No man or group will be able to contain this wind. It is God's breath, God's wind, God's fire. Those who embrace its purifying effect by yielding to it through repentance and obedience are prepared for service and His appearing. Those who resist will find the wind blowing by them. They will be divinely divided by their choices.

John 12: 48

"He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him - the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.

The wisdom of man, the pride of man, will become chaff and fuel for the fire of God's holy word.

Malachi 3: 2

"But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when he appears? For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderer's soap.

Isaiah 40: 4

Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low;

The humble will be raised up. God will raise up an army of nobodies. The big shots will have to become little shots. The sin of pride will be brought before them; they will repent or cling to this love of self exaltation and be set aside. The mountains and hills will be brought low.

Isaiah 66: 1, 2

Thus says the Lord: "Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me?

The houses of pomp, ceremony and theatrical craft come before the High and Lofty One as a stench.

And where is the place of My rest?

For all those things My hand has made, And all those things exist,” says the Lord. “But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, And who trembles at My word.

Are we contrite in spirit? Do we tremble at His word? Do we fear Him?

Proverbs 9: 10

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, ...

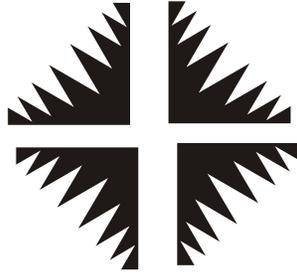
Are you one of the wise? Or are you so full of self that your confidence is in your own righteousness? Do you wait on Him, with a heart on fire for Him, burning with a hunger to know Him and do His will? Do you have a hunger for the fire of His word to burn away all that is not Him? Will you allow this fire to purify and purge every thought and intent of your heart? If you will, then God will be able to use you in His service; if you do not, you will be set aside. An army will be divided out. Will you be in it? It becomes our choice. If you are too busy with the cares of the world to hear what God is saying, then you will not hear. You will not see and you will not be sanctified, set apart and prepared. Hear the call of God, slumbering virgin, awake from your sleep. Behold the bridegroom is coming and your fire has gone out. Buy oil, anoint your eyes with eye salve that you might see.

Christ has set Himself against His church, to purge and purify it. That which reflects Him will stand the testing fire. All that is not Christ, will burn before His awesome terrible holiness. The dross will separate from the silver. The refining will go on. All self effort, the plans and precepts of men, will yield to the fire. Christ is coming forth through His temple. His whip is in His hand. Zeal for His house has consumed Him. He is jealous for His bride with a Godly jealousy. He is turning the tables of the money-changers. The spirit of promotion, the spirit of entertainment, the exaltation of man and his programs, will come down or be set aside. Christ will be the head of His church. He will have no other gods before Him. Every member of the body will look to the head. Christ will be the teacher through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, through seeking prayer. Teachers will confirm the unction within. Pastors, teachers and prophets will reveal the word of Christ. Not some teaching devised to manipulate and control Christ's body. The idolatry of creature worship will be destroyed. The grip of an ecclesiastical hierarchy will be destroyed. There will be no ecclesiastical hierarchy holding the bride in bondage to a Babylonian world system. Those from above will be clothed from above. Those from below will continue to wear the filthy rags of self-

righteousness. Outwardly they are adorned in the most costly apparel but God continues to look on the heart. The leaven of the Pharisees has crept into the church. Christ will have a church without spot or wrinkle on her garments of His righteousness. The garment will be Christ and Christ alone. The church will come forth from the grave of bondage. It will put off the grave cloths of the earthly and be clothed in the armor of light that only Christ can provide. The church will be free from all world systems. It will separate itself from the corrupt order and begin to function in divine order. Christ the head of every man; Christ the head of His church.

The body of Christ will be united, not in name but in the Holy Spirit, as one corporate entity; beholding the head and doing the will of God.

Divine division is the fire of God setting forth and separating a people because they choose to embrace the burning.



THE GREAT SHAKING

4

God is shaking His church. All that can be shaken will be shaken, so that, that which cannot be shaken will remain. That which cannot be shaken is Christ. In order for a pure expression of Christ to come forth through His temple, all that is not Christ must be removed. God is desiring to bring forth a revelation of Christ to the world in these last days. The church must begin to recognize God's plan for the body of Christ. The church must see its identity. We must begin to see His image in the mirror: God, seen through the body of which He is head. In order for Him to come forth, every area of our lives must be given over to Him. He must increase, we must decrease. The old man must give way to the new.

Ephesians 4: 22 - 24

that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Romans 12: 1, 2

... present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,

God is calling us to renew our minds to Christ. Scripture reveals Christ as the very word of God - the only way through which we come to the Father. We must turn to this living word, this living way and begin to renew our minds. He is water for the thirsty and bread for the hungry. He is light for those in darkness. We must reach out and partake of Him. We must begin to behold Christ.

2 Corinthians 3: 18

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

We are called to behold Him. The Spirit of Christ will work the change in us - changing us from glory to glory, into the same image we behold. When we wait on Christ, obeying His word, a death begins to work in the old man. The self nature, the flesh, gives way to the spirit. The new man created after God in righteousness and true holiness begins to come forth. When we wait on Christ, communing with Him in prayer, a new man comes forth.

Colossians 1: 27

... Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Christ will come forth. To bring forth Christ, God is shaking all that is not Him. Every area of our lives not submitted to Him will crumble. Every area surrendered to Him, every area in which He is Lord, will stand. Christ will stand this shaking; all else will fall.

Colossians 2: 8

Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

BEWARE! Beware lest any man cheat you. Paul is speaking here to the Colossian church. He is warning them against being cheated. The Greek word used here for CHEAT is "sulagogeo". It means, to lead away as booty, seduce or spoil. The KJV says, "*beware lest any man spoil you.*" Paul sets before the church a short list of things that have the potential to seduce or spoil us. The first is PHILOSOPHY, the second is VAIN DECEIT, the third is THE TRADITIONS OF MEN and the fourth is THE PRINCIPLES OF THIS WORLD. These things are not after Christ. Anything that is not Christ, is not pure and has the potential of bringing a mix or spoil to the church. All that is not Christ must give way to Him. So much of what we have passed off for Christianity is not Christ. So much of what now is excepted in the church will not be. A new zeal and desire for Christ and only Christ will soon take hold of Christ's bride. Those who have determined to stand will be forced to abandon all but Him. Christ will suddenly come to His

temple. The philosophy, the vain deceit, the traditions of men, the principles of this world, will all give way to Christ and Christ alone. He will become our all and all. His body will have no time for anyone or anything but Christ. The idolatrous, lukewarm church will give way to one that is very hot.

God is beginning to shake His Church. The church built on the rock will stand this shaking. The one built on sand will not.

Matthew 7: 24 - 27

“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock.

“and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

“But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:

“and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

How are you building? Are you building on the rock of obedience to God’s word? Have you been building according to your own precepts and understanding? The shaking God has prepared for His church, will prove how you have been building. The rain is beginning to descend, the floods are rising, the wind is getting stronger, a storm is beginning to blow in. Will you stand this storm? Is Christ everything to you? Is He the food you eat, the water you drink? Is He your greatest hearts desire? Do you love Him with all your heart and soul? Is He your all and all? If He is, then you will stand. If He is not, then you will fall. I am afraid many will fall. Many believe they know Him and that they are working for Him. In reality they are working for self. They have such a strong false image of Christ that they are blind and unable to see Him.

Matthew 7: 22, 23

“MANY will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’

“And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

We must begin to see! In order to see we must understand that without His light of revelation, we are blind. If we humble ourselves and see that we are blind,

He will open our eyes to see. We become humble by embracing the convicting power of His word. If we allow conviction to take hold of our souls, and we repent of the pride of thinking that can see without Him, then He will open our eyes to truly see. We will begin to see and understand that God does not see things the way we do. He hates our self-righteous religious pride.

Isaiah 64: 6

... our righteousnesses are like filthy rags;

Matthew 7: 22, 23

... have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out demons? And in thy name done many wonderful works?

... depart from me, ye that WORK INIQUITY. (KJV)

God calls it works of iniquity. We call it prophecy and many wonderful works. We must realize that God is not looking for our wonderful flesh-promoting works. God, who is holy, terrible, fearful and awesome, cannot receive our works. He can only receive one sacrifice, one offering: the holy, spotless lamb of God. The sacrifice of Cain, He will reject. The church has continually brought a sacrifice to the altar of dead works and it has produced nothing but dead works.

Hebrews 10: 5 - 7

Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:

“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,

But a body You have prepared for Me.

In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin

You had no pleasure.

Then I said; ‘Behold, I have come -

In the volume of the book it is written of Me -

To do Your will, O God.’

Christ came to do the will of the Father. His sacrifice was total obedience. We, as His body, are come, “*in the volume of the book it is written of me (us) to do Your will, O God*”. Christ is perfecting a body.

Ephesians 4: 13, 15

... to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head -

Christ -

We are being called to grow up into Him. Growth of any kind demands a certain amount of stretching and change. Very often change is uncomfortable. I believe the change that is coming to the church will be very uncomfortable for many. The images of Christ that are not Christ are going to shake and fall. Programs, concepts, methods, formulas, will all give way to a vital relationship with Christ.

God hates religion. I believe Satan has chosen his most powerful demonic world rulers to orchestrate the systems of world religion. Religion has always given man the self-righteous piety to mock God. Jesus' greatest denunciations were not for the harlots, the tax collectors or the Romans; but for the religious. It was to those who said that they see, that Jesus said, "*you remain blind.*" He called them blind guides, who shut up the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 23: 13, 24

"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; ...

"Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!"

Christianity was never meant to be a system of religion, making people good enough to get to heaven. Christianity is not religion. Satan is always trying to turn it into religion. Christianity is the outliving of an indwelling Christ. It is a love relationship between the redeemed and the redeemer. Christ has paid the wages of sin. He has purchased the believer out from under the captivity of sin and the tyranny of Satan. Christ has brought the believer into sonship with the Father. The wall of sin, separating a holy God from a sinful fallen creation, has been ripped down. Through Christ, the believer has become one with God. Satan hates this truth. His desire is to get us to fall into form and ritual. He wants people to believe that doing penance, observing holy days, or different forms of ritual will earn us our way. Form, ritual, ceremony with a priesthood to mediate is his design. These forces are very much at work in the church of Jesus Christ today.

Isaiah 1: 11, 13, 15, 16

"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?" Says the Lord. "I have had enough of burnt offerings and rams And the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, Or of lambs or goats.

Bring no more futile sacrifices; Incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths and the calling assemblies - I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting.

When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.

“Wash yourselves, (in repentance), make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil,

Isaiah 66: 1, 2

Thus says the Lord: “Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me? And where is the place of My rest?

For all those things My hand made, And all those things exist,” Says the Lord. “But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, And who trembles at My word.

And who trembles at My word.

