

The Hammer

Breaking Down Misconceptions



*“Is not my word like fire,”
declares the LORD,
“and like a hammer that
breaks a rock in pieces?”*

Jeremiah 23:29

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As always, if we can help you in any way, please contact the church here at
P.O. Box 68309, Indianapolis, IN 46268 USA.

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Below is the list of titles in a 10-part series of books about Foundational Issues of the Kingdom of God and the Bride of Christ.
www.JesusLifeTogether.com/Foundations/

THE HAMMER—Breaking Down Misconceptions
“Is not my word like fire,” declares the LORD, “and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?” Jeremiah 23:29

THE PLOW—Planting Hope & Vision
“The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman and the planter by the one treading grapes. New wine will drip from the mountains and flow from all the hills.” Amos 9:13

THE SCALES—Holding to God’s Standards
“The LORD abhors dishonest scales, but accurate weights are his delight.” Proverbs 11:1

THE CRUCIBLE—Refining and Melding Relationships
“The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but the LORD tests the heart.” Proverbs 17:3

THE SICKLE—Clearing the Land and Harvesting Change
“As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.” Mark 4:29

THE TROWEL—It Matters How We Build!
“This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: ‘See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.’” Hebrews 8:5

THE SWORD—Cutting Through the Fog
“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.” Matthew 10:34

THE CHISEL—“I Will Build My Church...”
“In building the temple, only blocks dressed at the quarry were used, and no hammer, chisel or any other iron tool was heard at the temple site while it was being built.” 1 Kings 6:7

THE ANVIL—Forging Out a Life
“See, it is I who created the blacksmith who fans the coals into flame and forges a weapon fit for its work.” Isaiah 54:16

THE PLUMB LINE—True Foundations
“Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty...Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of ‘God Bless it!’...Who despises the day of small things? Men will rejoice when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.” Zechariah 4

Europe, 30 Years Ago...

Are you content with what Jesus is not? HIS Standard and Heart's Desire MUST be ours, no Plan B.

“**W**e look out on the world today, on what we call the Christian world, and we see its state, which is indeed very like that in the days of the Judges. We see divisions and failures in what is called ‘the Church,’ and the question arises: Is it possible to have a whole testimony, a full testimony? Is it possible to have a complete expression of the Lord’s mind? The answer that is so often returned may be stated thus: ‘Well, that is the ideal, but you are setting yourself an impossible task if you attempt it. You had better accept the situation, regard it as all in ruins, and make the best of it!’”

“Are you content with that? I am not, and I have decided that even if I die in the attempt, I will give myself to the obtaining of a fuller expression of the Lord’s mind. In so far as my own life is concerned, it is going to be poured out to the last to get His people to the fullness of His will, and I am not going to accept this situation which is so far short of it. It is an unholy thing to enter into contentment of that kind. It is that failure to go on, in spite of the seemingly impossible, which has produced the terrible paralysis and spiritual ineffectiveness of the Lord’s people that is almost worldwide today.”

-T. Sparks

Why the World Cannot Receive

1950

“**T**he Christian faith, based upon the New Testament, teaches the complete antithesis between the Church and the world.

“The trouble with most of Christianity today is that we have tried to bridge the gulf between two opposites—the world and the Church—and have performed an illicit marriage for which there is no biblical authority. Actually, no real union between the world and the Church is possible. When the Church joins up with the world it is the true Church no longer but only a pitiful hybrid thing, an object of smiling contempt to the world and an abomination to the Lord.

“The mixture of darkness and light in which many (or should we say most?) believers walk today is not caused by any vagueness on the part of the scriptures. Nothing could be plainer than the pronouncements of the Scriptures on the Christian’s relation to the world. The confusion results from the unwillingness of professing Christians to take the Word of the Lord seriously. Christianity is so entangled with the world that millions never guess how radically they have missed the New Testament pattern. Compromise is everywhere. The world is whitewashed just enough to pass inspection by blind men posing as believers, and those same believers are everlastingly seeking to gain acceptance with the world. By mutual concessions men who call themselves Christians manage to get along with men who have for the things of God nothing but quiet contempt.

“This whole thing is spiritual in its essence. A Christian is what he is, not by theological ideology, but by the new birth. He is a Christian because of a Spirit which dwells in him. Only that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The flesh can never be converted into spirit, no matter how many church dignitaries work on it. Confirmation, baptism, communion, confession of faith—none of these nor all of them together can turn flesh into spirit nor make a son of Adam a son of God.

“Because you are sons,’ wrote Paul to the Galatians, ‘God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father’ (Galatians 4:6).

“And to the Corinthians he wrote: ‘Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith; test your own selves. Don’t you know that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are reprobates?’ (2 Corinthians 13:5).

“And to the Romans: ‘But you are not of the flesh, but of the Spirit, if the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if any man does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ’ (Romans 8:9).

“That terrible zone of confusion so evident in the whole life of the Christian community could be cleared up in one day if the followers of Christ would begin to follow Christ instead of each other. For our Lord was very plain in His teaching about the believer and the world.

“On one occasion, after receiving unsolicited and carnal advice from sincere but unenlightened brethren, our Lord replied:

“My time is not yet come; but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hates, because I testify that its deeds are evil’ (John 7:6-7).

“He identified His fleshly brethren with the world and said that they and He were of two different spirits. The world hated Him but could not hate them because it could not hate itself. A house divided against itself cannot stand. Adam’s house must remain loyal to itself or it will tear itself apart. Though the sons of the flesh may quarrel among themselves, they are at bottom one with each other. It is when the Spirit of God comes in that an alien element has entered. The Lord said to His disciples:

“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; yet because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you’ (John 15:18-19).

“Paul explained to the Galatians the difference between the slave child and the free: ‘The child born after the flesh always persecutes the child born of the Spirit. It is the same now’ (Galatians 4:29).

“So throughout the entire New Testament a sharp line is drawn between the Church and the world. There is no middle ground. The Lord recognizes no good-natured ‘agreeing to disagree’ so that the followers of the Lamb may adopt the world’s ways and travel along the world’s

path. The gulf between the true Christian and the world is as great as that which separated the rich man and Lazarus. And furthermore, it is the same gulf, that is, it is the gulf that divides the world of ransomed from the world of fallen men.

“I well know and feel deeply, how offensive such teaching as this must be to the great flock of worldlings which mills around the traditional sheepfold. I cannot hope to escape the charge of bigotry and intolerance which will undoubtedly be brought against me by the confused religionists who seek to make themselves sheep by association. But we may as well face the hard truth that men do not become Christians by associating with church people, nor by religious contact, nor by religious education; they become Christians only by an invasion of their nature by the Spirit of God in the new birth. And when they do become Christians they are immediately members of a new race, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people...which in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God (1Pet. 2:9-10).

“In the verses quoted, there has been no wish to quote out of context nor to focus attention upon one side of truth to draw it away from another. The teaching of these passages is altogether one with all New Testament truth. It is as if we dipped a cup of water from the sea. What we took out would not be all the water in the ocean, but it would be a true sample and would perfectly agree with the rest.

“The difficulty we modern Christians face is not misunderstanding the Bible, but persuading our untamed hearts to accept its plain instructions. Our problem is to get the consent of our world-loving minds to make Jesus Lord in fact as well as in word. For it is one thing to say, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and quite another thing to obey the Lord’s commandments. We may sing, ‘Crown Him Lord of All,’ and rejoice in the tones of the loud-sounding organ and the deep melody of harmonious voices, but still we have done nothing until we have left the world and set our faces toward the city of God in hard practical reality. When faith becomes obedience, then it is true faith indeed.

“The world’s spirit is strong, and it clings to us as close as the smell of smoke to our garments. It can change its face to suit any circumstance and so deceive many a simple Christian whose senses are not exercised to discern good and evil. It can play at religion with every appearance of sincerity. It can have fits of conscience (particularly during Lent)

and even confess its evil ways in the public press. It will praise religion and fawn on the Church for its goals. It will contribute to charitable causes and promote campaigns to furnish clothing for the poor. Only let Christ keep His distance and never assert His Lordship over it. This it will positively not endure. And toward the true Spirit of Christ it will show only antagonism. The world's press will seldom give a child of God a fair deal. If the facts compel a favorable report, the tone is apt to be condescending and ironic. The note of contempt sounds through.

“Both the sons of this world and the sons of God have been baptized into a spirit, but the spirit of the world and the Spirit, which dwells in the hearts of twice-born men are as far apart as heaven and hell. Not only are they the complete opposite of each other, but they are sharply antagonistic to each other as well. To a son of earth, the things of the Spirit are either ridiculous, in which case he is amused, or they are meaningless, in which case he is bored.

“But the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14).

“In the first epistle of John, two words are used over and over, the words ‘they’ and ‘ye,’ and they designate two wholly different worlds. ‘They’ refers to the men and women of Adam’s fallen world; ‘ye’ refers to the chosen ones who have left all to follow Christ. The apostle does not pay homage to the little god ‘Tolerance’ (the worship of which has become in America a kind of secondary surface religion); he is bluntly intolerant. He knows that tolerance may be merely another name for indifference.

“It takes a vigorous faith to accept the teaching of the man John. It is so much easier to blur the lines of separation and so offend no one. Pious generalities and the use of ‘we’ to mean both Christians and unbelievers are much safer. The fatherhood of God can be stretched to include everyone from Jack-the-Ripper to Daniel the Prophet. Thus no one is offended and everyone feels quite snug and ready for heaven. But the man who laid his ear on Jesus’ breast was not so easily deceived. He drew a line to divide the race of men into two camps, to separate the saved from the lost; those who shall rise to eternal reward, from them that shall sink to final despair. On one side are ‘they’ that know not God; on the other ‘ye,’ and between the two is a moral gulf too wide for any man to cross.

“Here is the way John states it: *‘You are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world; therefore they speak from the world’s viewpoint, and the world listens to them. We are of God, he that knows God listens to us; he that is not of God does not listen to us. This is how we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error’* (1 John 4:4-6).

“Such language as this is too plain to confuse anyone who honestly wants to know the truth. Our problem is not one of understanding, I repeat, but of faith and obedience. The question is not a theological one, ‘What does this teach?’ It is a moral one, ‘Am I willing to accept this and abide by its consequences?’ Can I endure the cold stare? Have I the courage to stand up to the slashing attack of the ‘liberal’? Dare I invite the hate of men who will be affronted by my attitude? Have I independence of mind sufficient to challenge the opinions of popular religion and go along with an apostle? Or briefly, can I bring myself to take up the cross with its blood and its reproach?

“The Christian is called to separation from the world, but we must be sure we know what we mean (or more important, what God means) by the world. We are likely to make it mean something external only and thus miss its real meaning. The theater, liquor, gambling—these are not the world; they are merely an external manifestation of the world. Our warfare is not against merely an external manifestation of the world. Our warfare is not against mere worldly ways, but against the spirit of the world. For man, whether he is saved or lost, is essentially spirit.

“The world, in the New Testament meaning of the word, is simply unregenerate human nature wherever it is found, whether in a tavern or in a church. Whatever springs out of, is built upon or receives support from fallen human nature is the world, whether it is morally wicked or morally respectable.

“The ancient Pharisees, in spite of their zealous devotion to religion, were of the very essence of the world. The spiritual principles upon which they built their system were drawn not from above but from below. They employed against Jesus the tactics of men. They bribed men to tell lies in defense of truth. To defend God, they acted like devils. To support the Bible, they defied the teachings of the Bible. They scuttled religion to save religion. They gave rein to blind hate in the name of the religion of love. There we see the world in all of its grim defiance of God. So fierce was this spirit that it never rested till it had

put to death the Son of God Himself. The spirit of the Pharisees was actively and maliciously hostile to the Spirit of Jesus as each was a kind of distillation of the two worlds from whence they came.

“Those present-day teachers who place the Sermon on the Mount in some other dispensation than this and so release the Church from its teachings little realize the evil they do. For the Sermon on the Mount gives in brief the characteristics of the kingdom of renewed men. The blessed poor who mourn for their sins and thirst after righteousness are true sons of the kingdom. In meekness they show mercy to their enemies; with guileless candor they gaze upon God; surrounded by persecutors they bless and curse not. In modesty they hide their good deeds. They go out of their way to agree with their adversaries and forgive those who sin against them. They serve God in secret in the depth of their hearts and wait with patience for His open reward. They freely surrender their earthly goods rather than use violence to protect them. They lay up treasures in heaven. They avoid praise and wait for the day of final reckoning to learn who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

“If this is a fairly accurate view of things, what can we say then when Christian men vie with one another for place and position? What can we answer when we see them hungrily seeking for praise and honor? How can we excuse the passion for publicity, which is so glaringly evident among Christian leaders? What about political ambition in Church circles? What about the fevered palm that is stretched out for more and bigger ‘love offerings’? What about the shameless egotism among Christians? How can we explain the gross man worship that habitually blows up one and another popular leader to the size of colossus? What about the obsequious hand kissing of moneyed men by those purporting to be sound preachers of the gospel?