Man has continually approached God the wrong way. We have come with the fruit of our own labor; confident that God would be pleased with our great sacrifice of toil. Our accomplishments have always promoted our own sense of self-exaltation. They have bolstered our pride. We have come down through the centuries with great architecture, great orations, great concerts, great theater, great assemblies and great men of God. God would have to be pleased with all our greatness. It has all been in the name of the Lord; all for His glory. We sincerely believe our craft, our polish is pleasing to Him. We are deceived by our own hearts. God is not looking for our vain oblation; our incense is an abomination. We can come to God with nothing but our own nakedness and plead only His blood. We must drop the fig leaves of religion and accept the revelation of Christ and Christ alone.

Genesis 3: 7, 21

Then the eyes of both of them (Adam and Eve) were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and sewed fig leaves together and MADE THEMSELVES COVERINGS.

Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin [a revelation of the shedding of Christ’s blood for the remission of sin], and clothed them.

The revelation of temple worship Moses received from God was a revelation of Christ. The bronze serpent on a pole God instructed Moses to raise in the wilderness, was a revelation of the curse hung on Calvary’s tree. The Israelites lost the meaning and started to worship it. The temple with all its symbolism revealing

Christ, also eventually became an object of worship. God instructed Moses to tear down the bronze serpent and pole. Christ pronounced judgement on the temple.

Matthew 24: 2

... not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

The systems of religion are as varied as the individuals who practice its craft.

Adam made a covering of fig leaves. God replaces the leaves with a covering of skin-pointing to the revelation of Christ's sacrificial blood. Cain brought the fruit of the ground; God rejected his sacrifice and tried to direct him to the revelation of shed blood, but Cain refused.

Genesis 4: 6, 7

So the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?"

"If you do well (come through the sacrifice of the Lamb, by faith and faith alone), will you not be accepted? And if you do not well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."

Esau was strong, he was independent, a capable hunter. His name means MAN OF THE EARTH. His faith was in what he could see, his own ability and strength. He sold his birthright to Jacob, his brother, for a stew of lentils. The birthright was spiritual and of little value to Esau. He despised the spiritual. It is in their own strength that many come to God, bringing an offering of self and fleshly ability.

Malachi 1: 2, 3

... Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" Says the Lord. "Yet Jacob I have loved; But Esau I have hated, And laid waste his mountains and his heritage for the jackals of the wilderness."

God hates Esau, in the sense that He can take no pleasure in the arm of sinful flesh.

God instructed Moses to speak unto the rock in the wilderness. He was to call water forth from the rock in the sight of the congregation. Moses was angry with the people and instead of speaking to the rock, he struck it twice with a rod. The water did gush forth from the rock, however Moses's disobedience incurred the

judgment of God. Moses would not enter into the promised land. God cannot allow flesh to be added to His word. The revelation of Christ cannot be mixed with flesh. The water coming forth from the rock was a picture of the rock of Christ giving living water to the thirsty.

1 Corinthians 10: 4

... and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

Moses unwittingly added to the revelation and incurred God's purifying judgment. Christ cannot be added to, or taken away from. Moses came to God with his assumptions. Saul came to God with his presumptions.

1 Samuel 15: 16, 17, 23

Then Samuel said to Saul, "Be quiet! And I will tell you what the Lord said to me last night." And he said to him, "Speak on."

So Samuel said, "When you were little in your own eyes, were you not head of the tribes of Israel? And did not the Lord anoint you king over Israel?"

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from being king."

The Lord anointed Saul king over Israel when he was little in his own eyes. When he was dependent on God, he was chosen. Saul became independent and self-reliant and he was rejected. The church must repent of its rebellion and independence. We must be dependent on God and His revelation alone. Only in complete dependency on the revelation of Christ, the living word, can the body reveal the head. The body of Christ cannot become self-reliant or self-directed by becoming independent of the voice of God. Saul disobeyed the word of God spoken through Samuel, God's prophet. Saul's self-reliance became his downfall.

1 Corinthians 1: 26 - 31

For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.

But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,

that no flesh should glory in His presence.

But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us WISDOM from God - and RIGHTEOUSNESS and SANCTIFICATION and REDEMPTION - that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord."

The church can only glory in the Lord. Christ is our wisdom and our righteousness; He is our sanctification and our redemption. We must see that in our flesh dwells no good thing. The revelation of the blood of Christ as the only sacrifice pleasing to God, is a revelation of Christ the author and the finisher of our faith. It is Christ, the word of God, presented as the only way, from the book of Genesis through to the book of Revelation. Christ is the sacrificial lamb; He is the coats that covered Adam and Eve, the sacrifice of Abel, the faith of Abraham and the words and works of Moses. Christ is the Passover lamb, the symbolism of the tabernacle; He is the veil of the temple, the shewbread, the incense, the blood on the mercy seat, and the list goes on and on. Christ is our salvation; He is our robe of righteousness. Nothing can be added or taken away from this great revelation. We can not add our self-righteous good works, our religion.

Romans 9: 31 - 33

but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.

Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.

As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and a rock of offense, And whosoever believes on Him shall not be put to shame."

Paul is saying that Israel did not seek righteousness through faith in the revelation of the shed blood of Christ. Individuals did, of course, but most of the nation rejected the revelation of the word of faith: Jesus Christ. Like Cain, they depended on a righteousness sought through works. They believed that if they strictly adhered to the law, they would be saved. They trusted in the flesh.

Philippians 3: 4 - 9

though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so:

circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee;

concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the

law, blameless.

But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.

and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by Faith.

Paul counted all that made him great in the flesh as garbage. God sees it that way too. In the eyes of God fleshly self-reliance is rebellion and evil. It is an evil He hates, because it has the potential to rob us of salvation and send us to hell. It robs God of His possession, His creation, His bride. It breaks our union with Him; it robs both God and man.

Isaiah 64: 6

But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses, (righteous deeds or religion), are like filthy rags;

We must be covered, not with what we can bring to God, not with our works, but with Him. His salvation must be ours.

Isaiah 61: 10

... He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, ...

The plan of Satan down through the ages has been to add to the revelation of Christ and then move man away from an understanding of that revelation completely. This strategy is played out almost immediately in the early church. Paul addresses this issue with the Jews in his epistles. They wanted to add to the message of salvation by observing the law of Moses. The emperor Constantine's conversion to Christianity in the third century brought the church into a state of darkness and spoil, as he assimilated the practices of paganism with Christianity. Down through the centuries Christ has been washing His church with the washing water of His word. Line upon line, precept upon precept, He has been bringing forth the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

God is shaking His church loose of all that is not Christ. All that has worked to spoil will shake loose and fall away. Philosophy, vain deceit, the tradition of men,

the principles of this world, all that is mixed with the body of Christ, that is not Christ, will give way to Christ.

The pride of flesh, independence, self-reliance, all the sacrifices of flesh will give way to the pure and holy sacrifice of Christ and Christ alone. Every idol of fleshly ambition, the glory of self, will topple and fall. Jesus said, "*he who is not with me is against me*". Christ's words indicate a line of division between what is His and what is not. To be with Christ is to die to what is not Christ; to lay down everything that is the old nature and to take up the new in Him.

Matthew 12: 30

"He who is not with Me is against Me, ...

Romans 13: 11- 14

... awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

*The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the ARMOR OF LIGHT.
of darkness, and let us put on the ARMOR OF LIGHT.*

Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.

But [put on your beautiful garment] PUT ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

John 8: 12

... "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

Isaiah 52: 1

Awake, awake! Put on your strength, O Zion; Put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city!

Hebrews 12: 25, 27

See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven.

Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being SHAKEN, as of things that are made, that the things which CANNOT BE SHAKEN may remain.

Christ cannot be shaken; He will remain. The word of God, Jesus Christ, the rock will remain. The systems of this world will all one day crumble, but Jesus Christ will stand. He is the only lasting true foundation.

1 Corinthians 3: 11 - 13

For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.

Matthew 24: 35

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. away.

Only ministry that has been done in obedience to the word of Christ will stand. The testing fire of God's word will try every work. The shaking that is now taking hold of the church will prove a pure word of Christ: a pure light.

Isaiah 52: 2

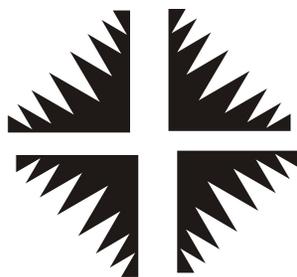
Shake yourself from the dust, arise; Sit down, O Jerusalem! Loose yourself from the bonds of your neck, O captive daughter of Zion!

Haggai 2: 21 - 23

... 'I will SHAKE heaven and earth. I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms; I will destroy the strength of the Gentile kingdoms. I will overthrow the chariots And those who ride in them; The horses and their riders shall come down, Every one by the sword of his brother. 'In that day,' says the Lord of hosts, 'I will take you, Zerubbabel My servant, the son of Shealtiel,' says the Lord, 'and will make you like a signet ring; for I have chosen you,' says the Lord of hosts."

The signet ring is a symbol of royal authority. Through Zerubbabel, a descendent of David, came the messianic line. Like David, he is a type of Christ.

All will be shaken, heaven, earth, thrones, kingdoms, the strength of kingdoms, nations, chariots, all will be shaken, Christ will not! Christ in you will not be shaken; He will rise over you and come forth.



THE BREATH OF GOD

5

Genesis 2: 7

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and BREATHED into his nostrils the BREATH of life; and man became a living being.

The Hebrew word, RUACH, is translated here, BREATH. Throughout the Old Testament, it is translated into English with the words BREATH, SPIRIT and WIND. The word RUACH is also used in connection with Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones. The account is found in the book of Ezekiel, chapter thirty-seven. The prophet has a vision in which he is commanded by God to prophesy unto a valley of dry bones. He is told to prophesy unto the WIND, to BREATHE upon the slain that they may live.

Ezekiel 37: 9 - 10

... "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Come from the four winds, O BREATH, and BREATHE upon these slain, that they may live."

So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came unto them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.

God breathed divine life into Adam and he became a living being, (soul-KJV). In Ezekiel's vision, life is also imparted by the breath of God. A third example of God imparting life by this method is found in the New Testament. After Christ's death and resurrection, He appeared to His disciples. He breathed upon them and spoke these words, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

John 20: 21, 22

So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

And when He had said this, HE BREATHED on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.

John the Baptist introduced Christ as the one who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. On the day of Pentecost, in an upper room in Jerusalem, Christ’s disciples received this baptism.

Acts 2: 2, 3

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty WIND, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.

The breath of the Holy Spirit, upon one hundred and twenty disciples, manifested as a rushing mighty wind and was accompanied by divided tongues of fire. The wind of God’s breath began to blow, imparting new life and power to Christ’s disciples. Hours before, they were afraid and powerless. A new boldness to proclaim the Gospel came with this impartation of spiritual life. The disciples were transformed by the experience. It was the creative work of God and again it was accomplished through the impartation of the RUACH, the wind or breath of God, blowing upon them.

The breath of God blowing upon Adam, or more correctly into Adam’s nostrils, brought him into being. *“He became a living soul.”* The transference of breath or spirit became the active ingredient that produced life. It is spiritual life with the character and nature of God, imparted to the created being. It is man created in the image of God.

John 4: 24

“God is Spirit, ...

Genesis 1: 26

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to our likeness;

God created man in the image of God. If God is Spirit, then it is the spirit of man that reflects God’s image and His eternal character.

In each of these examples there is the common phenomenon of God imparting

life and power by the breathing or blowing wind of God. Common to all three, we find the word breath or wind used to manifest the impartation of spiritual life and power.

In the example of Ezekiel's vision, again the breath or wind of God is indicative of the Spirit of God. After Ezekiel has the vision he is given an explanation for it. The bones are the whole house of Israel. The breath blowing upon them is said to be the Spirit of God.

Ezekiel 37: 13, 14

"Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves.

I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, ...

In the example of the one hundred and twenty disciples of Christ being baptized in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, it is again a manifestation of BREATH and WIND that reveals the baptism.

THE WORD OF GOD

Another element common to each of these three examples is the command or the spoken word of God. In each example, the manifestation of the breath, wind, or Spirit of God was released through the spoken word of God.

John 1: 1, 3, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

All things were made through Him; and without Him nothing was made that was made.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us ...

Here we find the Word of God revealed in flesh as Jesus Christ. Spiritual life was imparted to Adam by the breathing of God into Adam's nostrils. This was accomplished by the command of the Word of God, Jesus Christ.

In Ezekiel's vision he was commanded to prophesy. Again the Word of God is spoken, however, now the vehicle or the vessel through which the Word is released is the prophet Ezekiel. When this living Word is released, so is the breath of God, to release spiritual life and power.

By the direct command of the Word of God, Christ's disciples received spiritual life and power on the day of Pentecost.

John 20: 21, 22

So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you".

And when He had said this, HE BREATHED on them, and SAID to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

In response to this new life, Peter rose up to speak to the multitudes. The Word of God, spoken through his mouth by the unction of the breath of God, birthed three thousand souls into the kingdom of God that day.

Acts 2: 41

Then those who gladly received his WORD were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

Acts 4: 31

And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the WORD OF GOD with boldness.

shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the WORD OF GOD with boldness.

Acts 6: 7

Then the WORD OF GOD spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, ...

The result of Christ's disciples being filled with the Holy Spirit was that they went forth speaking the WORD OF GOD. They spoke the living word of God and creation power was released. The result was the birth and creation of spiritual babes in Christ. The creative, life-giving breath of God was multiplied through Christ's disciples as they boldly spoke the WORD OF LIFE.

1 Peter 1: 23

having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the WORD OF GOD which LIVES AND ABIDES FOREVER,

2 Corinthians 5: 17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a NEW CREATION; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

This word of God is a life-giving seed. When Christ's disciples spoke God's word, they became the vehicle through which God imparted new life and power. This word produced after its kind and new disciples were added to the church. The more they spoke under this inspiration, the more results it produced. An interplay between the Spirit of God and the word of God, spoken through lips of clay, joined to become an active, creative, life giving force. If the heart of the hearer was open to hear, believe, and repent, he or she became a new creation in Christ.

A wonderful interplay between God and man was set into motion. Each believer, born of the Spirit of God, became a son of God and therefore, a spiritual brother of Jesus Christ. They became part of His spiritual body, Jesus Christ being their head. Through Christ, they were positioned in Christ to become His feet, His hands and His mouth and speak the word of life to the dead dry bones. Christ's disciples were and are called to take the word of eternal life to those dead in sin. Christ multiplies Himself to speak a creative, life-giving word, through His body, to those dead in trespasses and sin. Just as Ezekiel was called to prophesy and speak the word of life to the dead dry bones, so Christ's disciples were, and are, called to take the word of eternal life to those dead in sin.

John 6: 63

... The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

John 20: 21, 22

... AS THE FATHER HAS SENT ME, I ALSO SEND YOU.

And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

In Ezekiel's vision, he was commanded to prophesy. He was commanded to speak, to declare not his words but the Word of God. Ezekiel spoke as he was commanded. The whole experience was far beyond him and his comprehension. The account starts with these words, "*The hand of the Lord came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord.*" Ezekiel was in the Spirit. The words he spoke were not his. When Peter stood up to speak before the multitudes in

Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, he was filled with the Spirit of God. He had just come down from the upper room where he had been baptized in the Holy Spirit. Peter's words were not his; like Ezekiel, he also spoke by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Hundreds of years before, this interplay between the breath of God, the spirit of man and the Word of Life, was experienced by the prophet Joel. Joel looked forward to the day of Pentecost and prophesied as the Spirit commanded.

Joel 2: 28

... I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,

The servants of God release the word of God. They prophesy as the Spirit of God commands them, releasing the breath of God. The breath of God, the wind of God, blowing upon the valley of dead dry bones and raising them up from death to life, to become "an exceedingly great army".

John 6: 63

"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

Hebrews 4: 12

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,

It was the life-giving word of God that Ezekiel spoke. It was the quickening word of God that Peter spoke. The word of God is life-giving. It is the word of creation.

Hebrews 11: 3

By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God,

When the Word speaks, worlds come into existence. Order replaces disorder, life springs forth from death. Those bound by sin, dead in sin, are released from Satan's captivity and are translated into the kingdom of God.

Colossians 1: 13

He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed (translated- KJV) us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.

The church holds this power. The name of Jesus, the power of God, has been given to the church. We hold the keys to the kingdom of God.

Revelation 19: 10

... For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Luke 4: 32

And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority.

Matthew 28: 18, 19

"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Romans 1: 16

... the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation ...

When we preach or proclaim God's word, we do it in vain if the word we speak is not alive. However, if it is God's word it will be alive. It will bring life, by the unction of the Spirit of God it will quicken the hearer. The hearer who believes and receives the living Word of God will have received the breath of God, the very life and nature of God. The believer's spirit-man will spring forth to new birth and eternal life. Just as Adam became a living soul in fellowship with God, so will the spirit of the man or woman be, who believes and receives the life giving Word of God that is breathed by the breath of God.

1 Peter 1: 23

...having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God ...

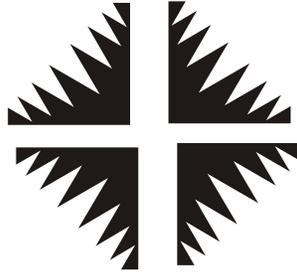
John 1: 12

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right (power-KJV) to become the children of God, to those who believe in His name:

Those who receive the breath of God hold the testimony of Jesus Christ, the spirit of prophecy. Like Ezekiel, like Joel, like Peter and countless others, they must release it. At God's command, they must begin to prophesy unto those dead in the

valley of dry bones, dead in a form of godliness without power, dead in a lukewarm formalism, dead in religion, dead in sin.

Freely the word is given; freely give it to others. Today the wind of God, the breath of God, belongs to the church. The church has been called to speak this life-giving, creative word of God. The church is the house of God, holding this keys to the kingdom. Christ's church will rise from the dust of religion, sectarianism, denominationalism, pluralism to behold only the head and reflect only His image. This church will prophesy as the Spirit commands; producing life after its kind. A new dawn is breaking. The seed of life is coming forth with an explosive power and intensity. The wind will blow. It will be released by those who hold it and it will blow by those who stand to resist it. At God's command to prophesy, His GLORIOUS CHURCH will prophesy.



THE TIMES OF RESTORATION

6

Acts 3: 20, 21

*“and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,
“whom heaven must receive until THE TIMES OF RESTORATION of all things,
which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.*

Heaven must receive Christ until the times of restoration of all things, then He will return.

James 5: 7, 8

Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer (husbandman - KJV) waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain.

You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

Christ is the farmer, the husbandman. He is waiting for the precious fruit of the earth. Waiting for the early and latter rain that will produce that fruit. Christ is waiting for the latter rain, the harvest rain which will produce a harvest of souls.

James was writing to Hebrew Christians who knew about Israel's rains. The early or former rain occurred in November, after the autumn harvest, to prepare the land for future planting. The latter rain came in the spring, prior to the harvest, to mature the crop.

We are in this period in the growth of the church of Jesus Christ. The rain of God's Holy Spirit and Living Word is maturing a church, bringing it forth to reveal the fullness of God.

Ephesians 4: 13

till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

Zechariah 10: 1

Ask the Lord for rain In the time of the latter rain. The Lord will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, Grass in the field for everyone.

Christ will rain on the hungry, on those who cry, “Rain on me, living water of God; fill me, your vessel.” “*Ask the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain.*” It is the thirsty who receive the living water. It is time to call on the Holy Spirit to be filled with this latter rain.

Luke 12: 32

“Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

We must reach out to take the kingdom. The church must press in, overcome all resistance, and receive. The rain is falling.

Matthew 11: 12

“And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.

Luke 16: 16

“The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.

Christ will come to those who diligently seek Him. He longs to reveal His love to all who will humbly seek Him with all their hearts.

Hosea 6: 3

... He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth.

Job 29: 22, 23

After my words they did not speak again, and my speech settled on them as dew. They waited for me as for the rain, And they opened their mouth wide as for the spring rain.

THE LIVING RAIN

Christ the Word of God is falling like rain upon the church. He is the shower of God upon the dry and thirsting soul. The living water of God, streams in the desert.

Isaiah 55: 1, 10 -11

Ho! Everyone that thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price.

“For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater,

So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

The word of God is alive; it is living, with supernatural power. When God created the heavens and the earth, He spoke them into existence.

Hebrews 11: 3

By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

The Living Word speaks forth and worlds come into existence. He speaks and a people spring forth to life. The rain is falling. The Word of life is calling the dead to come forth from the tomb of dead works and religion. Lifeless formalism, professionalism, ecclesiastical pomp, the grave clothing of the dead is giving way to the robe of His word, His righteousness.

The church was conceived by the word of God, it was brought forth from the womb by His word and it will mature into His image by feeding on the word of God. This word is falling like rain; it is the latter rain.

The cry of the spirit of man is, “Rain on me.” Dry, parched, thirsty souls, awakened to their need, are longing to be filled. They will set all aside for the one desire of their hearts. Others with no sense of need are satisfied to remain without.

Luke 6: 21, 25

Blessed are you who hunger now, For you shall be filled.

Woe to you who are full, For you shall hunger.

Matthew 5: 6

Blessed are those hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Church, this is the time of the latter rain. Pray for the rain in the time of the latter rain. Allow God's word to fill your heart; shut yourself away with God. Seek Him with all your heart and He will come to you. He longs to rain on you, as you make Him your heart's number one desire. He will take you, mold you into His image and position you in His army to fulfill the call He has placed on your life. Now, the day of the Lord is at hand. This is the time of the harvest rain. A word that will bring forth the bride of Christ. A rain that will mature a harvest people. Will you be part of that harvest? Will you be the wheat or will you be the chaff? The wheat will form the harvest. The chaff will be burnt with unquenchable fire.

Matthew 3: 12

"His (Christ's) winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

The choice is ours. The former rain producing a harvest and the latter rain bringing it forth to maturity. What a wonderful picture of the work of the Holy Spirit and of the living Word: Jesus Christ. This rain has produced the church from its conception to its maturation. On the day of Pentecost, Peter identified the outpouring of the Holy Spirit with the prophecy of Joel.