“There is only one answer to these questions; it is simply that in these manifestations we see the world and nothing but the world. No passionate profession of love for ‘souls’ can change evil into good. These are the very sins that crucified Jesus.

“It is true also that the grosser manifestations of fallen human nature are part of the kingdom of this world. Organized amusements with their emphasis upon shallow pleasure, the great empires built upon vicious and unnatural habits, unrestrained abuse of normal appetites, the artificial world called ‘high society’—these are all of the world. They

are all part of that which is flesh, which builds upon flesh and must perish with the flesh. And from these things the Christian must flee. All these he must put behind him and in them he must have no part. Against them he must stand quietly but firmly without compromise and without fear.

“So whether the world presents itself in its uglier aspects or in its subtler and more refined forms, we must recognize it for what it is and repudiate it bluntly. We must do this if we would walk with God in our generation as Enoch did in his. A clean break with the world is imperative.

“You adulterers and adulteresses, don’t you know not that friendship with the world is hatred towards God? Whoever therefore, that is a friend of the world is the enemy of God’ (James 4:4).

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world’ (1 John 2:15-16).

“These words of God are not before us for our consideration; they are there for our obedience and we have no right to claim the title of Christian unless we follow them.

“For myself, I fear any kind of religious stir among Christians that does not lead to repentance and result in a sharp separation of the believer from the world. I am suspicious of any organized revival effort that is forced to play down the hard terms of the kingdom. No matter how attractive the movement may appear, if it is not founded in righteousness and nurtured in humility it is not of God. If it exploits the flesh, it is a religious fraud and should not have the support of any God-fearing Christian. Only that is of God, which honors the Spirit and prospers at the expense of the human ego. *‘That, according as it is written, He that glories, let him glory in the Lord’ (1Cor. 1:31).*”

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Charisma Article

Tuesday Morning, March 13, 2001

Article: 41% of U.S. Churchgoers are NOT SAVED, even by the lowest standards of measuring such things.

Oh, how I grieve to make this point again, when my heart is toward more Lofty things... BUT, for us all to experience fully “the unsearchable Riches of Christ,” we must also Discover the “ADMINISTRATION of the unsearchable Riches!” Paul said as much (Eph. 3:2-10; 1Tim. 3:15; 1Cor. 3:10-20) and demonstrated this in things he chose to write about in 90% of his letters. Jesus spoke of His own Work as “the Builder of the House” and the Chief Cornerstone this way: “I will build My *Church*, upon the Rock of a Revelation to each that has come directly from the Father Himself, of who the Son of the Living God *truly is*. And the *Church* will devastate the power of the enemy and set captives Free Indeed. The gates of hell will not stand against the Church that *I* build.” “Be very careful HOW you build!” saith the Lord. So, bear with me, for the sake of so much of the “church world” that hasn’t seen it yet...

After reading the article below in *Maranatha News Watch* and *Charisma Magazine*, perhaps some will begin to realize that there is a Paradigm problem in our “church world” today of immense proportions. “See this great structure, Jesus!?” (Mat. 24:1-2). If the visible Church is really daily manifesting and embodying the Risen Christ, then He is REALLY in their midst, Alive with Power and Love and Wisdom and Truth. So, if He IS, then how could most be sound asleep *by our own statistics*? Another explanation is this: If the Lampstand has been removed, He doesn’t “circulate” in those places, according to His own Word.

The Paradigm problem breaks down this way:

1) The Nicolaitanism issues—Sauls, from above (up front, as officially in charge), instead of Samuels, from within. Clergy/laity assigned or official “leaders” or “teachers” is a bad idea. Jesus said, even to the Twelve, “Call NO man” as officially in these positions “for you are all just brothers amongst brothers” (Mat. 23:9). When we learn to appreciate

and respect GIFTS in our midst rather than (big and miniature) CEOs and assigned Talking Heads, we will be *far* closer to seeing Jesus ALIVE again as Head of His Church, Leading and Teaching, Himself! “When Revelation comes to the second, *let the first one sit down!*”

2) Lack of true daily relationships (Heb. 3:12-14; Gal. 6:1-4; Jas. 5:16; Acts 2:42-47) amongst 100% of those who call themselves Christians (Acts 2:44; Heb. 8:11). This disjointed quality of life, where everyone “leads their own life” and then *adds God* (instead of 1Cor. 12; Acts 2:42-47, and “Seek FIRST the Kingdom”), will *always* result in much leaven in the batch. In such a self-centered state there would be too little Light to see or help with the leaven issues God Commands us to resolve (1Cor. 5:7; 12; Jos. 7). Many who are weak will remain weak their entire lives unless they get the Help God planned through His People and His Gifts in those People. More knowledge won’t help without the many Gifts of the Body of Christ interacting with them “DAILY!” And many that are pretenders or unconverted will think they are outstanding Christians and never have the chance to meet the Real Jesus as long as we continue Building poorly. The man-conceived and convenient “time and place and pre-programmed” way of building—unBiblical to the core—has obviously resulted in much tragedy, by their statistics. It is no wonder so much damage is done to the children and to the marriages and lives.

Can we reconsider, as Paul said, “HOW we build”? For Jesus? For our children? For ourselves? What will it take for those with a heart for Jesus and His Fruit to *See* the need for more than a new program or a new “preacher” or building, or a new living room or guitar or Bible Study? As God said in Jeremiah’s day—as we weep together over issues *just as serious* as he faced—we must together “uproot, tear down, destroy, and overthrow that He may build and plant.”

When we allow Jesus to *truly* be Head of His Church, functionally, rather than a figurehead (as Tozer put it) or a “topic”...

JESUS is so, so, so attractive that everything CHANGES!

Consider the article below from the Christian news service, and then an alternative...

=====
MARANATHA NEWSWATCH

Issue #184 3/12/01

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Study: Churches Have Lost Their Spiritual Passion

(CHARISMA)—Despite having more born-again Christians today than ten years ago, America is spiritually stagnant. A new study on the state of Christianity in the nation has revealed that Americans remain interested in faith and consider themselves to be religious people—but it concludes that believers are seemingly mired in spiritual complacency.

The verdict was delivered in the State of the Church report by the Barna Research Group (BRG), a California-based Christian organization that annually conducts a nationwide study of the country’s faith practices and perspectives.

Not everything is gloomy. The study of 1,005 Protestants and Catholics found that the percentage of adult born-again Christians increased from 35% in 1991 to 41% in 2001. Since 1995, there has been a five-point increase in the percentage of adults who say they are “absolutely committed” to the Christian faith.

But the report found a decline in other significant faith areas. Regular Bible reading dropped over the last decade from 45% to 37%. Volunteering at church declined from 27% to 20% over the same period. Church attendance has slipped from 49% to 42%.

The study also revealed other disturbing findings. Four out of ten Christians do not attend church or read the Bible in a typical week, while seven out of ten are not involved in a small group that meets for spiritual purposes. The report also confirmed that there are more than 10 million Christians who are unchurched.

BRG’s president said the findings point to America’s need for a spiritual shake-up. According to George Barna, “in a typical week, 41% of the adults attending Christian churches are not born again. More than one-third of the Protestant churchgoers are not born again.” He added:

“Most of those people have been attending Christian churches for years and years, without really understanding the foundations of the Christian faith and its personal implications.”

Reiterating comments based on previous BRG findings, Barna said, “America certainly did not experience the spiritual revival that many Christians hoped would emerge as the new millennium began.”

He added: “There are magnificent exceptions throughout the country, but overall, Christian ministry is stuck in a deep rut.... Like the churches of Laodicea and Sardis, described in the Bible as distasteful to God because of their complacency and spiritual deadness, too many Christians and churches in America have traded in spiritual passion for empty rituals, clever methods and mindless practices.

“The challenge to today’s church is not methodological. It is a challenge to resuscitate the spiritual passion and fervor of the nation’s Christians.”

Barna’s views contradict those of Christian Broadcasting Network founder Pat Robertson, who told the Virginia Press Association last week that a religious revival was under way in America. He said the revival was significantly impacting America’s politics because religious people were working together with politicians to make the country a better place. The involvement is “a very healthy trend,” he said.

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Contrast what you just read with this...

There’s HOPE!

What then does the Kingdom of God really look like? What will a Church *today* walking in God’s Presence and full of Grace look like? How can I recognize the Spirit of Christ, and His best Way for His people and for me?

Jesus’ Bride, His Church. She’s a special Lady, a “Bride PREPARED for the return of the Groom,” the King of Glory. She’s “a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish.” She is an equal yoke for Jesus—compassionate, yet

filled with fury toward hypocrisy; sensitive, yet relentlessly pursuing the completion of Her Father's business. *This* is the Church that Jesus bought with His very Blood...

She'll be a Church that is not bound by time and place, but "daily in public and from house to house." She'll be "joined and knit together by every supporting ligament," "everyone members of one another," "confessing sins one to another," "admonishing one another daily so that none are hardened by the deceitfulness of sin," always loving and serving and "bearing one another's burdens" in joy and thanksgiving. And with a few tears. Her corporate gatherings will only be the overflow of what is happening on the streets and in the homes of all of her people. "*Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own*" (Acts 4:32).

The Church will be characterized by "mega power" and "mega grace." Sin will be exposed and eradicated with "ever-increasing Glory" in the lives of those in the Church. Captives will, at long last be set FREE. The singing of songs to our God won't be written in a menu printed a week in advance, but will flow out of what God is doing in our midst at the moment. Watch out! Those joy-filled, faith-filled Saints of His may even erupt into song in a Burger King parking lot as the Church descends on the restaurant for a meal. What's real in one place must surely be real everywhere! (That New Wine, that Living Water has strange effects, you know. It's just Biblical, normal, filled with Jesus Christianity!)

Together, with intimacy of relationships, we'll *LIVE* as our Lord did. Jesus, the Christ of God, now lives within us, individually and as a People (Col. 1:26-27, 3:4; Gal. 2:20; Acts 17:28; Eph. 5:18; 1Jn. 2:6; Rom. 8:9).

This passage is the Eternal pattern of the Church Jesus established, and is for every generation that will walk with Him by His Spirit:

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that

they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.

“And they shall rebuild the old ruins, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations.

“You shall be named the Priests of the Lord, men shall call you the Servants of our God” (Isaiah 61:1-6; Luke 4:18-19).

Now God’s version is better than man’s any day, isn’t it?! And such Churches do actually exist! If you’d like to get in on it, rest assured, *“We must through many tribulations enter the Kingdom of God.”* Will you “go for it” no matter what everyone else is doing? Will you pay that price? I know you will. It’s entirely worth it.

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be GLORY in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen” (Ephesians 3:20-21).

God's Awakening Call

Monday Morning, December 7, 1998

The Call to *Be* the Body of Christ, Rather Than To “Attend” Something

It has become more and more obvious to God's Chosen, worldwide, that the typical expression of what is known as “church” has been influenced by the enemy, and through worldly culture. Our understanding and expression of “church,” in generation after generation, around the world has been led down a Machiavellian path of shallowness, pride, greed, lukewarmness, worldliness, and Ishmaelic infrastructure. In the institutions of today, the quality of the sermons and teaching is sometimes good. I hesitate, after visiting many hundreds of “services” of every conceivable denomination and “non-denomination,” to say that “most” teaching in these assemblies is Truth-filled. But, certainly some of it is quite good. Sometimes the “worship time” is “encouraging” or “inspiring.” We need to add, though, that accomplishing this has often required Spiritual prostitution to acquire “talented” musicians to “lead”—in spite of the fact that they may have little or no real relationship with Jesus. Their unregeneracy, or worldly life is often overlooked in order to accomplish our desired *end* of a wonderful worship experience to attract larger numbers. Frequently the “programs” of modern religious assemblies have targeted “worthy” objectives, such as feeding hungry unbelievers, building homes in Nicaragua, or distributing tracts to passers-by in an urban area. Many groups have a formidable number of creative efforts ongoing, many or most of which may be good things to be involved in. And yet...