Joel 2: 23 - 25

Be glad then, you children of Zion, And rejoice in the Lord your God; For He has given you the FORMER RAIN faithfully, And He will cause the rain to come down to you - The FORMER RAIN, And the LATTER RAIN in the first month.

The threshing floor shall be FULL OF WHEAT, And the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil.

So I will RESTORE to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, The crawling locust, The consuming locust, And the chewing locust, ...

The word of God is sounding forth to restore all that has been eaten. The times of restoration will come and are upon us. Jesus Christ was received into the

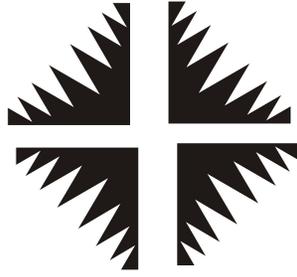
heavens but will return in the times of restoration of all things. The farmer waits patiently for the former and the latter rain; for the restoration of the harvest. This restoration rain has been, through the centuries, producing a crop, and what has been eaten will be restored.

Proverbs 4: 18

*But the path of the just is like a shining sun,
That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.*

In the past, the church has been robbed of its brightness. The darkness of the age has many times hindered its shining. Wave upon wave of restoration rain has moved the church closer and closer to the expression of her full glory and brightness. The light of His being, shining brighter and brighter. From the dark ages until now the word of God has fallen. Rain is pouring down bringing forth wave upon wave of restoration revival. Those who idolize one wave miss the next. Their love for the author of the revival, is sadly many times, turned toward the revival wave. They slip into religion and are in danger of rejecting the living Christ of the next restoration wave. They refuse to let go of a system of form, created by the spirit of religion to obscure Christ. They refuse His living anointing. They reject the living word, for dead form. They reject the light of the living rain and go back into darkness. They live in the past of some great revival of yesterday. Religion becomes substituted for a vital relationship. They become self righteous propped up by a system of doctrines and form. They are turned back to the dead letter of the word. They refuse to behold the head and therefore cannot discern the body.

There is, however, another people who cry for rain in the time of the latter rain. Christ becomes the focus of their gaze. He fills their desire. Nothing, or no one, can take His place or quench their thirst. They hate religion and its idolatry. When the living Christ moves, they move with him. They are obedient to His first command. They love Him with all their hearts. They are waiting before Him to be washed in the water of his word. Born of His Spirit, they reveal his nature. They drink in the harvest rain, and it is working to bring them to maturity. It is producing a harvest for Christ, the husbandman, in THE TIMES OF RESTORATION.



TAKE THIS BREAD

7

Matthew 26: 26, 27

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body". 27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

The invitation of Christ to TAKE THIS BREAD is an invitation to fellowship with His ministry and death, His life and resurrection. The bread broken is a symbol of His body broken. The wine is a symbol of His blood spilt out. The judgement of an Holy God on sin.

2 Corinthians 5: 21

For he made Him (Christ) who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Sin, the body of sin, hung on Calvary's tree to receive the wages of sin, death.

1 Corinthians 11: 26

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

As we partake of the emblems, of the body and blood of Christ, we show forth our reception of this judgement on the body of sin.

2 Corinthians 4: 16

... though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.

Matthew 16: 24

... *“If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.*

As we eat the emblems, we also show forth our dependency on the ongoing claim of this judgment. We show forth our living by the continuing death of our outward man.

Our sustenance, our daily bread, nurturing real life-eternal and spiritual, comes from our continuing fellowship with Christ's death. It is in fellowship with His death that we reveal His resurrection. Resurrection life becomes our daily experience as we abide in the continual submission of our outward man to the cross.

Matthew 16: 25

“For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

EATING THE FLESH AND DRINKING THE BLOOD OF THE SON OF MAN

John 6: 53 - 58

... *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.*

“Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood, has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

“For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.

“He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.

“As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.

“This is the bread which came down from heaven...

We eat the flesh of the Son of Man every day, when we meditate on the written word of God and commune with Christ in the Spirit. As we fellowship with Christ, we enter into a life sustaining spiritual communion with Him. We hear His voice and partake of the bread of life.

Matthew 6: 11

Give us this day our daily bread.

1 Corinthians 10: 16

... The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

John 6: 35

... "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

To eat this bread and drink this wine is to live by the LIVING WORD OF GOD. It's hearing His word and acting on it. Jesus prayed for His disciples in John chapter 17, verse 17, "*Sanctify them through your truth. Your word is truth.*" Christ sanctified His church: His disciples.

Ephesians 5: 26, 27

*... with the washing of water by the word,
that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

Through our communion with Christ, which becomes experiential, the church - Christ's disciples - becomes His body. The body becomes one with the head, one with Christ.

John 1: 1, 14

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, ...*

Matthew 4: 4

... 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'

Jesus said, "*I do always those things that please the Father.*" Christ's meat, or food, was to do the will of the Father.

John 4: 34

... "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.

John 6: 57

"As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me

will live because of Me.

1 John 4: 17

... as He is, so are we in the world.

To eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man is to live by Him.

John 6: 63

“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are LIFE.

Spiritual life, real life, is realized in the believer who waits before Christ to hear His word and do His will. This feeding becomes an ongoing divine exchange that works to reveal the nature of Christ through the believer.

Colossians 3: 1 - 4

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

The reality of our identification with the death of Christ, and the life and resurrection of Christ, is first spiritual. This identification enters the arena of physical reality as we appropriate the truth of God's word by confessing and acting on it by faith. By speaking and acting on revelation knowledge, (God's word to our spirit man), we exemplify the feeding process. We partake of the reality of Christ. What Christ has done through the cross only benefits those who through feeding on the word of God partake of it's revelation and go on to manifest it's spiritual reality by acting on it by faith.

1 Corinthians 1: 18

For the message of the cross [death to self] is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is THE POWER OF GOD.

Paul's prayer, his fervent desire, was to know Christ. To know Him, not as one would know a friend, but to know Him through a supernatural union. A divine fellowship in which he would die to his own life and take up the life and ministry of

Christ. This message of divine exchange, this preaching of the cross, Paul knew to be the life and power of God.

Philippians 3: 10

...That I may know Him and the POWER of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, BEING CONFORMED TO HIS DEATH,

Paul could not know Him and the power of His resurrection without first knowing fellowship with His sufferings and conformity to His death. Paul could not assimilate these truths without first feeding on this Bread of Life: the Word of God.

TAKE THIS BREAD, I GIVE IT TO YOU
TAKE THIS WINE, MY BLOOD, I SPILL FOR YOU
TAKE MY LIFE, I GIVE IT TO YOU
FOR THE GRAIN OF WHEAT MUST DIE
BEFORE IT BRINGS FORTH FRUIT
NO GREATER LOVE HAS ANY MAN
TAKE MY LIFE, I AM SPILT OUT
MY LIFE IS A DRINK OFFERING POURED OUT FOR YOU

DARK CLOUDS ARE GATHERING
THUNDER AND LIGHTNING
WILL YOU BE AN OFFERING
I AM CALLING YOU

MANY SOULS ARE GATHERING (PERISHING)
IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION
WILL YOU GO AND TELL THEM
I AM CALLING YOU

TAKE THIS BREAD, I GIVE IT TO YOU

(Song and lyrics by Ron Brick)

THE WORD OF GOD - BREAD TO THE PROPHETS

The testimony of Jesus Christ is the Spirit of prophecy. The prophets spoke the word of God under divine inspiration. They fed first on the bread of life, the living

word of God, and then prophesied.

Revelation 19: 10

... I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Ezekiel 2: 7 - 10

"You shall SPEAK MY WORDS to them, whether they hear or whether they refuse, for they are rebellious.

"But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house; OPEN YOUR MOUTH, AND EAT WHAT I GIVE YOU.

Now when I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me; and behold, a scroll of a book was in it;

Then He spread it before me; and there was writing on the inside and on the outside and written on it were lamentations and mourning and woe.

Ezekiel was commanded by the Lord to "speak my words", "open your mouth and eat what I give you." Ezekiel opened his mouth and ate the word of God, (a scroll of a book). The word was one of lamentations, mourning and woe. It became what he prophesied to the rebellious house of Israel.

Ezekiel 3: 1

... eat this scroll, and go, speak unto the house of Israel."

In the book of Revelation, John is also commanded by an angel of the Lord to eat the Word of God, the Bread of Life, and from this source to prophesy.

Revelation 10: 10 - 11

Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it my stomach became bitter.

And he said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."

Amos 7: 12

Then Amaziah said to Amos: "Go, you seer! Flee to the land of Judah. There eat BREAD, And there prophesy.

Isaiah 55: 1 - 3

Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price.

Why do you spend money for what is not BREAD, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance.

Incline your ear, and come to Me. HEAR, and your soul shall live;

THE SHEWBREAD

God commanded Moses to construct a tabernacle in the wilderness. A dwelling place for God among His people. It was to consist of three rooms, an outer court, a holy place and the most inner room, called the Most Holy Place, or Holy of Holies. Within the holy place there were to be pieces of furniture. The altar of incense, the lamp stand and the table of shewbread. It was on the table of shewbread that twelve loaves of bread were to be set, on golden plates. Beside the bread, ladles or pitchers were placed for drink offerings. The bread was called the bread of presence or shewbread. Because it was to be placed in God's presence, "before Me", in the most holy place. These loaves represented the twelve tribes of Israel and pictured the fellowship and communion of God with His people. The priests who served at the tabernacle were to eat this bread showing or signifying a life supporting communion with God. This communion between priest and God was a demonstration of the New Testament believer - priest and his life sustaining communion with the body of Christ as the Bread of Life.

1 Peter 2: 9

But you are a chosen generation, a ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

The shewbread was never cut with a knife. It was always broken, to become an illustration of the broken body of Christ. It became a picture of the life sustaining Christ, the "grain of wheat" ground in the mill of suffering, turned to flour, formed into a loaf and baked in the fires of judgement. Christ has become bread to all who will come to Him and freely eat.

John 12: 24

"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless A GRAIN OF WHEAT falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.

John 12: 27, 31, 32

“Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour.

“Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all peoples to Myself.”

MANNA FROM HEAVEN

As the children of Israel traveled through the wilderness toward the promised land, they ran out of food between Elim and Sinai. As the supply of bread became depleted, the Israelites began to complain to Moses. Forgetting their plight in Egypt, they longed to return and eat the food of Egypt once again. The Lord immediately responded by giving them bread, which they called manna (bread from heaven). The bread rained down from heaven early in the morning while it was still dark, and melted away with the heat of the day. Each day the Israelites were to gather only what they needed for the day. On the sixth day, they were to gather enough for the sixth and the seventh, the Sabbath day. Bread kept for a second day, other than the Sabbath day, would spoil. This is a picture of the Bread of Life, Jesus Christ. It is a picture of our need to come to Him each day for our daily sustenance, our daily bread.