And yet the quality of *DAILY LIFE* of people in these organizations is what it's all about. *THIS* is the *TRUE* measurement of how much of what is going on is really of Jesus. The lack of the daily application of the Word of God, by the Priesthood of Believers with one another, is

cataclysmic. In most religious assemblies, only the 5-10% “committed nucleus” (a number offered by many “pastors” as the norm) even TRIES to be involved in each other’s lives on a visible daily basis as Jesus commands, and demonstrated. And this number is still fairly accurate, even with the “cell group” programs that have sprung up everywhere as an acknowledgment of this crisis. Even within these cell groups, the stories of surprise suicides, rampant concealed pornography, love of the world, gossip, unforgiveness, pride, ambition, and general shallowness are legion. Simply changing the size of the group, “assigning” a less experienced leader, and trading the religious facility and seating for a home and a sofa...doesn’t change its DNA.

By the way, running away from “institutional religion” so that “you don’t have to answer to anyone but GOD!” is usually a deception as well. Caution and wisdom, and learning God’s Ways are in order here. You *cannot* just run out and “start a group” (the way men typically do such things) and expect to find much more than heartache, confusion, division, and a colossal waste of time and emotion. Ask most of those that have tried it! Let’s proceed carefully with such delicate and Holy matters as Jesus’ Church!

Laying down their lives for one another, being involved in the homes and work places, sharing in the children’s lives together, living in vulnerability, “confessing sins one to another;” “bearing one another’s burdens and so fulfilling the Law of Christ,” the mutual Life and dependency and Priesthood of 1 Corinthians 12-13...these are almost unheard of as a description of an entire congregation of Believers. And such a congregation, Biblical and mandatory as it might be to live this way, would be viewed with suspicion and called names. Yet, the rampant lukewarmness and leaven amongst the general population of most congregations is forbidden by God. It is only “preached to”—rather than resolved. The insanity of deception and worldliness amongst the teenagers of these organizations is beyond words. I could refer you to folks from any number of the most highly-respected congregations anywhere that have been totally devastated by what has happened “backstage” at their congregations. All of these tragedies and fatalities, and more, simply say what Jesus said: “You know a tree by its fruit” and “Wisdom is proved Right by her children.”

There is (as hundreds of thousands are now shouting from the mountaintops in every language) something fundamentally wrong with the understanding and expression of “church” as has been so frequently practiced for the last bunch of years!

HOWEVER! This is still worth saying: Though most churches bear precious little resemblance to the Life-filled Church we read of in the Bible (in spite of their good teaching, good worship, and good programs), most who energetically participate in the organizations of today have had only the highest motives all along.

So, why the “wake-up call” now? Why haven’t we seen all of this before? Some in previous generations have, of course. But most of them were martyred, as Jesus predicted. Some were martyred physically, some by slander and libel and politics. Those with something to lose have suppressed God’s prophets in every generation. Why are multitudes in ever-increasing numbers and courage raising their voices as One today? Perhaps, the “Two Witnesses” are ready to stand, and the Bride is sensing that the time of preparation for the Groom is growing short. Perhaps “the Spirit and the Bride,” discerning the Hour to say to Him, “COME!” is drawing near. And still there’s so much lacking in this Preparation!

Too often, we have been hypnotized by the immensity and traditions of the religious world as we’ve known it (“It’s everywhere, and all we’ve ever known!” “Mom and Dad were good folks. They ‘loved the Lord,’ so what’s the problem?”). We’ve been decoyed by men’s religious sentimentalities and emotional devices (“It’s all so nice, so sweet, so moving, so soothing, so fulfilling...”). We’ve allowed ourselves to be threatened and blackmailed into subservience to it. (“You don’t want to oppose GOD, do you? Touch not God’s anointed!”) Sometimes we’ve even been seduced by promises of advancement within it. (“You could be a leader one day! You have a true calling and gift from God! You could have your *own* ministry one day! Just ‘work from within’ and you can really help us.”) “Pinnacle of the Temple” stuff, for sure.

Yet most of us who have offered our involvement into typical church situations around the world, “staff” or not, have had only the best of interests in serving our resurrected Messiah, Jesus. We have rightfully chosen and attempted to serve Him within a relevant and Biblical expression of His Body, the local visible Church.

The good news: On a level of global magnitude—stuff’s getting better every day. Many everywhere have been awakened by the Holy Spirit to His Call for the Life of Jesus to be lived out DAILY in the local Church, reflecting His Glory and Wisdom and Holiness. Though we get letters literally every day in this season of Awakening, there is undoubtedly

far, far more than we could ever be aware of. Even the letters we receive come from a cross section of many countries and languages and cultures, crying out to know about Jesus and the daily Life of His Body in the local Church. I mention this to you for a reason. Many times the letters or telephone calls we receive are moistened with tears. “I’m so happy! I’ve been told my whole life that I’m crazy. I’ve been told that I’m a troublemaker and just looking for perfection that I’ll never find. I should just be content with things as they are, and try to make them better. But I’m *not* crazy, and God *does* want to build a VISIBLE Church that lives every day as His Son lived every day!”

He *does* want a Church that, while not “perfect” of course...still “everyone, from the least to the greatest” loves Him and knows Him and “*loves the light!*” We mention these other folks out there, because we want you to know that you are not alone, and you are NOT crazy. Or maybe you are crazy like Enoch, like Abraham, like Moses, like Elijah and Jeremiah, like Paul...and like Jesus. So maybe you’re crazy, but you’re not alone.

In Malawi, Africa, a very dear friend and brother (native to Malawi) has likened the Call of the Holy Spirit regarding the functioning of Jesus’ Church to this: “David Livingstone brought to Malawi the Good News of Jesus (in 1859). David Livingstone’s Gift to us is like Life-giving Bread in a basket. And now, the Good News of the KINGDOM, and the LIFE of the Body of Christ as a daily Priesthood is giving us another companion Gift. This Gift has given us the ability to truly take the lid off of the basket, take the Bread out of the basket, eat it and be nourished to the full!” Precious insight.

In spite of what we have all been conditioned to accept as “church” for so many, many years, many people now know that the Bride of Jesus must be “making herself ready.” And this real Church is unrelated to sitting in a pew, on a bench, or folding chair, or even in a home or living room. Involvement in a setting constructed and controlled by mere men is still *not* what God intends. Even if some “amateur talent ‘specials’” are permitted, or some filtered teaching or utterances are allowed in some controlled settings (so that all the “laymen” feel involved), this is not the Real thing—born of, sustained by, and defined by Relationship with Jesus and His Body. A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS, daily LIFE involvement by 100% of the “members” of Jesus’ Body, with one another, breaking down hell’s gates—this is all that will ever satisfy His Heart and fulfill His Prophetic Teachings. And the Valley of Dry

Bones, touched by the Wind of the Spirit that brought Jesus Christ back from the dead, shall arise by His Grace and Mercy! I love it. Stuff's getting better every day. ☺

Working Out His Dream!!

And so. An inner call of God's Spirit is precipitating a coming "outside of the camp" to fellowship in His Sufferings and BE His Body—instead of just "studying" about it, or singing about it. DAILY. The Church *really* becoming the CHURCH! As so many are in a Holy pursuit of His Holy City descending from Above, it is increasingly more important to speak, as Paul did, of "the administration" or the "practical working out" of the "unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. 3:8-10). In other words, there are some really practical issues that come up as we move towards *being* the Church on a daily, interactive, "joined and knit" basis.

They are, of course, mostly irrelevant to those who try to center Christianity around meetings, buildings, hired clergy, and programs. To those religious organizations that have little difficulty or discomfort with known or unknown "leaven in the batch," there is not much to think about. If someone wishes to move in and "place membership" at such a place, they are always most welcome. At an institutional assembly, the questions are fairly simple. If they'll "tithe," have some talents they can offer, and have a commitment to attend regularly, that would nearly universally be sufficient. They would be more than welcome to move and "become a member." While there are surely many true Christians who are part of these groups, that is not to say that Jesus is happy with those organizations, or that much of anyone will reach their full potential in a place where "a little leaven leavens the WHOLE batch." Just as Uzzah discovered, when we use the Philistine's ways to accomplish God's Purposes, people get hurt and people die. In a Church that is not building God's Way, even the true Christians will suffer loss. Don't mistake anything here for saying, "So-and-so can't be Christians." We're not discussing that. This is about how we build. It is shameful that many will never reach their potentials for Jesus because we've "tried to grow an orange tree at the North Pole." It really does matter how we build.

"If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will

test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If what he has built is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames" (1 Corinthians 3:12-15).

Now, for those that want to build out of Relationship—rather than org chart hierarchy, programs, forms, traditions, and calendar-ized times, places, and events...there is much to talk about.

Avoiding the New “Pearl Harbor Disaster!”

Wednesday Night, March 7, 2001

*Admiral Outlines Sub Wreck Factors
The Associated Press
March 7, 2001 5:02PM*

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii (AP)—A Navy admiral on Wednesday outlined five factors that he said led to the fatal collision between a nuclear submarine and a Japanese fishing boat.

Rear Adm. Charles Griffiths, who conducted the Navy’s preliminary investigation, spent his third day testifying in a court of inquiry into why the USS Greeneville hit the Ehime Maru.

“What went wrong?” asked Vice Adm. John Nathman, one of three admirals on the panel.

Griffiths summarized his testimony with a list of problems:

- 1) Lack of qualified sonar operators aboard the Greeneville.*
- 2) Broken equipment that could have helped detect the Japanese ship.*
- 3) The number and location of sixteen civilian guests visiting the submarine.*
- 4) A rush to complete an emergency surfacing drill, which was pushed back nearly 45 minutes because of delays including a long lunch for the guests.*
- 5) A command climate in which crewmembers were unaccustomed to questioning the commanding officer because they trusted his skills.*

Let's look at this recent event through Spiritual eyes, for a moment.

These things and all things “are for our learning” and occur for the Purpose of teaching those “upon whom the Apex of the Ages is bestowed.”

The SHIP of God's Grace and Truth, the Pillar and Foundation of Truth, the visible Ekklesia (the Church)—must avoid the same pitfalls as those that caused the loss of life in the event mentioned above. So, what to watch out for??!

Disaster strikes when:

1) There is little or no open daily Prophetic life amongst the saints. Of course, when we say “Prophetic,” we DON'T mean an exalted high Poohbah issuing magic words from a stage or in a secret room by appointment. Ohhh, dear me. That is such a sad loss and full of heartbreak and danger compared to the Real thing. And we don't mean a lot of little wannabes, essentially disconnected in the inner man from one another, seeing each other only mostly at “meetings,” wandering around saying, “The Lord told me to tell you that...” or “You'll be this or that when you grow up...” or “Thus saith the Lord! Blah, blah, yadda.” We mean what GOD meant in Acts 2:16-18, 42-47! Daily Life! Sharing the LIVING “ever-proceeding” Word of God together as we rise up, as we sit down, as we walk along the way (Deut. 6, 11)—in the stores, markets, homes, workplaces, and neighborhoods and in child rearing and relationships, as a *Holy Nation*, a *Kingdom of Priests!* “Would to God that all of God's People would Prophesy!” And so shall it be! No “stained glass voices,” no Old Testament “obsolete” Holy Oracles of self-proclaimed carnival act “Prophet” shows! (Those shows relegate the rest of God's people to be a “puppet show.”) The real deal prophetic people are everyone, “from the least to the greatest,” putting the hand of man into the Hand of Jesus, by showing them the Vision of the Son of God (Rev. 19:11-16) and helping them see and eradicate the “sins that so easily beset”—that they might be “free indeed!” (Refer to the song “Prophetic People” for a few more thoughts on this one.)

2) When the clergy/laity system is our way of building: Nicolaitanism (“Conquering the People”), the “pastor”—the “cell leader”—“life group/kinship group/ bible study/whatever leader”—the “reverend”—the “priest”—the “minister” (though no such animals exist in the Holy Record as they are done today), we are asking for trouble. Remember how God said that Israel was REJECTING HIM when they wanted

an *office* over them (Saul) rather than Gifts around them (Samuel)? “It is the same now,” as the Apostle Paul put it, when distinguishing between Ishmael and Isaac. When appointing head honchos or head “facilitators” is the unBiblical way we “build” in an Assembly of Believers—the result is far more tragic than the ship that was just sunk in Pearl Harbor. The other gifts in the Body of Christ (now “controlled,” “conquered” by the unBiblical assignees), the “equipment” that could be saving lives and marriages and teens’ souls and could be overcoming hell...is left virtually useless and broken and non-operational.

3) When there is “leaven in the batch” because the body of Believers is “attendance-based” (whether in a religious facility or in a “home”)—rather than DAILY LIFE-based, there is a guarantee from God that disaster will ensue. If there is a “periphery” of people that no one *really* knows because we build around times and places on the calendar and “meetings” to attend, many staying “at a distance” spiritually with their lives, it is a hopeless situation according to GOD. How does God describe the terrible result of being attendance-based as the definition of who is a “part” of the “church” where we are? How does God assure us, by His Oath that the end result is terrible if we are unable to “get the leaven *out* of the batch?” If we, because of so little deep relationship as a whole, find it impossible to obey the Commands of God because we have no ability to discern the difference between weakness (to be helped) and leaven (to be removed), we’re in a world of hurt! Here is God’s sworn Testimony: “A little leaven leavens the *whole* batch.” IF we build in such a way as to allow “civilians” (unregenerate or lukewarm and world-loving, or those who will *not* “take up their cross daily” or obey His Commands about life and family and job and possessions and habits and time) to consider themselves “a part of the church,” wandering the ship—we are, according to God, assuring disaster. No way out. Ai wins.

4) If we are playing around and not clear on our purpose or our Assignment before Almighty God and the Captain of the Lord’s Hosts, Jesus of Nazareth, disaster will befall us, eventually. “Be not deceived, God is NOT mocked. A man, or an assembly, reaps what it sows.” If we do what we do out of “token” assignment, half-heartedly or without the focus of “heartily, as unto the Lord Himself”—we are lukewarm, to use Jesus’ term in Revelation 3. And the results are not favorable.

5) Lastly, if we cease to be “a Kingdom of Priests,” where “from the least to the greatest, we ALL know HIM”—and we shirk our responsibility

to “admonish one another daily, so that none are hardened and deceived,” we harm ourselves, the Body of Christ, and everyone we love. Clergy/laity is the Old Covenant and is death to God’s Purposes in this Covenant. If we allow ourselves to think, “I just don’t trust myself enough to mention anything, even though it seems unlike Jesus or unWise or wrong to me,” or “If it were really wrong, someone else would have said something,” or “They know better than me, so I won’t mention it; I’ll just try to suppress my wonderings”—we are shirking our responsibility as Priests of God. If a man or woman is truly walking with Jesus, no matter how “Gifted” they may be (Eph. 4:11-17), they are still (in THIS Covenant of the KINGDOM of PRIESTS) only “brothers amongst brothers” (Mat. 23:4-14, etc.) and must “love the Light” (welcome input into their lives like anyone else)—or they are not even Christians, let alone “leaders” (Jn. 3:19-21; 2Thes. 2:10; 1Pet. 1:22-23, 2:2; Jn. 12:48). If anyone ever pulls the “Touch not God’s Anointed” stunt on you (to keep you from asking them about something in their life, Mat. 18:15), rest assured that they have little to no understanding of the Word of God or the Spirit of Christ, and have set themselves up in a seat higher than Peter or Paul or John ever did. That is serious trouble. It is a Kingdom of Priests, all sharing a part of the very Life and Wisdom and Power of Christ Jesus (and to be responded to humbly as such, by ALL), or it may as well be Buddhism or Islam or Hare Krishna. Always approach one another with humility, hoping and praying and loving them into greatness. But, put your heart and courage into being a Priest of God, covering others’ blind spots, serving His Purposes—and Seeing and Sharing and Encouraging others into the arms of God. It doesn’t get any better than that! **WE ALL NEED EACH OTHER!** And everyone who is “baptized in the Spirit” sees it that way (1Cor. 12)!

And so! Let us “be very careful how we build” to quote the Apostle—and avoid these unnecessary and dangerous traps that cause Ships to sink and great loss of life! It needn’t be so. His Ship, His Ark, is UNSINKABLE if we build His Way. Oh, we’ll hit a rock or two along the way. We’ll swallow a little salt water on occasion as the waves crash over the sides of the ship. But the North Star is guiding us HOME, and we will arrive Safely, beyond question!

The Fifth Dimension

Monday Morning, April 19, 1999

Don't read this if you are happy with the fruit of what is called "church" in your environment and your family. Honestly, it's no fun to not be liked. So, if you're prone to be happy with things as they are, then seriously, don't read any more. This isn't a tease to get you to read it. It's an honest request that you not read it. However, if you're looking for some insights as to how the Life of the Body of Christ can lead to deeper relationships with God and each other...and are willing to pay any price for "the pearl" of His manifested Life...then prayerfully read this analogy below.

The Trouble With Our Scheduled Religious Activities

How would one describe the root problem with having a "religious meeting" or "bible study" or "prayer breakfast" or "worship service"... on some regularly scheduled basis? Is there a problem with having Christian events at some preset time on the calendar every week or every month? This is an almost universal practice in our generation and society. So, what's so wrong with doing a "spiritual" thing every Tuesday at 7 o'clock, or on a weekend morning at 9:00 every week?? WHY does that lead to Ishmael instead of Isaac, and leaven instead of Life? Why does the regularly scheduled religious thing create a major problem? (We're speaking of those events, in particular, having to do with seeking or serving or learning of God.)

WHY is it almost a CERTAINTY that a "regularly scheduled" "God thing" is destructive and weak? To use an analogy from the shadow of God's Creation, one way to describe it is this: It is obvious that the second dimension "owns" or "controls" the first dimension. A line contains and "owns" all of the single points on that line. A plane has dominion over all of the points and lines on that plane. The third dimension controls the second dimension. All locations in the second dimension are owned and in submission to the third dimension. Likewise, all material world objects in the third dimension are subject to the fourth dimension:

time. The Second Law of Thermodynamics is a function of time, and demonstrates the fact that the material world and its three dimensions are governed by the fourth dimension, time.

The *SPIRITUAL REALM* is the FIFTH dimension, we could say. It is not “up” or “down.” You can’t find the Spiritual Realm with a telescope, or by digging a hole deep into the earth. Nor is it simply “invisible” to our naked eyes because our eyes can’t see the infrared or ultraviolet frequencies where the Spiritual Realm lies. The Spiritual Realm is “unseen” because it is in another dimension. It is in a realm that cannot be measured or judged using men’s native tools from within the third dimension. We’ll call this “place” that the Bible calls “heavenly realms,” the fifth dimension. This is where angels, the Throne Room, the “many mansions,” “paradise,” and “the third heaven” (Paul’s description) are located.

With all of that as backdrop, it is easy to see that matters relating to the seen world, such as exercising (or some such thing), might possibly be externally “scheduled” in advance on a regular basis. There is not as much danger in doing this as there is in doing so with events primarily intended to interact with God and about God. (Although, it is still often a shortcut to the Highest way in many cases. And any obsession or inflexibility when Spiritual matters are at stake *is idolatry*.) The third dimension can be legitimately “governed” by the fourth dimension, time. If an area of endeavor is not innately and directly about the pursuit of things relating to God and His Kingdom, then there is certainly more “room” to function out of the human “DayTimer” mentality. (Of course, ALL issues are ultimately indirectly “Spiritual” areas.) Go ahead if you must, and allow some seen world (third dimensional) issues, such as “running every other day” to be governed by the fourth dimension, time. But we mustn’t dare to act as if the issues of the fifth dimension (issues directly relating to Father and His angels, and His Truths) are to be submitted to our convenience and our schedules of time and place. God is God, and the NEW Covenant has no such shallow externals as that.

We must not ever act as if “prayer” or “worship” or “fellowship” or “Bible study” can be governed by a lower dimension—time. Being together all night until dawn (Acts 20) and every day (Acts 2) *must* be legitimate possibilities, every single day and week. God doesn’t need our permission to do whatever He wants, giving us no notice at all. And if we’re likely to bellyache about not having “notice,” or if we’re

prone to skipping whatever doesn't fit into our plans, we'd better take another look at what GOD says the definition of a Christian (Lk. 9:57-62, etc., etc.), and a Church, is. To make the fifth dimension subject to the fourth dimension is a tragic mistake. The fifth dimension having *dominion over* the fourth and the third dimensions (time, and the material world) is essential, always.

“Let's get together every Friday night at 7:30 at so-and-so's house for worship and intercession!” Not a good idea. Perhaps this analogy will help introduce the problem with this common practice, and point us toward a Higher direction. By the way, this higher way IS plenty practical enough for true disciples of Jesus. There are Churches that live this way every day, decades at a time, with large numbers of people and children, and all sorts of occupations. Rock-solid, Jesus-centered, Biblical Christianity. It is not “less” to live free of schedules, programs, hierarchies, and “the sound of man's chisel in the temple courts.” It is so much MORE! Just as love is more than a well-intentioned life of good deeds strung together, one after another. Love is *more* and not less...and finds its own creative expressions, day by day by day. It doesn't *need* a program. And so it is with Jesus and His Church, daily living out Reality. A program and a plan is a HINDRANCE to creative, miraculous, daily love with Him and one another. Man's safety nets of programmed meetings choke God's Love and creative life; it doesn't “help” anyone really. It only helps everyone to stay as spiritual babies for years and years, and allows leaven in the batch. It allows the children and teens, and many of the adults, to live in lukewarmness or rebellion that God has sworn He will not receive. But there is an alternative. And a small portion of this Biblical, Living way to build has to do with putting to death programmed, calendar-ized meetings. This superior Love and Life way to build is not only True; it has proven True in the crucible of everyday life in our “modern” world, for many years.

Really. It is as wrong to have a “Holy Day” in this new Covenant as it is to offer animal sacrifices. Neither pleases Father in this Agreement He has made with us by the Blood of His Son. They are both, for the same reasons, the wrong Covenant. The Covenant of “visual aids” and external shadows to help us “See” the Father was very necessary. Abraham, Moses, and the others lived out the “Old Covenant” types and shadows that were “examples for our learning.” These externals of rituals, temples and sacrifices, and physical lands and wars...these all happened, the Bible says, to teach us of God's Kingdom and to lead

us to our Messiah. Yet, this covenant of externals, of “visual aids”...is “obsolete” according to God Himself (Heb. 10:5-18, 9:8, 8:5-13; Col. 2:16-17). There is something, SOMEONE now. He and His Ways are FAR more Real and fulfilling than 10,000 externals could ever be. For that reason, it is as wrong to make GOD and His Realm subject to time and place...as it would be for a man to bow down and pay homage to a tree or an animal. Why? Because it is perverting the decreed Order, to make the things of God subject to our whims, or to time, or to the material world.

God will have NO schedule, except His own, as dictated by the Living Head of His Church, Jesus of Nazareth. It is subject to His Current Thought ALONE, not the calendar, the clock on the wall, the little league baseball games, the basketball games, the “summer vacation” nonsense, the guitar lessons, the sleep schedules or interest levels or convenience of the created beings. We must simply allow *Him* to make the choices, “real time,” as to time and place and frequency, and what we do *when* we are together in small or large numbers.

Letting Jesus decide when and where and how we get together is only practical, of course, for those who are listening currently to a Risen Head of the Church. Paul spoke of a “mere men” way of living that doesn’t hear God or know His heart and mind. By the Spirit, Paul then contrasted that with those who *truly* are living for Him, and are therefore able to “judge all things” and even “know the Mind of Christ” (1Cor. 2-3:5). He went on to say that we will even judge angels. This is His determined Will for His People: that they would be intimately connected to Him and to each other, and that Jesus Christ would give direction, minute by minute, as surely as the physical head does to a physical body! That’s His Plan and our destiny in this awesome new agreement. But we’ve got to *live* that way! If we’re ever going to see His immense Wisdom and the wonders of His Plan, we’ve got to *listen* and not fall back on some religious program. If we are truly only, as a religious practice, reminiscing together about an historic Christ and His teachings, then we “must” schedule things in order to be secure and functional. If we aren’t listening to Jesus for His guidance, we would, of course, need the schedules. If we didn’t have the externals (the schedules and plans and notes and structures and hierarchies), we would have total chaos and disjointedness—if we didn’t have a living Head to follow, or weren’t accustomed to letting Him BE the Head. This is not about UFO’s and science fiction! It is as basic as the fact that

Jesus is ALIVE, and wants to be as much the Head of His Church as He was when He was here physically. It's always been His Plan.

I know this is hard for most people to grasp. Most have never experienced anything other than what the “gentiles” do to manage their lives in the seen world. For most, it is quite intimidating to even *think* about trusting God for the daily functioning of His Church. But, don't be too quick to be skeptical! The fruit of the common thought is incredibly bad, as a million honest saints have testified. Perhaps this is not entirely because of “bad hearts”? Maybe it has something to do with HOW WE BUILD!