Matthew 4: 4

“It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’”

A daily diet of the living word of God, Jesus Christ, is our life- giving and life-sustaining daily bread.

John 6: 48 - 51

“I am the bread of life.

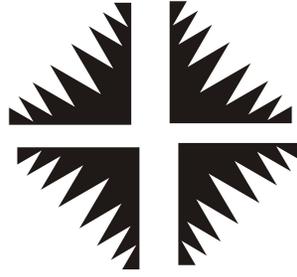
“Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

“This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die.

“I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the BREAD that I shall give is My FLESH, which I shall give for the life of the world.”

Christ invites us to take this bread, to live by the bread of life, the living word of

God. The broken bread becomes a symbol of a life brought forth through judgement on the body of sin. Flesh (the sinful, carnal nature) giving way to the spirit. It is a picture of the grain of wheat falling into the ground to die and bring forth much fruit. When we eat the bread, we receive the life it sustains and we identify with its broken state of divine judgement. This becomes a picture of our willingness to accept judgement's claim on our flesh, or body of sin. It becomes an identification with the exchanged life and ministry of Christ. Will you accept Christ's invitation to TAKE THIS BREAD, die to self, embrace the judgement of the self-life and live by the power of Christ?



THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST

8

The church of Jesus Christ has been given the divine mandate of revealing the character of Christ. The purposes of God, as accomplished by His church, depend upon us knowing who and what we are in Him. The church must begin to see that it is born of Christ and lives to reveal Him. We must begin to see that our identity as a people is revealed in Christ, and that His identity is revealed through us. God's arm is Christ. Christ's arms, feet, legs, eyes, voice and entire body is the church. The church is the body of Christ. We are His arm extended. The world will see Christ when His body begins to reveal Him. His character, His nature, will be seen in the world when it begins to shine forth through the believer. Love, the fruit of the Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, Christ's holiness, His power, His character will be seen first in the church as the church begins to live separated onto Christ.

2 Corinthians 6: 14 - 18

Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be my people."

"Therefore Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you." ... And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty."

"Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers." A yoke is a wooden frame. It was used for the purpose of joining two draft animals together to haul heavy loads or plow fields. The draft animals, usually oxen, had to be compatible in weight and size. They had to be trained to haul together. One could not be pulling

in one direction and the other in another direction. Paul is inspired by the Holy Spirit to use this illustration in a figurative manner. He is speaking about the relationship of Christ's church with the world. We are not to be yoked up with the world. If we are, it will be an unequal yoking. The unbelieving world will be constantly pulling in a direction other than the one which the Holy Spirit wants to take us.

Christ invites us to yoke up with Him. He calls us to lay down our heavy burdens and exchange them for His yoke which is easy and His burden which is light.

Matthew 11: 28 - 30

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

"Take MY YOKE upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for you souls.

"For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Christ also uses the illustration of the yoke in a figurative manner. Christ has a burden He calls us to bear, however, it is a light one. He has a yoke He calls us to receive. His yoke is easy. Christ is speaking of being yoked to His will. He is calling the believer to be in subjection to Him. Christ, who did that which always pleased the Father, is calling His disciples to do the same. The believer is to walk in subjection and obedience to the will and plan of God for his life. The believer is to be yoked with the will of God through Christ.

Paul calls the believer to remain free from being yoked with the unbeliever. He calls the believer righteousness and the unbeliever unlawfulness. He calls the believer light, the unbeliever darkness; the believer Christ, the unbeliever Belial. He calls the believer the temple of God and the unbeliever idols. Paul draws a great contrast between those who are Christ's and those who are not. He draws the contrast to emphasize the need to be separate, set apart and holy unto God. He emphasizes the fact that the believer is unequally yoked if he is yoked to the world. The fulfillment of God's desire, to have a people that He will dwell in and walk in, is conditional upon our response to His call of separation. God declares that He will make those who are obedient to this call, His sons and daughters.

2 Corinthians 6: 17, 18

"Therefore Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch

what is unclean, And I will receive you.

I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters Says the Lord Almighty.”

This call to separation is not some show of a holier-than-thou attitude. It is rather a revelation of the character of Christ and, therefore, the character of the believer who has become joined to Christ through the new birth. It is a crisis of identity that has caused the church to mix with sin and rob us of a pure expression of Christ's character. The church has failed to see her own image, the image of Christ, in the word of God. The result has created a church that lacks power and is unable to reflect all that she is in Christ.

John 3: 6

“That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

2 Corinthians 5: 17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

We must begin to see that a church born of the Spirit of Christ is indeed a new creation. A new creation that has been fashioned after the image of Christ and has been called to exhibit His character.

We must begin to see that the church is made up of individuals who have come out from under the lordship and character of one deity and have been positioned under the lordship and character of another. We have been given a new yoke. The character of our new Lord is as different from the former as light is different from darkness.

Ephesians 5: 8

For you were once DARKNESS, but now are you LIGHT in the Lord. Walk as children of light

Colossians 1: 12, 13

... giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the LIGHT,

He has delivered us from the power of DARKNESS and conveyed (translated) us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.

Ephesians 2: 1 - 3

*And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,
In which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince
of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,
among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the
desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by NATURE children of wrath, just as the
others.*

The church has been conveyed or translated from one position into another. We have been taken out from under the domain of spiritual darkness and have been positioned into the kingdom of the Son of His love. The church is no longer of this world. The ruler of this world has no more legal authority over the born-again believer. The believer is called light; the unbeliever darkness. The believer is called Christ; the unbeliever Belial. The church once walked according to the course of this world. We once followed the prince of the power of the air. Our god was Satan, our appetites and our fleshly lusts; we were ruled by darkness.

Ephesians 6: 12

... the rulers of the darkness of this age, ...

In order for the church to understand its identity in Christ, we must begin to see where we have come from. We can not appreciate where we are and where we are going as a people, if we can not see where we have been. We are a chosen people, a people of destiny. We have been called to reveal Christ. We were unbelievers and without faith. We were idolaters, but now we are the temple of God.

2 Corinthians 6: 16

And what agreement has the temple of God with idols?

For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them, And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."

The revelation of who we are in Christ, becomes the light that continually works to renew our minds to the purposes and plans of God for us as His people. Through Christ we are united with the Father. The body is joined to the head. His thoughts become our thoughts, His ways ours. The divine unity creates a vehicle of expression, revealing the Father to His creation. In Christ we are made perfect; we are made complete. He is the bridge that joins us to the Father.

John 17: 21, 23

... that they also may be one in Us, ...

“I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, ...

Ephesians 2: 14, 15

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and broken down the middle wall of separation,

having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two thus making peace.

THE CALL TO SEPARATION

You can not mix light with darkness. Christ addresses the Laodicean church, in the book of Revelation, with these words:

Revelation 3: 15, 16

“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. “So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit (spew - KJV) you out of My mouth.

2 Corinthians 6: 17

Therefore, “Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord, Do not touch what is unclean,

Don't covet the darkness. Christ is calling His church to be hot. A lukewarm mix, He will spew out of His mouth. We are not to touch the unclean thing.

Ephesians 5: 11

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

Expose the darkness with the light. Walk as children of light. Have no communion, make no accord with the darkness. We must come out from the unclean and be separate unto Christ.

2 Peter 1: 3, 4

... As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the DIVINE NATURE, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

2 Peter 2: 20

For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.

God has called us to glory and virtue. He has given us exceedingly great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature.

God is calling His church unto Himself. It is a call that will change us into His image and cause us to reveal Him. His character will be the character of His church. His glory, His name, His love, His compassion for the lost, all His attributes will be seen through His body. Christ is not calling His body to reveal some strange religious system. We will not all start to look like some clone, wrapped in religious behaviour and clothing. Christ hates religion. Christ is interested in our hearts, not some outward show of false piety.

Matthew 15: 19, 20

“For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

“These are the things which defile a man, ...

Colossians 3: 1 - 4

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

For you are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Romans 8: 5, 6

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

We are defiled by what proceeds from the heart. Where have we placed our

affections? Are they on Christ? Or have we fixed our hearts on the lusts of the flesh and the corruptions of this world?

The separation Christ calls us to is not a separation from those who are in need. Christ was holy, harmless and undefiled; yet He walked among sinners every day. He ate with the tax collectors and allowed a repentant prostitute to wash His feet. He kept company with those the religious leaders considered unworthy and defiling. Christ did not look down on the needy from some lofty religious position.

Hebrews 7: 26

For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;

John 17: 15

"I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

The separation that the Spirit of Christ calls us to is not some outward show of religion. The outward expressions of religious separation are, in fact, works of the flesh leading to self-righteous pride and spiritual death. The separation that Christ calls us to is of the heart. It is a heart submitting to union with Christ through obedience. It is a heart embracing death to self and flesh, and surrendering to fellowship with His being. It is a heart yielding to His purposes, His plans, His life and His character. Movement in His direction, through obedience, separates the disciple of Christ from the defilements of this world. It unites the disciple with Christ, as Christ is undefiled and separate from sinners.

Romans 6: 3, 4, 11

Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Galatians 5: 16, 17, 19, 20

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,

idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,

envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

The church separated unto Christ must put aside the flesh to reveal the character of Christ by the fruit and gifts of the Spirit.

Galatians 5: 22 - 24

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

The church separate onto Christ has crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. Christ's Spirit is revealed through the submitted, yielded believer. The fruit of the Spirit manifests the character of Christ.

Ephesians 2: 10

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

The good works that God has prepared for us to walk in are not the works of self. The works God calls us to are His works, revealed through us. Jesus said, "I can of Myself do nothing". Jesus came to express the life and will of the Father. He has called the body to express the life and will of the Father through the Son.

John 5: 30

"I can of Myself do nothing ..."

Ephesians 5: 9

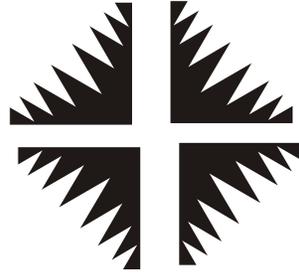
(for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),

Philippians 1: 11

... Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

The character of Christ is the character of the Father. The character of the church, the body of Christ, reveals the will and character of the head: Christ. Christ is in His temple. We are called Christ. The believer is called to reveal Him. This truth must begin to take hold of the church. We must begin to allow the revelation of our identity in Christ to move us to a new experience of oneness with the character of Christ. Christ's love, His power, His submission to the will of the Father must be ours. We can know Him and reveal Him. The fullness of Christ, His character is revealed through His Glorious Church. This is our high calling. The destiny of a people called out of darkness into His marvelous light. The church of Jesus Christ, revealing Christ, His character, His beauty and His glory.

The church is to be separate from all that is contrary to the character of Christ. Through our union with Him we become THE GLORIOUS CHURCH.



THE POURED OUT LIFE

9

Philippians 2: 14 - 17

*Do all things without complaining and disputing,
that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the
midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,
holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not
run in vain or labored in vain.*

*Yes, and if I am being POURED OUT AS A DRINK OFFERING on the sacrifice
and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.*

Paul's desire was to see his labour in the Lord produce fruit. He is speaking to the Philippian church. Lights shining in a dark world. He speaks of rejoicing in the day of Christ, as they hold fast the word of life. They are his labour, his work in the Lord. His joy is to be given to this cause. He says that if he is poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of their faith, it is his joy.