A weekly scheduled religious meeting, whether in a home or in a religious facility, suffers unspeakably great loss from what *could* be. The lives of those involved in the externally managed religious lifestyle are numbed, and their Spiritual growth is stunted *far* more than they could ever know! And the families and children are lost forever to the world and the enemy of Jesus. In *many* cases, this never had to be. “Be very careful how you build!”

What if we were to follow a LIVING Jesus exactly the way that the handpicked twelve followed Him in the first century? How many meetings were on *their* calendar? What meetings did they have scheduled months in advance and expect Jesus to show up at? You know it never happened that way. Why? Because He was alive, and HE was Head of His Church. HE made those decisions. So, why would it be different now, if He's really alive and risen from the dead? Didn't He say that this Covenant intimacy that we have with Him is SUPERIOR to those days? (Jn. 14:18-21, 16:7).

If we will follow Him and HIS Way, we will see His supernatural Wisdom and Life in ways that we could *never* orchestrate (Eph. 3:10). No matter how many times the “sermon” is practiced in front of the mirror, or how impressive the worship leader is with his practiced and planned songs and spiritual sayings in between songs, it isn't the Real thing. (Now, granted, God does show His Mercy and bring some benefit from “all things” working for Good, and God can even speak through a donkey. But that doesn't mean that it is His preferred Way. Nor does it mean that He couldn't get ten times more benefit out of something closer to His heart and His Intent.)

Orchestration, choreography, emotional manipulation (“every head bowed as the music plays...”), man's eloquent and powerful word

crafting...none of these will change lives as Jesus can, if we'd live HIS way, together, every day. Man's best efforts to "bring God down from Heaven" and give everyone goose bumps for an hour or two on Sunday morning will not produce much Eternal fruit, as has been proven in countries all over the world, in temples, mud huts, religious facilities, and in living room "services."

It may seem unimportant to you to quit with the canned, "planned in flatland," religious meetings and events. Some say, "What harm can it do? Everything we DO when we 'attend' the weekly event is 'good.' So what's the problem!?" And, if you have always lived the other way, by human plan and schedule, you may be afraid of anything else. If you have grown up with, or have your ego (or stomach) fed by "the empty traditions handed down by your forefathers," you probably are comfortable with everything...except the fruit. I assure you, it is far more important to learn the Way of letting Jesus be the current Head of His Church than you've ever imagined.

Even if the illustration of the different "dimensions" of Creation didn't make sense to you right away, this will. He wants us to live as His Son did: "not doing anything that we don't See the Father doing." He wants us, as individuals and His Church to live by Him, i.e. minute by minute. The props are not helpful, but rather dull us to His Call, His Guidance, His Protection, His Teaching, and His Gifts within.

Consider the teenagers and the vast amount of independence, worldliness, and leaven that the "way that seems right to a man" produces. It is utterly convincing, if we're honest and if we care, that we have built very poorly for a long, long time. Would you reconsider this point? Would you consider that the scheduled-on-the-calendar religious events, no matter what day of the week they are regularly scheduled, are definitely not as "Biblical" as you've always been told? It takes some serious verse plucking to make any case at all that Sunday was an official holy day in the New Testament (Gal. 4:9-11). In the sixty years of the Church that the Bible gives to us, the word Sunday ("first day of the week") is only mentioned twice, and neither time is it presented as some "official christian worship service day." Nor is there any record by the Holy Spirit of ANY day being held apart in this New Covenant as some regularly scheduled day for anything at all! Jesus did not meet with the disciples for a regular Wednesday night study of the Book of Isaiah, did He? Nor did the apostles do anything of the kind, any day of the week—unless the Holy Spirit just didn't mention

it. In the sixty years He carried men along to teach us Who He is, and what the Church is to be, there were no regularly scheduled religious meetings recorded. And Acts 20 and 1Corinthians 16, the two times the “first day of the week” are mentioned, are definitely not examples of “regular Sunday services.” These are isolated specific events, for particular reasons. There is no teaching from Jesus or His Apostles to authenticate a regular or “holy day” service for Christians on Sunday or any other day. This lack of Biblical mention by the Holy Spirit about a regular “Christian Sabbath Service” is incredible in view of how christianity is practiced today! What is commonly called “church” today, bears almost no resemblance to anything we can read about in the Scriptures. A scary thought.

Although this may all seem unimportant or abrasive to you, it is extremely important. If you spend your life riding in a wheelchair, you’ll never learn how to run and jump! In addition, the leaven that “leavens the whole batch” thrives on externals and schedules and hierarchies. Just like bacteria loves the warm, dark, moist places. Don’t give “leaven in the batch,” and the enemy a launching pad to destroy your loved ones, and to dilute your life into immaturity and relative fruitlessness! This is just what we’re doing when we build with man’s wisdom and for man’s convenience as we have been doing for so many years.

We either live dependent on Him for “every word that continually proceeds from the mouth of God,” with no more need of the rationalized borrowed-from-the-world “wheelchairs,” or we rob ourselves and our children of ever being forced to know the REAL Jesus. Removing the props allows us to see who we really are, and who others really are so that we can finally REALLY be of use to each other and to God. It’s amazing what can happen if we’ll live “seated with Christ” in His realm, and will not allow our lives to be governed by the calendar or the clock or the seen world. Try it! You have nothing, except the world, to lose. And perhaps you’ll have your children, and your fullest inheritance to gain.

Jesus replied, “Believe me, the time is coming when you will no longer worship the Father here or in Jerusalem.... But the time is coming and is already here when true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for anyone who will worship Him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship Him must worship in Spirit and in truth” (John 4:21-24).

Is YOUR Life Your Own?

Sunday Afternoon, February 25, 2001

A “well-known” international “leader and teacher” in the “house church movement” just said something VERY revealing today while visiting some Believers in the United States. If this has been relayed accurately (I truly hope not!), a question was posed about why we should revolve around a “here or there kingdom” and circle up the wagons primarily, or exclusively for some, around “set times and places.” (From the Record of the Holy Spirit, under Jesus’ leadership, or that of the Apostles, there is ZERO evidence that Followers of Jesus would ever slouch to “set times and places for pre-arranged programs and gimmicks and ‘bible studies.’”)

His answer tells it all about our wimpy, sloppy, worldly generation. The reason why “the house church movement,” as well as the so-called “system” (how much difference is there really, in most cases?) revolves around set times and places to define its existence (Sunday at 9:00, Tuesday at 7:30 for this, Friday at 7:00 for that...blah, blah)—is because, according to this “world-recognized leader and teacher and ‘church planter’...”

“Well, We All Still Have Our Lives To Lead, Don’t We?”

Unbelievably revealing, even to some listening to him say these words today, if this is accurate as it is said to be.

I guess some really ARE still their own—and NOT “bought for a price.”

“Doulos,” “slave”—what’s THAT?

“Well, We All Still Have Our Lives To Lead, Don’t We?”

OUTRAGEOUS! God is, beyond question, appalled at such situations where mere men tenaciously and jealously clench on to the reins of their own lives, and then attempt to wear the Name of His Son anyway. Grievous, grievous, grievous bankrupt unBiblical version of christianity. An embarrassment to the Name and Call and Glory of the Messiah. What cost the Father the life of His Son—*is pushed into a little box for our convenience in this wicked and corrupt generation*. Is THAT the “Bride who has made herself ready” for the Return of the Groom? Not a chance. Some SERIOUS repentance is in order.

“Anyone that claims to be in Christ, must walk as Jesus walked” (1 John 2:6).

Here is the picture of lives, even yet uneducated in the Teachings of Jesus, but *transformed from the Power of darkness to the Kingdom of the Beloved Son*, and now *partakers of the Divine Nature, sealed with the Spirit of Christ Jesus living within*, and *therefore longing to walk as Jesus, their master, walked*. They were brand new Christians!

“They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

“And 100% of those who had believed (3000+ who had just surrendered to Jesus’ Love) were continually together, and they lived with all of their personal possessions as if they were not theirs alone; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

“Day by day continuing with one mind in the park/courtyard, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people” (Acts 2:42-47).

“They were all (3000+) with one accord in Solomon’s park/porch” (Acts 5:12).

IF you or I accept some pigeonholed, pre-programmed, flesh-authored and world-conforming version of christianity, shame on us. HE gave His all. And He deserves better from us than that “WE-ALL-STILL-HAVE-OUR-LIVES-TO-LEAD” lukewarm nonsense.

Let's instead, to the praise of His Glory, "Live and move and have our being" in Him, "admonishing one another daily, so that none are hardened and deceived by sin," as "a hundred mothers, brothers, and sisters" in intimate, daily, light-walking, burden-bearing

CHRIST-IANITY—the LIVING, ANOINTED LIFE of CHRIST JESUS in His DAILY, LIVING, CONNECTED BODY!

"He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the chief cornerstone" (Acts 4:11).

Definition

Monday Morning, December 22, 2003

Definition: “A carnal man or woman rules their own life. Their tongue says what it wants, governed only by perceived consequences or perception, not by the now-Life of the Spirit of God. A carnal man or woman looks not to the Heavens for direction regarding purchases or plans or decisions. The carnal man or woman is disConnected from the Head in all reality, except as conscience salve during religious moments of their choosing. A carnal man or woman has no comprehension of what is God’s and no fear or disgust of what is not. All choices, and all relationships and dialogue are simply ‘practical matters’ and the carnal man feels no repulsion at what is not God’s. A carnal man or woman will live in a vacuum of Life, filling the voids with self-love, indulgence of the senses at will (when consequences might be avoided), the pride of life, and a distinct lack of true Love of others. A carnal, flesh-animal man or woman will not even care to read such as this, nor long focus on anything of Spirit, nor allow any conviction in the depth of their being, because this is likely not one of their chosen religious moments. ‘Truth’ is little more to them than a very slight burden located behind their forehead, and that for ever so briefly. Their flesh cravings driven by pride or desire or fun or fear, however, have their total attention as they bow before each new temptation to be a god—realizing little or nothing of their empty and desperate plight due to the hardening of their hearts and the futility of their thinking. Wherever such an unSpiritual man may live, whatever ‘reputation’ they may have acquired (though without Truth in the inner man), oh, that their passion might be turned to the sincere cry, ‘OH, CONQUERING KING, CONQUER MY HEART!’ May the Lamb have a People that are TRULY His, with ‘all their hearts, all their souls, all their minds, and all their strength.’ Please Conquer us, oh Lord! For YOUR Name’s sake!”

Not Enough TIME?! 😊

Sunday Evening, April 2, 2000

Question: Dear Family, This is all quite a bit more than we thought at first. Please don't misunderstand—that is not to say that we reject it—rather, we're beginning to realize how much we need it! But no doubt about it—it changes pretty much EVERYTHING. We've been pondering something—if you are meeting daily, in different sized groups, how do you get housework, home schooling (if any of you are home schooling), lawn work, errands, etc.—general day-to-day-necessary work done? Please, please continue to lift us up in prayer, both for our discernment and even more, to combat the warfare that we see escalating as a result of our search.

Great questions—thank you! And the courage you expressed in the Journey you're describing you have embarked upon is encouraging to me. Good stuff. 😊 In brief, the “extra” time (in our busy world) to LIVE OUT the Life of Jesus, together, visibly, as “a city set on a Hill that CANNOT be hidden” comes from:

1) PRIORITIES! “Seek FIRST the Kingdom!” Few would *tolerate* Acts 2:42-47 in their lives because *honestly*, they don't *want* the Christ-Life. They prefer God to be on *their* schedule. That's “love of the world” and “lukewarmness” and “idolatry” on some level, whether intentional or not. If we allow the world and its demands and our desires to dominate our schedules, and then try to *add* Him to all of that nonsense, we're making a huge mistake and we'll never “SEE Him Who is invisible,” or “SEE the Kingdom” in our lives. We may “escape as one through the flames,” but we'll never truly “taste the power of the Coming Age”—as is our Inheritance. Unfortunately, most will die in that state. They allow guitar lessons, little league baseball, errands, housework, making money, spending money, isolating and focusing on their genetic family, homeschooling, and a thousand other things to consume the majority of their time and energy.

Those who *say* they have continual wondrous ecstatic experiences with Jesus, but live in this state of mixed priorities and worldliness (except on Sunday) are generally hallucinating. Living *truly* in “the power of an indestructible Life” comes from “losing your life”—“dying to the world and the world to you”—and “the seed falling to the ground and dying.” The *only* place where the enemy is shamed and destroyed is “the cross.” “It is the same now.” He is our “all in all” and one will “live and move and have our being in Him,” or it is not the Testimony of Heavenly Life which Jesus lived for and died for. We may *not* be addicted to going to “bury my father,” or “saying goodbye to my father and mother.” Those radical things *JESUS* said were mandatory in order to be the real thing—*ARE MANDATORY!* ☺ Jumping up and down on Sunday in a meeting, or knowing a lot of Bible will not substitute for Reality. “Jesus we know and Paul we know about—but who are YOU!??” said the unimpressed demons that ripped to shreds the religious men with the right words. In the unseen realm, it matters what our *real* daily priorities are, and how we really live, and where our passions and time *REALLY* are.

2) “Extra time” *also* comes from “whether food or drink, do ALL to the Glory of God.” All of the “important” chores? Mowing the lawn, fixing the house, doing the laundry, going to work, shopping...ALL of that *MUST* be woven into the *HIGHER* priority of God’s Life and God’s House. In other words, a disciple in the midst of *LIFE* will seldom head out to the hardware store without looking for a brother to come along. And not just “their spouse.” That’s only one disciple of many.

Why would I bring someone else along on a menial chore? Because, “where two or three are gathered...” *JESUS is there* and I’d like Jesus along in special measure. Also, the Spirit of God, we are told, distributes the Gifts that Jesus had/has amongst all of the members of the Body of Christ. *Of course* I’m delighted to have extra firepower along when I’m talking to an unBeliever at the checkout counter, or a person mowing the lawn at a location. Time-sapping duties? Do the laundry and house cleaning *together* whenever possible. Help each other in *whatever* you’re doing. “*THIS is how ALL MEN will know that you are MY disciples: by the love that they see you having for each other*” (Jn. 13:35). The unBelieving world needs to *see* me loving on my brothers and sisters in daily life! It is *essential* for my growth that my life is in front of and intertwined with the lives of other disciples. It is for my Good in a thousand ways, as well as for the good of “all men”—as Jesus said.

We have every kind of prominent and time-consuming professional job responsibilities within the Church here, as well as every fatiguing labor-intensive occupation and trade. And NONE of the Saints would MISS an opportunity to be at a 3 a.m. baptism, even on a so-called “work day” or because “the children are tired.” What kind of priorities are we teaching our children!!?? We’ve got all the time in the world for what’s most important in our lives, whether we live in Nigeria or in Alabama.

Life in Christ is not *at all* based on “meetings”—as wonderful as meetings can be. Being with others, “from house to house” doesn’t imply meetings at all. At least not how most would define meetings! We can be daily “from house to house” and give and receive the Word of God, join together in speaking with Father about things going on, help each other in body, soul, and spirit every day—and never have any “official meeting” at all in that process!

3) In order to “admonish one another daily,” “confess sins one to another,” “bear one another’s burdens to fulfill the law of Christ” and the other fundamentals of Christ-Life...you won’t be able to do any considerable percentage of it over the telephone, or “just with my spouse.” That’s just not the Intent of, or Spirit of the Scriptures. It’s not Jesus’ Way, or very fruitful—two very good tests. The very word often translated “admonish” or “warn” or “encourage” in the Command of the Master in Hebrews 3 could be translated from the compound word this way: “Be called alongside one another daily,” as long as it is called today, SO THAT none are hardened and deceived by sin. “Called alongside.” Phone calls are great “fillers,” but surely don’t suffice for the impartation of Life and Love and Truth as a Kingdom of Priests, or the receiving of these essentials within the Body of Christ Jesus.

Ohh, I definitely understand the pressures that you mentioned and totally FEEL the pressures with you. I know it’s hard. The Kingdom is entered with much tribulation, I guess, eh? Worth it? OH, yes. “A HUNDRED mothers, brothers, sisters, lands, possessions, tribulations, and Zoë Life that always was and always will be!” ☺ It was a great question from sincere hearts. No doubt in my mind.

Much love to you, and the prayer that you asked for...always.

“Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth” (Psalm 124:8).

Five Casualties... Out of Millions

Friday Morning, June 29, 2001

Below, we're passing on some reflections a brother elsewhere had of the recent tragedy, now known worldwide. Add this example below to the recent headlines of escaped convicts and murderers from Texas—who had no problem blending into the religious world, teaching at bible studies, playing christian music from their trailer day and night. Someday all who desire to See will comprehend the point a brother from another city makes below—about the faulty building of “attendance christianity” (whether in homes or temples). Surely it isn't hard to see that Jesus was not living today's ways of expressing “christianity.” The faulty building principles (1Cor. 3) of attendance-based, calendar-driven, disconnected living can never result in HIS Church, which would no longer see the gates of hell prevail. Continue to pray to the Lord of the Harvest and have the courage (with no bitterness or wild accusations or reactions) to speak Truth daily into the lives of those around you! For the sake of the Lamb!

Many have been deeply disturbed by the news account of a Houston mother murdering her five children last week. (Some nine months later, she was convicted of murder by a jury of her peers.) Rehashing the details is unnecessary, but the Houston authorities have called the murders the most horrendous in their experience. To true Believers and Disciples of Jesus Christ, the most deadly aspect of this crime, however, is that the parents professed to be Believers. They “home schooled” their children, went to all of the “home school conventions” and were “regulars” at the local christian book store. They named their children after followers of the one True God, Yahweh: Noah, John, Paul, Luke, and Mary.

While not trying to get any unnecessary “mileage” out of this tragedy, let's not close our eyes and bury our heads in the sand, either. If we won't be honest enough to LEARN from the fatal short-comings of the christian infrastructure and building principles, “we are destined

to repeat them.” If anyone honest needs any further indication that something is horribly, horribly wrong with the prevailing paradigm in christendom, read a few quotes from CNN:

“Neighbors and friends described the Yates’ children as lively, gentle, and bright—everyone seemed to notice their smiles. ‘I always just saw a happy family, and I saw kids playing, kids laughing, the father interacting with the kids,’ said one unidentified neighbor. ‘I can’t say there was ever anything that would have made me wonder what was going on with this family. By all accounts, they were the Cleavers,’ she said, referring to a 1950’s television program depicting idyllic family life.

“Terry Arnold said she adored the Yates children. She works at a home schooling bookstore that Andrea Yates often visited with her children. Arnold said the Yates children lit up the store when they walked in. ‘I would stop what I was doing and play with the children because they were just so pleasant,’ Arnold said. ‘We referred to them as our favorite customers. We’d see them pull up and we’d say, “Hey, they’re here!” So it was—it was fun. We looked forward to seeing them....’

“The Rev. Byron Fike, who presided over the service, said Russell Yates’ strong religious beliefs seemed to be helping him cope. Before the service, which lasted about 75 minutes, Fike tried to shed some positive light on the tragedy. ‘God will use this to bring about good,’ said Fike. ‘There’s been a lot of talk lately about postpartum depression.’ Fike said he hoped the killings would educate others in the dangers of depression.”

A woman who professes faith planned for four months to kill her children. No one was close enough to see through the facade of idyllic family life. And the spokesman for the clergy seemingly (Oh, how I would love to be proven wrong) has no answers beyond psychobabble.

The real and truly “life and death” issue with the prevailing christian way of “expressing” Christianity and “church” paradigm is NOT a simple doctrinal dispute. (Although, today’s “Sunday go to meeting” attendance, speech, and programmed christianity is certainly nowhere to be found in the Bible or the experience and Teaching of Jesus and the Apostles.) Five children died physically. As tragic and heartbreaking and revealing as this is about the faulty forms of Christianity being ubiquitously practiced in most every country today, it is far worse than

even that. In actuality, children by the millions will continue to die spiritually (in “youth groups” and the like, worldwide) for the very same reasons...unless something changes.

Had folks around them been building Jesus’ way: totally intertwined daily relationships, one heart, one mind, one soul, contending as one man (no one acting as if “I have no need of you” until next meeting), joined and knit by every supporting ligament, admonishing one another daily so that none are hardened or deceived—odds are extremely high that this and a thousand less obvious things would never “slip through the cracks,” and disasters strike. And because there was too little relationship together in Christ to have caught and dealt with satan’s work much earlier on, there is also insufficient relationship in Christ to heal the wounds, out of Gifts and daily Life. The cost of building out of convenience and the traditions of men is very, very high.

May God deepen our convictions and broaden our hearts for the Work.

—DZ

Keep in mind that the Message of this writing is that she could have been helped, if the church was building God’s Way. God’s heart IS breaking for the tens of thousands and millions of Andreas! God’s way is that those who are NOT saved (but only religious) would come to know it because of the Quality of Life and daily interactions that allow Discernment and 1000 times the magnitude and specificity of the Word of God to one another’s lives. And those who ARE saved, but very weak and in danger, could be helped by the daily input and melting together of lives and Gifts and love! THAT’S the Message here, not that she was or was not chemically imbalanced, or may or may not have been saved. We don’t know. It is simply that Hebrews 3:12-14 and Acts 2:42-47 (God’s Ways—the Way that Jesus Himself built) *solves most problems before they get to this point!* The woman mentioned would have been Helped by a Church the gates of hell could not prevail against. That is the message here—not anything about the woman. Physical and emotional, chemical and hormonal, circumstantial and relational crisis DO put massive pressure on all of us! There is no denying that satan loves to press us in every imaginable way. Andrea was undoubtedly under the pressure of most, if not all, of that list of pressures. But

that is just the point! *SHE MIGHT HAVE BEEN HELPED*, if we were Building God's Way, instead of in "the empty traditions handed down by our forefathers" that "nullify the Word of God." In most religious environments, *PEOPLE NEVER NOTICE* whether another is saved, or greedy, or a liar, or manic-depressive, or prideful, or lustful, or if they love the world. OR if they are under great pressure from hormonal or chemical or financial problems. This is *DISOBEDIENT* to God. Flat out disobedient (Heb. 3:12-14, Gal. 6:1-2, 1Cor. 12). To allow others around us to kill themselves or others, whether physically (as in this painful example with Andrea), or Spiritually (as do a full 70% of the youth in "youth groups" and 50% of the marriages in the "churches," and over 50% of the businessmen on business trips and the internet), simply because we are continuing to build with the foolish and convenient ways of men...is selfish and rebellious, as well as disastrous. If you read again all of what has been discussed above once again, you'll see that it is not the woman who is being discussed here, but the ways of men as it comes to christianity. "*The stone the BUILDERS rejected has become the Cornerstone*" (Acts 4:11).

And, one more thing... Wow, I just hate how so many have heard so much falsehood their whole lives from the "pulpit" (an unBiblical concept of speech-making to Saints by an appointed person). But one of the most dangerous FALSEHOODS ever generated to protect the compromise and disobedience regarding "leaven in the Batch" (1Cor. 5) is the frequent false teaching from the pulpits and seminaries about "the parable of the wheat and the tares." If you read what JESUS said (!!!!)—the "field" where the wheat and the tares are to grow together until the end of the age IS NOT THE CHURCH—IT IS THE WORLD!!! JESUS said, "the field is the WORLD"—not the Church! There are NOT to be "tares" that are "members" of the Church that JESUS is building! (Mat. 16:18; Mat. 18:15-20; 1Cor. 5:6-13). What an incredible difference! That changes EVERYTHING! Now, we can obey God and "get the leaven out of the batch" (1Cor. 5) as He has always commanded. IF, IF, IF, IF we have sufficient daily relationship, as He has also Commanded (Heb. 3:12-14) we will work out the difference between "weakness" (to be guarded and helped—1Thes. 5:14; Gal. 6:1-10)—and "leaven" unbelief and rebellion and ongoing sin (which is to be "cut off from among you"—1Cor. 5; Acts 3:22-23). We are to live "in the world, but not of it"—to let our light shine before men.

Now this is key. We are not looking to pull away from others in a

cloistered environment, to build a utopian society. Why not buy a plot of ground in the country, away from the world? Because JESUS said, “THIS is HOW all men will know you are My disciples—by how they *SEE WITH THEIR OWN EYES* the supernatural love you have for each other!” We must REMAIN, “in the world, but not of it.” Of course we will have NO affections or “friendships” or allegiances or camaraderie or yokes with the world or the unsaved (whether neighbor or biological relative, according to Jesus). And yet, our devotion to see them bow their knees before the Master and Lover of their souls means that they must SEE and hear the Word of God from WITNESSING “how we love” on “the brotherhood of Believers.”