The Greek word translated into our English phrase POURED OUT is "spendo." Spendo means to pour out as a libation; to devote one's life or blood as a sacrifice. To be ready to be offered. Paul was ready to be poured out upon the sacrifice and service of the faith of the Philippian believers. He would rejoice in being poured out as a libation. A libation was a drink offering.

THE DRINK OFFERING

The drink offering was first mentioned in the Bible in the book of Genesis. God reveals Himself to Jacob, Abraham's grandson, and changes his name from Jacob to Israel. God renews the covenant with Jacob that He had first made with Abraham and his descendants. In Genesis chapter 35, verse, 1. God speaks to Jacob, saying, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God". God gives

Jacob specific instructions on how to construct the altar and what to do there.

Genesis 35: 14

So Jacob set up a pillar in the place where He talked with him, a pillar of stone; and HE POURED A DRINK OFFERING on it, and he poured oil on it.

The drink offering is not drunk. It is poured out on an altar, on the ground or on another sacrifice. It was a liquid: wine, water or oil. It is set forth in the books of Leviticus and Numbers as an offering to accompany some of the other sacrifices.

Numbers 15: 7

'and as a drink offering you shall offer one-third of a hin of wine as a sweet aroma to the Lord.

God calls the drink offering “*a sweet aroma to the Lord*”. The drink offering is a picture of the poured out life of Christ. His life offered for the remission of the sin of the world. It is a picture of the selfless life of Christ, poured out before the Father in service and true worship.

Psalms 22: 14

I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; ...

Psalm twenty-two is called the psalm of the crucifixion. It is a psalm written by David, years before the crucifixion of Christ. It is a prophetic psalm, with many portions directly foreshadowing the actual crucifixion. The psalm begins in verse one with these words, “*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*” These are the exact words Christ spoke from the cross. In verse eighteen, we are given a description of the behaviour of the soldiers at the foot of the cross. “*They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots*”. This incident is recorded in both the gospels of Mark and Matthew: Mark, chapter 15, verse 24 and Matthew, chapter 27, verse thirty 5.

The phrase, “*I am poured out like water*”, found in verse 14, of psalm 22, reveals the relationship Christ’s life and ministry played in the typology of the drink offering. The drink offering is a picture of Christ giving Himself in life and ministry and being poured out.

Isaiah 53: 12

Therefore I shall divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because HE Poured out His soul unto death.

The covenant God made with Jacob was a renewal of the covenant He first made with Jacob's father, Abraham, and Adam before him. God gave Jacob specific instructions to go to Bethel, build an altar, and pour out the drink offering. The offering points to Christ, the covering for Jacob, that God extends in order to ratify the covenant.

THE COVENANT

The Hebrew word "beriyth" (Ber-eeth) is translated into our English word COVENANT. Beriyth is derived from the root Hebrew word "barah" (Baw-raw), which means to cause to eat, present or give meat. The word beriyth is derived from barah in the sense of cutting and presenting meat. Beriyth is defined as a compact (an agreement) that is made by passing through or between pieces of cut flesh. It signifies the formation of a league of confederacy. It is expressed or entered into through a process of moving through pieces of cut flesh.

The meaning of the word covenant holds within it a deep and profound expression of giving. The covenant is an agreement to die, and in death, give life. It is the essence of the cycle of natural life. Death is displaced by life in nature and in the human condition. We are born to die. We live to birth, and feed from our very beings, life to our offspring. Our offspring will grow out of our nurturing to do the same. Walking through the pieces of cut flesh demonstrates a willingness to enter into a deep compact of giving. The giving is so all-encompassing that it consumes our whole being. It is a serving out of the flesh of self to another, through death. The symbolism of walking through pieces of cut flesh becomes a picture of walking through death, to present self as meat. It is the presentation of meat, or food, for the sustaining of another life. The mother who holds her newborn baby to her breast, has glimpsed this mystery. The father who weeps over a wayward son feels the pain of this love. A love so deep it aches to give, and finds its ultimate expression in dying and being given or offered for another.

John 15: 13

"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

It is the gospel of Jesus Christ. The grain of wheat that falls into the ground to

die that others might live. All who enter into this communion of death begin to know the power of real life.

The covenant made between two parties establishes the willingness of one to live for the other. The dying of one would be the sustaining life of the other, and vice versa.

The making of a covenant finds its original institution in the dealings of God with man. This explains the original Hebrew meaning for the word. The concept of presenting cut meat for food and walking a death walk through cut pieces of flesh are concepts that cannot be human in origin. These principles are in accordance with the relationship God forges with man throughout the pages of Holy Scripture.

THE FIRST COVENANT

In the book of Genesis, God enters into what is called the Adamic covenant with Adam. After Adam's sin of disobedience, ultimate triumph over the tempting serpent and sin is set forth by God. The obedience of the second Adam, Jesus Christ, would destroy the disobedience of the first. A covenant established by God with man would bring all who would receive it, and believe it by faith, into union with God.

Genesis 3: 15

And I will put enmity between you (the serpent) and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He (Christ) shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

Romans 5: 19

For as by one man's (Adam's) disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's (Christ's) obedience many will be made righteous.

Sin and disobedience entered the world through Adam. Christ is called the second Adam, in that through Him righteousness comes into the world. The covenant God made with Adam could only be fulfilled through Christ. The seed of woman, Christ, would bruise the head of the serpent. The serpent, Satan, would bruise Christ's heel. This was fulfilled in the crucifixion of Christ. There would be a cutting of flesh and a passing through the pieces. The obligation of the covenant is met by both parties in Christ. As the Son of man, the seed of woman, Christ

meets man's obligation, and as the Son of God, Christ meets God's obligation. This is the basis for our covenant relationship with God. It is from this perspective that God deals with the seed of Adam.

Through obedience to God, by faith, man becomes identified with the sinless obedient Christ and is able to enter into and fulfill his covenant agreement with God.

It is through identification that this profound union is formed. This identification works through a deep love that finds its fullest expression in obedience to the will of God. Obedience, at the cost of death to self, places man in the role of Christ who lived the poured out life, being obedient unto death. The poured out life is the outworking of man's covenant obligation.

Matthew 16: 24

... "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

"For whosoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

It is in giving our life for Christ's sake that we fulfill our part of the covenant. The covenant God first made with Adam is renewed with all who will by faith fulfill it.

God renewed this covenant with the seed of Adam when he instructed Jacob to pour out the oil as a drink offering. Jacob built the altar and he poured out the oil in compliance with God's instructions. Jacob's obedience brings him into covenant with God. His willingness to participate in the pouring out of the oil is a picture of his identification with the second Adam in death. Jacob's part of the covenant can only be exercised through his identification with Christ's poured out life. Jacob is identified through this act of obedience as one in faith with the obedient life of Christ. Identification with Christ's life and ultimate sacrifice of death is established with the one who through obedience makes the sacrifice. The act of obedience becomes a revelation of personal faith working by ultimate love.

James 2: 20

... faith without works is dead?

Jacob makes this identification just as Abraham did before him.

Genesis 15: 5 - 12, 17, 18

Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."

And he (Abraham) believed in the Lord, and He, (God), accounted it to him for righteousness.

Then He said to him, "I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it."

And he said, "Lord God, how shall I know that I will inherit it?"

So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon."

Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two.

And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him.

And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces.

On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying:

"To your descendants have I given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates -

God makes the covenant with Abram. He calls Abram to lay out before Him the carcasses of a heifer, a goat and a ram. God instructs Abram to cut the carcasses in half and lay them side by side on the ground. A deep sleep falls upon Abram and he has a very unusual experience. He enters into what I believe to be an identification experience with Christ's obedience unto death and His entry into Hades. Abram is identified as the seed of Adam after the flesh, and the seed of the second Adam (Jesus Christ) by faith. Abram believes God and it is counted unto him as righteousness. *And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.* His belief or faith is expressed again through his obedience to God. He follows God's instructions by laying out the carcasses and watching over them. Abram chases away the vultures that try to devour the fresh meat. God passes through the midst of the carcasses to confirm and establish the covenant. God is holy; He can have not fellowship and He can make no accord with sinful man. He can only make a covenant on the basis of Christ's sacrifice. Christ the spotless holy lamb of God receiving in Himself the penalty for sin, removes sin from man.

Christ's sacrifice fulfills man's covenant obligation and makes man acceptable. Abram entered into oneness with Christ by faith through identification and through his position in Christ fulfills his side of the covenant. Jacob does the same thing when he chooses to follow God's commandment, build the altar at Bethel and pour out the oil upon it. The identification is made by faith and results in the imputed righteousness of Christ. The identification is not in theory only. It is also experiential; one life is surrendered to the other through a willingness to walk in obedience or works and demonstrate the faith.

James 2: 20

... faith without works is dead?

Through obedience Jacob demonstrated the poured out life and became Israel; Abram became Abraham, and you and I become "Christ ones" or Christian. By faith expressed through identification with the cross of Christ, we become one with Him.

Colossians 3; 2 - 4

Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Romans 6: 6

knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.

Ephesians 2: 5 - 6

even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

and raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Christ Jesus,

Our death becomes swallowed up in His victory.

The covenant is an exchange. One life is exchanged for the other. The symbolism embodied in the cut pieces of flesh become the ultimate expression of the agreement.

COVENANT SYMBOLISM

Throughout scripture we find one example of covenant symbolism after another. With the creation of man, God imparts life from His very being by breathing into Adam's nostrils. Woman is created from a rib removed from Adam's side. The cutting of the flesh in circumcision given to Abraham is

Genesis 17: 11

... a sign of the covenant ...

The sacrifices and offerings of the Old Testament point to the death and ministry of Christ. Christ being poured out in obedience unto death, for the life of the world. In the New Testament, Christ is revealed as the word of God, the bread of life, the living water and the true vine. These are all pictures of His life-giving sustaining ministry.

In the book of 1 Samuel, David and Jonathan make a covenant. Their covenant is symbolized by an exchange of garments and weapons.

1 Samuel 18: 3, 4

Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

And Jonathan took off the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt.

THE COVENANT OF MARRIAGE

In the marriage covenant and relationship, which was instituted by God when He created man, we also find covenant symbolism.

Genesis 2: 23 - 24

And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man."

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

The covenant agreement is so strong and binding that each member will forfeit all his or her rights and desires for the other. Each member of the covenant will find their greatest joy in the giving up of self to live for the needs and life of the

other.