Just to reiterate, the parable of the wheat and tares (Matthew 13) does not teach that there must be leaven in the Church! In addition to the Words of Jesus Himself IN that parable, this would be in direct disobedience to many other Scriptures. According to Jesus Himself—“*THE FIELD IS THE WORLD,*” NOT the Church. I apologize on behalf of the clergymen who have taught that falsehood, to the destruction of so many marriages and teens and businessmen and others worldwide.

If you felt like in bringing up the news article known world-wide about Andrea was somehow picking on Andrea, know this: We are, in fact, actually saying the exact opposite! “*THIS WOMAN, in spite of her emotional (and perhaps chemical and disobedience) problems, might have been helped and healed...if the churches were doing their part, and building as Jesus designed and commanded!*”

Remember what was said? “Had folks around them been building Jesus’ way: totally intertwined daily relationships, one heart, one mind, one soul, contending as one man (no one acting as if ‘I have no need of you’ until next meeting), joined and knit by every supporting ligament, admonishing one another daily so that none are hardened or deceived—odds are extremely high that this (and a thousand less obvious things to the natural man’s eye) would never ‘slip through the cracks,’ and disasters strike. But, because there was too little relationship in Christ to have caught and dealt with satan’s work much earlier on, there is also insufficient relationship in Christ to heal the wounds out of Gifts and daily Life. The cost of building out of convenience and traditions of men is very, very high.”

May God Truly deepen our convictions and broaden our hearts for the work. There IS a Way, in Christ, Built on the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, that is seeing “the Gates of hell will

not prevail!”

“God’s Intent, is that NOW through the church, that the full weight and glory of the Wisdom of God be openly displayed to even the principalities and powers” (Ephesians 3:10).

Now. Through the Church. “The fullness of Him who fills everything in every way.”

Don’t miss it...by being drunk on traditions of men, convenience, laziness, fear of man, or fear of your own cross. Jesus Himself wants it FOR you—and that births all the confidence in the world for you to risk for His sake, and pursue no matter what all the machinery, hierarchy, and compromising religious lukewarmness around you is willing to settle for. YOU can press on, and press the religious world around you to come to Him and His Standard. “The Stone the BUILDERS rejected...has become the Cornerstone!”

Legacy System

Saturday Morning, March 11, 2000

*A term used in the computer industry,
but applicable in the religious world.*

Legacy System (leg e-see sis-tem)

A computer system or application program which continues to be used—due to the cost of replacing or redesigning it, and often despite its poor performance. The implication is that the system is large, monolithic and difficult to modify (see Mk. 13:1).

A system that has been in operation so long that no one remembers how it came into being or why it was designed as it was. However, in spite of its inferiority and many fallacies and inefficiencies, many are hopelessly dependent upon it. They have no idea how to do anything differently.

Isn't it time to go back to the Beginning, to Yesu and His Ways—instead of the “Legacy System” unBiblical paradigm Sunday/Wednesday cell group machine, org-chart hierarchies, programs, events, titles, assigned leaders and performers, gimmicks, psychology, dress up, speech/audience, calendar-ized institution, and self-centered lifestyles?

The “Legacy System” is stealing the rightful inheritance of God's Lambs, born to be daily “a Kingdom of Priests”!

We must go on towards His Full Intention, together!! (Acts 2:42-47; Heb. 3; 1Jn. 1-3; 1Cor. 12).

It will cost us, as it did the Pearl Merchant, EVERYTHING. The Task is dangerous and daunting. (Mk 13:1).

The Peanut Butter Principle

Monday Night, January 24, 2000

You know, one thing that tickles me as I view the religious landscape is that humans are SO inclined to defend the turf of their comfort zones. I know I have no room to talk, but it's funny anyway, all right? ☺ Ten million flavors of dogma in christian circles and so much fear of change. So much fear of laying aside things that are no more than human tradition. And why? Why do we cling, chanting in unison, "The old is better, the old is better! Don't confuse me with the facts!"? Why are we so fearful and tenacious in defending things illogical, unfruitful, and unBiblical?

It's because of peanut butter.

I know, you already knew that. But for the sake of everyone else, I'll lay some more groundwork so we'll all be together on this.

Let's consider a computer analogy. In this generation, most are aware that computers can calculate and manipulate things, whether graphics or data or text or music. Also, computers "remember" things. This "memory" can be retained, even if someone pulls the plug on your computer to plug in the vacuum cleaner. That is, it can be retained if the information (email or graphic or spreadsheet) was "saved" to the "hard drive" or some other storage media. The information, whatever it may be, is generally saved using magnetic or optical storage technology. Essentially, the information is "printed" on a hard drive, floppy drive, CD ROM disk, DAT, or some other medium for later access. The information is written there and, barring the HIGHLY unlikely event (ha) of a computer crash, it can be recalled on command at some later time.

So much for computers. What about you and me?

How do you explain your memories of thirty minutes ago, five years ago, or for some, fifty or more years ago? Where are those memories stored? Explain your "hard drive" to me. How do you remember these

things, technically speaking? *Where* is that information exactly? If someone were to dissect your brain, would they find the memory of when you were seven years old and snuck out the window of your auntie's house to play with the dog, when you should have been taking a nap? Scientists have, on a molecular level, discovered great wonders in DNA in the brain, but they have never discovered a memory in there anywhere. If they dissected your brain, would they readily locate that special memory you have of the smell of chocolate chip cookies, fresh out of the oven? Or would they locate your fear of heights, or of being overweight or lonely? Would they find your fondness for mountain streams, crackling logs on a fire, skiing or golf? Where would they locate the section of your brain where they could see how you feel about your mother? Could they find the dream you had last night, or the goals you had for your life when you were 15 years old? Could they find *why* you desire those goals instead of ten thousand others? Could they locate why you are jealous of others? Where is the location on your hard drive in your brain where they could identify your loves, the things and people you have confidence in, the things that bring you peace? Where are your fears, the things that launch you into being confused, disoriented, disappointed, anxious, or angry? Where are the things stored that you perceive as "needs"? What about the "belief system" that you consider such a part of who "you" are, *where is that, exactly?*

Of course, God is involved in "who" you are. But, because GOD certainly isn't responsible for all of the religious and political carnage of the ages, and since He is the God of Peace and of Order, we must look elsewhere for an explanation for all of the bizarre fears and contortions that exist. We must look for another explanation for all of the biases, illogical or unBiblical beliefs that everyone has but "me"! All of these things—the memories, the hopes, the fears and taste preferences, rationalizations and thoughts—are "stored" in a tiny bit of chemical energy in your brain, as a direct result of your diet and your set of experiences. It's the peanut butter! Doesn't that help us to understand the complexity of human perceptions, relationships, and communication to know that your feelings and convictions are stored in the chemical energy of your Fritos, peanut butter sandwiches, your chocolate ice cream, and your tuna casserole? While certainly acknowledging readily and gratefully that we are created in God's image and that He has implanted a soul and a spirit within us, we must also be honest about this fact:

Much of our perception of an event, a word, or our opinion of a matter is defined by our experiences and our intellect and how our life has previously interacted with some circumstance or another. We have so many memories stored away, faulty definitions and emotional biases loosely embedded on a couple of milli-volts of chemical energy on the hard drives of our brains! These preferences and “convictions” are seldom as much “God” as we would like to think they are! This is precisely why Jesus has told us that only the little children can see it properly. The rest of us are trying to protect our turf, salvage our pride, and escape our fears or previous bad experiences. We are defining words, ideas and observations by a little bit of chemical energy stored in some category on our brains’ hard drives, instead of with total softness and honesty.

Let’s be fair. No one is unbiased, as much as they would like to be, or as much as they think they are. Our reactions to things are frequently not based on the superior intellect, knowledge and wisdom that we think they are, but rather based on some set of definitions or observations from previous good, bad, safe, or dangerous experiences. Our perceptions of “truth” can be highly prejudiced by rumor, speculation, and hearsay. Our perceptions are frequently mired by fear of the CONSEQUENCES of that truth, so therefore we don’t WANT it to be truth, thus it isn’t truth.

A child who has been badly burned from a fireplace coal or the burner on a stove will cower in fear from anything that resembles that which had previously harmed them. Even a harmless toy, light, or photo that in any way resembles what once caused the child pain will cause a needless, but very convinced reaction.

A man with no knowledge of electronics can look at a circuit board and it cannot be distinguished in any way from another circuit board, designed for a totally different task. It gives off no information to him as he looks at the various components, while another man can readily distinguish both the task the board was designed for, and the manner in which that task is being accomplished on that board. To one person, the “picture” means nothing, and to another it speaks a thousand words; it is bursting with declarations, hints of color, creativity, and genius. This totally different ability to “perceive” a vast, secret, silent universe from *exactly* the same set of “facts” is an amazing thing! Accept the fact that if we can be blind to the facts in the seen realm, such as with circuit boards, we just might be missing a TON of color, creativity, and

genius in the unseen realm as well! And that's GOOD! There are so many more rooms in Father's Mansion to be explored. Let's not stop in the entranceway and call that the House!

To understand ourselves, others around us, the Kingdom of God, the Scriptures and our Father, we've got to recognize that the same phenomenon exists within us. We can all look at a set of "facts" or Scriptures, and frequently arrive at totally different conclusions! Sometimes this occurs because of what we are afraid of seeing based on the cost, or based on previous bad experiences with what *looks* similar to us. Sometimes we simply don't have the experiences or the "equipment" physically, intellectually, or Spiritually to see what others can easily see. And, just because WE can't see what a circuit board really is, doesn't mean that no one can. It really is okay that not all of the parts of the Body are eyes. We don't have to see and understand everything in order to go forward with what others *can* see and understand. It's okay to develop convictions when the Truth is NOT "relative." God does have but one Mind, and He is not like shifting shadows. It is simply that we are not GOD and our finite chemical perceptions are so easily fooled that it does not behoove us to protect "the empty traditions handed down by our forefathers." Not even when we are comfortable with those traditions or ways, and our forefathers were good guys!

Why is this worth discussing? Here's why. Everything that is outside of your personal set of experiences is not automatically wrong. Everything that is not based on comfortable traditions and building is not a sect or heresy. Everything that is "diffi-cult" is not "cult," just because someone somewhere doesn't care for what Jesus taught in Luke 9:57-62, or someone somewhere had a bad experience. Truth can't be defined by what you are trying to avoid, or by what you are trying to get. Truth doesn't change to accommodate your hurt feelings, wounded pride, or desire for revenge. "You can't fire me, I QUIT!"

Instead of protecting ourselves and fearing words that sound like other words, things that look like other things, and accusing the unknown territory of what God is really after as He prepares the Bride for His Son, why not instead, just relax a little? Why not try to learn everything we can, and change everything that we possibly can in order to walk together "in agreement" with Him? Why hold on to the past and define our existences by what is comfortable, rather than by what is "new every morning." That's where God is found, you know.

So, practically speaking, the next time you are faced with something that is outside of your experience of what “church” has been, could you take a step back and ask yourself some honest questions? Instead of a quick or harsh reaction, calling names, the fears of the unknown of “life” without bible classes, programs, hired leaders, youth groups, building, budgets and the like, maybe you and I could take the time to allow for the fact that our “hard drives” may have been “mis-programmed” at one time? And, maybe the loss of security or loss of income (for some) or new levels of personal responsibility and accountability are the fears that we will be tempted to “filter” truth through? Maybe the loss of friendships, family, the high price of being rejected, or the pain of remembering others’ experiences such as these has more effect on what you consider “truth” than you thought. Perhaps your convictions, stored in emotional energy bytes in your brain are not as unbiased as they need to be in order to be most useful to God, and in most intimate relationship with the Spirit of Christ.

Maybe, too, if we understand “the Peanut Butter Principle” we’ll have the time to cross some barriers relationally and all TOGETHER press towards Jesus and His Truths. They’re not heretical swine and cult members, necessarily. Maybe it was lunch that did it. Or maybe they’re right. Give it some time and find out.

Maybe above all, this is a call to humility and flexibility. There are really good reasons for both.

Instead of being insulted by what needs to change, as if we’re protecting the honor of our deceased faithful relatives, perhaps we should have the courage that some of them had to forge new Territory and recover the Ancient Paths. Sometimes, as in Nehemiah’s day, “The rubble from the ruined walls seems too deep to be able to build.” But, even so, the Promise is for those with faith to “See Him Who is invisible”...that “the Glory of the latter House will exceed the Glory of the former House.”