In many societies and cultures different forms of covenant symbolism are enacted to seal the union between a man and a woman. A meal is shared. Meat is cut, divided and given. A new husband will feed his bride and the bride her husband. Rings will be exchanged, possessions are exchanged; the new bride will take on the name of her husband. The symbolism points to an exchange of lives. One being given up to the other. Each living a death walk for the feeding or sustaining of the other. The covenant also becomes demonstrated in the very act of marriage; with the cutting or dividing of flesh, the shedding of blood and the passing through, as the couple consummate the marriage. The act of marriage becomes an ongoing expression of two joining and becoming one. Throughout scripture the union of husband and wife is compared to the relationship of God with His people. In the Old Testament, Israel is called the wife of Jehovah. Paul, speaking to the Ephesians in the New Testament, calls the marriage relationship a mystery and compares it to the relationship Christ has with His church.

Ephesians 5: 30 - 32

For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”

This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

John, in recording the book of Revelation, gives us a glimpse into the mystery of this union. The symbolism of a marriage supper demonstrates the covenant.

Revelation 19: 7

“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the lamb (the marriage supper of the lamb) has come, and His wife has made herself ready.”

Christ states the intent of the covenant when he prays to the Father on behalf of His disciples.

John 17: 21

“that they may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

PASSING THROUGH THE CUT FLESH

When Christ, the lamb of God, hung on Calvary's tree, His flesh was rent and the way was opened to the Father. The covenant, made first with Adam and renewed with Abraham and His seed, was consummated in the work of the cross. We have been invited to pass through the cut pieces of Christ's flesh and enter into oneness with the Father.

Matthew 26: 26 - 28

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you."

"For this is My blood of the NEW COVENANT, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Hebrews 9: 22

And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission (of sin).

The symbolism is again the sharing of a meal. When Christ took the bread and the wine and presented them to His disciples, He was presenting His life for their sustenance. It was the symbolism of covenant, the breaking of bread, passing it one to the other and eating it from the other's hand.

Hebrews 10: 19 - 20

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh.

When Christ's body was torn on the cross, the veil in His temple, which separated the presence of God from the people, was torn in two.

Matthew 27: 50 - 51

And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His Spirit.

Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks were split,

A covenant relationship with Christ is a revelation of a divine exchange.

2 Corinthians 5: 21

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Galatians 2: 20

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

This statement by Paul expresses so aptly the essence of the covenant relationship. The life we live is not our own, but Christ's, lived through us by faith. It is a faith responding to the life that was given for us.

1 Corinthians 1: 30

But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God -and righteousness and sanctification and redemption - that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the Lord.”

When we are united with Christ through this new covenant, we become one with Him. We enter into a relationship so deep, so profound that it affects every area of our lives. It becomes a new life. It is a life born and sustained by a continual exchange. The new is revealed by the pouring out of the old. It is the poured out life, a sweet aroma of Christ.

THE FRAGRANCE OF CHRIST

2 Corinthians 2: 15

For we are to God the fragrance of Christ,

In the book of Leviticus, five offerings are set forth; three of them are called a sweet aroma to the Lord. The sweet aroma offerings always speak of a life of complete consecration. They find their fullest expression in the life, ministry and death of Christ. I have listed the five offerings or sacrifices as they are presented in the book of Leviticus.

BURNT - The burnt offering is called a **SWEET AROMA OFFERING**. It is a type of Christ's entire obedience to the Father. The burnt offering is wholly consumed.

It speaks of entire consecration, complete dedication to God.

MEAL - The meal offering is called a SWEET AROMA OFFERING. It is a type of Christ's perfect humanity anointed with the Holy Spirit. It signifies the dedication of one's life to God. It speaks of the person of Christ.

PEACE - The peace offering is called a SWEET AROMA OFFERING. It depicts Christ making peace between a Holy God and sinful man.

SIN - The sin offering is not called a SWEET AROMA OFFERING. It speaks of atonement for the sin of mankind. It signifies Christ becoming sin and being denied the presence of God as He is crucified outside the camp.

TRESPASS - The trespass offering is not called a SWEET AROMA OFFERING. It is typical of Christ satisfying God's demand for justice and righteousness.

The first three offerings, the burnt, meal and peace offerings are received as a sweet-smelling aroma to the Lord. They are called sweet aroma offerings because all three typify obedience, consecration and dedication. A life wholly consumed in service to God. These three offerings typify Christ's life of complete sacrifice and sinless obedience to the Father. The drink offering, like these three offerings, is also called "*a sweet aroma to the Lord*". The other two offerings, the sin and the trespass offering, are not a sweet aroma to the Lord. They speak of sin, carnality and flesh. They speak of Christ becoming sin for man and as a result being separated from the Father. The drink offering was an auxiliary offering. It was poured out upon the burnt, meal and peace offerings. It spoke of purity of heart, undivided devotion, and pictured the sinless Christ. The drink offering is a picture of complete dedication to God. It is symbolic of a life poured out in service and devotion to God. It is a picture of a love so all encompassing and consuming that the life of the believer is wholly consumed and poured out. This is called a sweet aroma before God. It is an offering that ascends before the throne of God as a beautiful aroma, a sweet and wonderful fragrance of Christ. The drink offering is a picture of this beautiful surrendered life. The life of Christ wholly consumed in the service of God. Perfect submission, being humbly possessed by the Father in every act, in every word. It is the greatest love, the greatest expression of pure devotion. The life of Christ was a poured out life, a sweet aroma offering.

The new birth positions the disciple of Christ in identification with Christ's life

and ministry. Christ's consecration and devotion to the Father becomes the consecration and devotion of His disciples to the Father. The poured out life of pure devotion is expressed first by the head and then by His body.

Philippians 2: 17

Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.

SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES

1 Peter 2: 5

... you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

The church is called a spiritual house, a holy priesthood. We are called to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God, by or through Jesus Christ. The spiritual sacrifices we are called to offer God are our very lives. This becomes a living expression of true worship to God. A sweet aroma offering. A true spiritual sacrifice.

Romans 12: 1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

The Greek word "latreia" is translated here *reasonable service*; it means, ministration of God or worship. Worship is not what we say to God in song, how well we sing, shout, play a musical instrument or dance. It is the laying down of our lives to Him. It is being poured out in total consecration and devotion to Him. It is recognizing that our reasonable service, our worship, is the ministration of God, expressed by Christ. It is revealed in and through us as we obey Him. Our worship finds expression in songs of praise through hearts of complete and total consecration.

2 Chronicles 29: 27

Then Hezekiah commanded them to offer the burnt offering on the altar. And WHEN THE BURNT OFFERING BEGAN, THE SONG OF THE LORD ALSO BEGAN, ...

The burnt offering spoke of a life wholly consumed in consecration and

dedication to God. The burnt offering was a sweet aroma offering. When the smoke of the offering began to ascend, the song of the Lord began. The song ascends with the smoke from the burning of the sacrifice. True worship is never professional music. It is not the harmony of voices that God desires. It is the heart given in pure devotion, poured out in sacrifice through obedience to God. The harmony of sound that ascends before God's throne is the heart He plays in tune with His, willing to go to a cross and die for the life of others. It is a sweet aroma to the Lord.

A LIFE OF OBEDIENCE

Self-denial, associated with obedience to God through Christ, is the spiritual sacrifice that ascends unto God as a sweet aroma. It is expressed through obedience to the will of God, which creates or reveals our identification through faith and forges our oneness with Christ.

1 Samuel 15: 22

... "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.

This sacrifice is not the work of man or the efforts of man to gain God's favor through self-effort or self denial. The sacrifice is the result of obedience to the Father. All the Old Testament worship, the temple sacrifices and offerings are all ordered by God. It is God who revealed the pattern to Moses; it is not man's creation. The sacrifices are conducted through obedience to God. The sacrifice is an expression of obedience, pointing to the obedience of Christ and our identification with Him. If the sacrifice is conducted from any position other than obedience, it is self-effort, a form of godliness without the power, dead works, self-righteous empty religion.

EXPRESSED IN PRAYER

Psalm 141: 2

Let my prayer be set before You as incense, The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

Exodus 30: 1, 7

“You shall make an altar to burn incense on; ...

“Aaron shall burn on it SWEET INCENSE every morning; when he tends the lamps, he shall burn incense on it.

Incense is presented before the Lord as a type of prayer. It is called sweet incense, a sweet aroma unto the Lord. It is the church in prayer. It is prayer breathed by the Spirit of God through the body of Christ. It is the groaning and travailing of God’s heart expressed through vessels whose hearts are aligned with His in pure devotion and love.

Romans 8: 26 - 27

Likewise the Spirit also helps our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered.

Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Prayer as a spiritual sacrifice is not something we do. It is like our songs, like our obedience. It is an expression of the living out of our identification with Christ. We yield, we surrender; the Spirit within groans, travails and He comes forth. We become identified with the burden of Christ for the lost, sick, suffering, and it is expressed with the aroma of Christ. Through our obedience to the will of the Father, we make our identification with Christ’s ministry of intercession and prayer to become a sweet aroma unto the Lord.

Hebrews 13: 15

Therefore by Him (Christ) let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.

Revelation 8: 3, 4

Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel’s hand.

STRANGE INCENSE

Exodus 30: 9

“You shall not offer strange incense on it, ...

Simulated formal worship of self effort is called by God strange incense. The prayers or incense which is sweet before the throne of the Lord is always revealed through the consecrated life of Christ. It is the heart of the believer crying unto his creator, deep calling unto deep.

Psalm 42: 7

Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls;

James 4: 5

... “The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously”?

The prayer that reveals the spiritual sacrifice offered by Jesus Christ originates with the Spirit of Christ. It is the Spirit of God dwelling in His temple that calls unto the throne of God and brings back to God a sweet smelling-incense.

The poured out life is a life revealing Christ. It is dying so that others might live. When we walk out a life of obedience we take up our cross and follow the Saviour. When we follow Him we become one with Him. We are identified in Him. His life becomes ours; His death becomes our death, and His life and resurrection becomes ours.

John 12: 24

... unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.

Colossians 3: 2 - 4

Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

When CHRIST, WHO IS OUR LIFE appears, then you also appear with Him in glory.

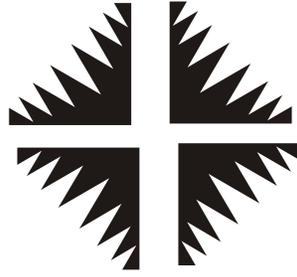
Paul was poured out in the sacrifice and service of faith of His converts. They became the fruit of His labour in the Lord. Paul could not glory in his life. He could not glory in his name, his education or his intellect. Paul could only glory in his weakness, because in his weakness he became strong. In his weakness the

strength of Christ was manifest. Death was swallowed up in victory. Paul was poured out, and because he was, a beautiful aroma came up before the throne of God. Christ was revealed, the word of God was revealed, souls were born again and fruit was produced. Spiritual sacrifices were presented before God.

Ephesians 5: 2

And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and GIVEN HIMSELF FOR US, an OFFERING and a SACRIFICE to God for a SWEET - SMELLING AROMA.

THE POURED OUT LIFE.



THE GLORIOUS CHURCH

10

When God called the children of Israel out of Egypt, He called them into a special relationship with Himself.

Exodus 19: 5, 6

*... you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; ...
'And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'* ...

The children of Israel were to be unto God a special treasure, people of his own. They were to be a kingdom of priests, a holy nation. They were to reveal His name to the nations of the earth, showing forth His glory and praise. God revealed His desire for intimacy in this relationship through the prophet Jeremiah. He sets forth His intentions and purposes in the following portion of scripture.

Jeremiah 13: 11

'For as the sash clings to the waist of a man, so I have caused the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah to cling to Me,' says the Lord, 'that they may become My PEOPLE, for renown, for PRAISE, and for GLORY; but they would not hear.'

God's intention was to draw Israel onto Himself. They were to be a people bearing the name of Jehovah. They were to be the people of God, showing forth his praises, revealing His glory, and carrying His name. God had caused the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah to cling unto Himself. He had pulled them into His loving embrace. He drew them as close to Himself as if He had tied them around His waist like a belt. However, Israel refused to hear His voice. They walked after other gods, to serve them and worship them.

Jeremiah 13: 10

'This evil people, who refuse to hear My words, who follow the dictates of their hearts,

and walk after other gods to serve them and worship them, ...

What God desired for Israel, He is today accomplishing with His church. Of all the New Testament revelations concerning the will of God toward man, the revelation of the church's place as the engrafted branch is one of the most pervasive. The church, through the revelation of the New Testament blood, has become God's new nation of priests. What Israel refused through the working of the law, the church embraces by love and faith through grace.

Romans 11: 19 - 20

You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."

Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. ...

Romans 9: 8, 9

That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.

For this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son."

Romans 9: 31 - 33

...But Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.

Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.

As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, And whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

Romans 10: 12 - 13

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon him.

For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Romans 3: 29 - 30

Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is he not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also,

Since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.

The gift of eternal habitation in the embrace of the Father becomes, through Christ, open to all who will come by faith.

1 Peter 2: 9

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

God had a marvelous plan for the nation of Israel, a plan that finds expression in these last days. Expression in a spiritual nation, a people called out of darkness and into His marvelous light. This spiritual nation is the holy bride of Christ, His glorious church. A church without spot or wrinkle. The world has not yet seen Christ, nor have they known Him, like they one day will. Through a people, THE GLORIOUS CHURCH, the Father's Name, PRAISE and GLORY will be revealed in the earth.

Ephesians 5: 26, 27

...that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word. that He might present her to Himself A GLORIOUS CHURCH, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

God is a covenant-making and a covenant-keeping God. The nation of Israel will know the fulfillment of every one of His promises.

Romans 11: 28

Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

THE CALL

The nation of Israel was called out, chosen of God, not according to works but by grace, by election. God called Abraham and Abraham responded to the call. His response to the call revealed his faith. Abraham's faith was accounted unto him as righteousness. God called Abraham to come aside unto Himself. God drew Abraham away from the city of Ur of the Chaldeans and brought him into a secluded place. He brought Abraham into communion with Himself. God separated Abraham unto Himself in the wilderness. Abraham became the vehicle through which God brought forth His purposes and revealed His desire toward a people. A nation would come forth from the loins of Abraham to be a covenant

people, a people unto the Lord. This call to fellowship in the wilderness, this invitation to holiness and covenant, has become the cry of God's heart toward His New Testament church. A people of darkness have become a people of light, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, THE GLORIOUS CHURCH.

The New Testament Greek word for church is "ekklesia". It means the "called out ones", the "chosen ones". Christ's church has been born of His Spirit through the new birth, and conveyed or translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. We have been called out of Satan's kingdom to become, the chosen ones, the called out ones.

Colossians 1: 12 - 13

...Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

*He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,
kingdom of the Son of His love,*

The Bible teaches that the whole world lies in wickedness, that Satan is the prince of this world's systems. The Bible teaches that the god of this age, Satan, has blinded the mind of the unbeliever.

1 John 5: 19

... the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.

John 14: 30

... the ruler of this world is coming and he has nothing in Me.

2 Corinthians 4: 3 - 4

*But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,
whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

Ephesians 2: 1- 2

*And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,
in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,*

The church has been called out, called out of a spiritual darkness. Out from under the tyranny of a world system which is under the authority and dominion of Satan. The church has been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. In the Old Testament, Abraham was called out of Ur and given the land of Canaan. The children of Israel were delivered out from under the tyranny of Egypt and brought back to the promised land. They were also delivered from a Babylonian captivity and returned to Canaan. The historical deliverance of the Nation of Israel becomes a picture of the translation of the spiritual nation, the church, from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear son, the kingdom of light.

Ephesians 5: 8 - 11

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

*(for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),
finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.*

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

A REMNANT PEOPLE

God has always had a remnant people of light, a people of promise, a people of covenant. A people who have responded to His call. A people separated, not by flesh, but by spirit. God has always had a spiritual house in the midst of a natural one; a spiritual Israel out of a natural Israel. A people bearing His name, showing forth His praises and reflecting His glory.

Romans 11: 2 - 5

God has not cast away His people whom he foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel saying,

"Lord, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"?

But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal."

Even so then, at this present time there is a REMNANT according to the election of grace.

At this present time there is a remnant. God has a remnant people, who have not bowed to the image of Baal.

In the book of Genesis, chapter five, the genealogy of Noah is traced back to Adam and God's redemptive promise. Sin caused God's hand of judgment to fall on mankind, in the form of the flood. God brings Noah and his family through the flood to become His remnant people. Noah appointed Shem, as God's chosen seed, to become heir of the redemptive promise (the line through which the redeemer would come). After the flood, the descendants of Noah led by Nimrod, rose up in rebellion against God. They constructed the tower of Babel as an outward expression of that rebellion. From this seat of idolatry, God separated Abram unto Himself. God changes his name from Abram to Abraham and makes a covenant with him. He promises Abraham, the land of Canaan and the fatherhood of a nation that would reveal the Messiah. He gives Abraham the redemptive promise. From Adam, the first man, in the book of Genesis, to the New Jerusalem, a bride adorned for her husband in the book of Revelation, a remnant line of redemption weaves through the scriptures. A line of promise, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, an unbroken line of spiritual men. They are a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, children of the promised redemption. Throughout history a people are constantly being separated out, taken aside unto God. They are the remnant people, the called out people, the chosen ones.

Moses answered God's call in the desert to become His arm and lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. Moses leads the children of Israel out of slavery and bondage. Egypt is a type of this world's systems; systems from which God is constantly bringing forth His children.

God has always had a remnant people. In Elijah's time, it was seven thousand who had not bowed their knee to the image of Baal. In Isaiah's time, it was a very small remnant, for whose sake God did not destroy the nation. During the 70 years of Babylonian captivity, it was Esther, Mordecai, Ezekiel, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. At the end of the captivity, it was a remnant that returned to Canaan under Ezra and Nehemiah. In the New Testament, it was Simeon and Anna, ministering in the temple, waiting for the advent of Christ. It was John the Baptist declaring Christ's first coming, and John's disciples. It was the disciples of Christ, one hundred and twenty in the upper room, and a new church era the - Wycliffes, the Lollards, the Luthers, the Calvins. In the 17th century it was the Puritan Movement, the 18th, the Methodist. It was the Brethren in the 19th century, and in the 20th century, the Pentecostal revival. God has always had a called out, holy, separated people. When one movement would wane because of compromise and mix with the world and the spirit of religion, the Spirit would call

out another.

Revelation 18: 4

And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.

The call of God unto Himself has sounded forth down through the ages. The voice might be that of one of the patriarchs, a Moses, one of the prophets, a John the Baptist, a Luther, a Calvin or a modern-day Finny. The instrument has been as varied as personalities can be however, the *voice from heaven* has been the same.

The call to communion with a holy God demands separation from what is not holy. God, who is spirit, desires worshipers who worship Him in spirit and in truth. The dead works of religious self-righteousness pride are an abomination to Him. Fleshly piety is not what He desires. God's people have always been a people who have been willing to decrease so that He might increase. The call of separation demands a death to the ambition of self. Abram turned from his own way to embrace God's way, God's plan. Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the children of Israel than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Ephesians 5: 11

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

2 Corinthians 6: 17

Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you".

Isaiah 52: 10 - 11

The Lord has made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; And all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Depart! Depart! Go out from there, Touch no unclean thing; Go out of the midst of her; Be clean, You who bear the vessels of the Lord.

The cry of the Spirit of God has always been for a people. A people separated unto God, clinging like a belt to His waist. A people revealing His name, showing forth His praises and reflecting His glory. God will have such a people. In these last days this people will be His church: THE GLORIOUS CHURCH

HIS GLORY

In the Old Testament it was called the shekinah glory of God. It manifested in different ways, sometimes as fire, sometimes as smoke or wind. It expressed the presence of God in a visible or audible way. Israel was led through the wilderness by these expressions of glory, a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day. Moses received the law on Mount Sinai and the mountain quaked with smoke and fire. He received instruction in the building of the tabernacle and its accompanying worship. The tabernacle constructed in the wilderness became the house of God. In the Holy of Holies, the glory of God manifested as a cloud above the mercy seat. At the dedication of the temple Solomon built, a great cloud of glory manifested, rendering the priests unable to stand.

2 Chronicles 5: 13 - 14

... when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying: "For He is good, For His mercy endures forever," the house of the Lord was filled with a cloud,

So that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for THE GLORY OF THE LORD FILLED THE HOUSE OF GOD.

In the most inner room of the temple, the Holy of Holies, the shekinah glory of God gave evidence to God's presence. A curtain forty feet wide, twenty feet high and four inches thick separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the temple. When Christ died at Calvary, this huge curtain ripped from the top to the bottom. The glory and presence of God moved out of the temple. On the day of Pentecost, His glory, His presence entered one hundred and twenty of Christ's disciples in an upper room in Jerusalem. God's glory manifested by wind, and tongues of fire that rested on each one. On that day, a people became the temple of God. A group of disciples had answered the call of God. They had laid aside their own ways and plans to respond. They were separated unto God, out of the systems of religion, the systems of this world.

John 17: 14, 22

"I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

"And the GLORY which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:

A New Testament people became the house of God. God's habitation, His dwelling place, became a separated people. With God's GLORY filling the temple, His people became THE GLORIOUS CHURCH.

Hebrews 3: 6

but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are ...

1 Timothy 3: 15

but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God,

1 Corinthians 3: 16

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

Paul was talking to a people who knew about temples. Their cities teemed with all kinds of temples, dedicated to different gods. Paul called the church, corporately and individually, the temple of God.

1 Peter 2: 5

You also, as living stones, are being built up a SPIRITUAL HOUSE, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

The church is the house of God. A spiritual house built with living stones. Called into communion with God, we become separated from all that is not Him. Through communion with Him, we begin to reveal Him. We bear His name as His bride. We show forth His praises, revealing His character to the nations or kingdoms of this world. We are a city set on a hill, showing forth a great light. The Lord will arise over us. His glory will be seen upon us. The new Jerusalem prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. A people adorned in Christ, adorned in and transmitting His glory. Make sure your part of His house, His temple, His body, THE GLORIOUS CHURCH!

Isaiah 60: 1, 3

*Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.
For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the Lord will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you.
The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising.*

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