If we are to ever see this, we MUST accept a new wineskin for the new wine, without cowering in fear at some past generation’s waywardness. We cannot stay where we are and ever hope to see anything more than the Laodicean expression of christianity that is so prevalent today. We can trust Him that He has, as always, “saved the Best Wine for last.” Our ability to see it, embrace it, and join in all that He has for us will require that we put our fears, prejudices, previous opinions, and all of our well-thought-out definitions aside in order to start fresh without bias. Let’s

form around Him, His current Thoughts and current Feelings instead of our own. After all, apart from His Grace our feelings are not much more than last week's peanut butter, usually.

Liturgy, Ritual, “Services” ...??

Thursday Afternoon, May 24, 2001

Question: My parents were confirmed into the “episcopal church” this year. They have never been happier. There was (and is) a lot of deep, deep hurt there stemming from my younger brother’s rebellion and depression. My mom especially has told me how becoming part of that church has allowed God to do a lot of healing in her. I have only been peripherally involved with this “church,” but it seems to me that those people surely must “love the Lord.” So, I guess my question is: how do you deal with the fact that God appears to help people through the liturgy?

Dear Jay... Fair question, if we are looking at the surface of things, for sure! I know this is an area that is confusing for some, so stay with me here—this is VERY important! The human mind and adrenal glands are quite powerful, and you MUST keep this in mind as you assess things. ONLY JESUS and HIS WAYS and TEACHINGS can be used to “measure” or “weigh” or “evaluate” the value of something “religious.” The fact that someone feels rosy-cheeked and warm all over as they sway to the music or ritual or group dynamics, and their depression is lifted by a dopamine and endorphin secretion—isn’t the *real* measurement of whether GOD is in it or not. You must surely acknowledge, if you are being unbiased and honest, that transcendental meditation, communing with spirit-guides while listening to crickets and waterfall music, a good massage or chiropractic session, a hypnotist’s silver watch swaying back and forth, the euphoria of “runner’s high,” or \$30 worth of Ecstasy...*ALL* have the same reported effects that you have mentioned with “liturgy.”

Historically, “overcoming depression” has been accomplished by men in many ways. Religion, “the opiate of the people,” has long been used in every culture to salve the conscience and psyche. Human emotion and sentimentalism are NOT to be confused with BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY. Let’s be realistic! All world religions have “something to offer”—or there would not be so many millions of adherents to

those religions, from Hare Krishna, to voodoo, to Catholicism, to Islam, to “Moonies,” to New Age, to Buddhism or Taoist thought! BUT, it is SCRIPTURE—the Life and Teachings and WAYS of the Master, Jesus, that define our lives and teachings and ways. *And Liturgy is NOT Christian!! Liturgy contradicts and disobeys the teaching of Jesus and the recorded ways of how He lived with His followers then, and therefore NOW!!!* (He is RISEN, and the SAME! He is *not* now changing how He relates to His Followers. Do you *really* believe He chanted with them, burned incense, did “responsive readings,” sang hymns pre-selected, practiced, and posted, or wore special clothing for a “weekly service”?? Come on now!! ☺)

There is nothing more we need to know than the fact that JESUS, the same yesterday, today, and forever has never lived this way. Never. Not then, not now. He cannot and will not—in this Covenant of Reality. He will not endorse again a “shadow of the Reality that is in Christ” ritual—and He and His Apostles have commanded us against such things! God said, “I fear I’ve wasted my time on you!” when you return to those beggarly principles. Your traditions “nullify the very Words of God!” and are, at best, “weaker faith.” Of course, there are good folks scattered in and around such situations, who genuinely desire God with all their hearts, and would change *anything*, at any personal cost that God desires. They just don’t know anything else. But, as the saying goes, “religion” and “liturgy” are the last refuge of the scoundrel—they are a hiding place for hypocrisy and worldliness. *Everyone* looks spiritual during a “liturgy”—though every conceivable sin, without repentance, is happening within hours, and no one knows and few care! *Leaven is invisible* in an environment of clergy, “liturgy,” “services” and the like. “Leaven” is even *WELCOME* in such environments because they pay good money like everyone else. Because “leaven in the batch” is forbidden by God Almighty, we must not build *any* environment where we are not doing it GOD’S way: Light, and personal relationships with God, and the Gifts of the Royal Priesthood are always at full Liberty. “When you come together, brothers, *everyone* has a song, a teaching...!” That is GOD’S Way! The end result of building with externals, such as ritual, liturgy, pre-formatted speech giving and “worship” and the like, is “leaven in the batch.” And this means even the good people are leavened and therefore never can become who God has Designed them to become. (“A LITTLE leaven leavens the WHOLE batch.”) Maybe we ought to avoid that which God has forbidden?

No matter how “good” it feels to our emotions and hurts, “liturgy,” hierarchy, traditions of men, and all...are a placebo—NOT the Real Place Jesus has invited us into! Sure, “The Kingdom is entered through much tribulation”—and it doesn’t always “feel” good. That’s okay! What’s it worth to learn to FLY?!! “Tasting the Powers of the Coming Age”—“Joy inexpressible, full of *Glory*”—“the Power of an Indestructible Life”—“Rivers of Alive Water gushing from within”!! God’s ways are best. No doubt in my mind! If I were in that environment of “services” and “liturgy” and “religious office and hierarchies,” I’d: 1) love the people; 2) be involved in their daily lives to find out who truly “loves the Light”; 3) be willing to do what God Commanded, “When revelation comes to the second, let the first *sit down*.” (I would rather obey God than man, and be willing to “pop the bubble” of the “liturgy” and stand up and say something REAL.); 4) pray endlessly and tirelessly for the people and the assigned or hired “leaders.” (Though this is terribly unBiblical, they may be innocently drawn into all that they knew, also.); and 5) be ready to do something different if “leaven in the batch” couldn’t be resolved via deep, daily relationships amongst ALL of the “members” (Heb 3:12-14; Acts 2:42-47) within a reasonable amount of time.

And most of those things, if not all, will start over again at the next “place” you end up at! But, that’s okay too—you never know when you may encounter some who *really* “love the Light” and want *all* that God has Desired, and for the “Bride to make herself ready” for the Return of the Groom! May God birth REAL Light-loving, daily-intertwined, Holy expressions of His Son—true Lampstands, en masse! Of course, there is still, and always, Work to do even in these rare environments, but the FATIGUE of the sin, hypocrisy, defensiveness, disconnectedness, contradictions, power plays, cliques, love of the world, and the like...is gone! “From the least to the greatest”—*EVERYONE* “loves the Light,” “loves the Truth and so is saved.” If it is a TRUE Lampstand, when there is a Foundation in a location—*ANYTHING* can TRULY be dealt with, to the Praise of His Glory. Where it is only a religious group (whether in a religious facility with or without liturgy, or in a living room with or without liturgy), and not a true Church, a true Lampstand—issues that violate Jesus cannot be dealt with. Perhaps it is your temporary blindness, or theirs, but in a TRUE Lampstand, where everyone “loves the Light”—it CAN be resolved! (In a non-Church, you will be met, instead, with excuses, threats, platitudes, flattery, or be despised. Now, *that’s* no fun!!)

May He raise up His People, open our eyes, Gift and Equip us, and Sovereignly BUILD HIS CHURCH, in every Nation...”and then the End will come!” Hallelujah!

Immersion in His Daily Life

Thursday Morning, August 16, 2001

Pondering Jesus and His Ways while in South America last week, I was reminded of a Kingdom Principle. I was thinking that this Truth is well illustrated by the process of learning a language—that is, learning a language that is not one’s native tongue.

I can’t help but share this story, as we build our thoughts together over the next few minutes, about the Jesus-Life....

This past year, a professional sports figure (from the United States, which makes this news story all the more believable ☺) traveled to South America to perform in some exhibition games with his sports team. During an interview upon his return home, he remarked with great enthusiasm about what he had seen there. He was most impressed with the intelligence of the children he had encountered in this South American country. “Those children down there are *really* smart! Every child I talked to, even the really young ones, *could even speak Spanish!* Can you believe that??!! And Spanish is a *really hard* language! The children down there are really smart!”

Ummm... ☺ I’m thinking this athlete didn’t get through school on his academic prowess. ☺

The point is still well made. It is “really hard” to learn a language that you didn’t grow up learning, or do not have exposure to in all of the daily events of life. I’ve only known one person who was able to learn a language as easily as he can tie his shoes, and I believe there are supernatural reasons for his particular ability to do so. Grace-with-a-Purpose. *Generally* though, (and I’ve seen this exercise many times, and have participated in it as well) we take a “foreign” language class (or many such classes) in “school.” We get “A’s” in the class, and can still barely speak or understand a word, realistically, when in the midst of “real life” pressures. We purchase course after course from the bookstore (*French For Dummies, Russian in 30 Minutes a Day,*

and *Power Japanese In a Week*) and rack our brains for about three days trying to learn a language that *even children can speak* (!) in their native lands. Thousands of “dollar-hours” are spent with results that cannot parallel even a six-year-old child—in a native land. After personally “acing” four years of a foreign language in “high school” (the government factory version I was enrolled in growing up), I found myself on a train in that country not long after—and was virtually helpless to “put into practice” what I thought I knew so well! It just didn’t work! I was deaf, dumb, and blind—though “highly instructed” and quite successful in that sterile laboratory of the “classroom” and “studies.”

Is there a point to be made here about the Kingdom of God? You had better believe it.

Why are there 5000+ denominations, and 30,000 more lukewarm, meandering, confused, leaven-filled and poorly Taught “house churches” and non-denominations? Why are there clergymen (protestant and catholic) by the tens of thousands or more who can speak glorious things of the Scriptures and of Jesus—but their lives are as empty as those who cannot speak such things? They can make money off of the Good News of Jesus, but show little of it outside of the “show.” WHY? Why do the pagans roar in laughter at the worldliness and hypocrisy of virtually every expression of “church” they have ever seen? Why are foul language and choices, unGodly attitudes at work and at home, lust, greed, pride, deceit, divorce, blind and destructive child-rearing...why are these as commonplace amongst the christian world, as with the unBelievers? WHAT IS THE DEAL HERE??!! Why, with all of our books and CD music and conferences and weekly religious meetings...WHY are weakness and compromise and drifting and aloneness so ubiquitous—obvious even to the pagan world?!

Is there a point to be made here about the Kingdom of God? You had better believe it.

Here it is: Some fight desperately to protect their “way of life”—the prideful, disconnected independent worldly lifestyles that caused God to say to one Church in Paul’s day, “Your meetings do more harm than good!” Some say, “We have our own lives to lead, you know! Let’s just schedule and orchestrate a few spiritual meetings and social activities on our calendar (and lead “the good christian life” in between, of course) and that will be fine. But let’s also conjure up ‘the 18 inch rule’

(Gen. 4:9) and everyone will stay out of my business and I'll stay out of theirs, and we'll just have great times at meetings."

By contrast, GOD said, "Unless you die to yourself and your ways and desires, denying your very self *daily*—you cannot even be considered My follower." GOD said, "Unless you are engaged *daily*, shoulder to shoulder ("para-kaleo") in life-changing discernment and dialogue and infusion into one another's lives, you *cannot avoid* becoming hardened and deceived. As long as it is called 'Today'—these words remain True." It was GOD who said a "hundred mothers, brothers, sisters..."—*INTIMATE DAILY RELATIONSHIPS*—would be the very *definition* of what He had died and was raised from the dead to bring to Planet Earth by the Power and Glory of the Father...His CHURCH. God said it was for this very INTENTION, side-by-side with the Atonement of the Lamb's Blood that Jesus was Sent.

So, we wonder why we cannot really, effectively learn a language in a classroom or by cassette tapes? We wonder why "even children" ☺ can surpass our understanding and execution and effectiveness, if we have merely learned by "meetings" and books and tapes—rather than by LIFE together in Him. As Paul would say, regarding the Kingdom of God and His Church, and our Knowledge and Experience of Him: some things are irrevocable Principles, illustrated by His Genius in innumerable "shadows," for all who watch and pray. "It is the same now."

God Designed us to learn by immersion, not by academic procedure and method and meeting! IMMERSION into LIFE is how a language and its under-girding existence and reality are learned! The foods, the furniture, the transportation, the clothing, the occupations, the decisions, the weather—all of these "words" and ideas were meant to be learned *as a child learns* a "very hard language" ☺—in REALITY, in three dimensions (or four or five)—NOT in the "FlatLands" of two-dimensional, "Let's-describe-what-we-read-in-a-book" kind of existence. Live there! Be IMMERSED in the life in that Place with others, and you will change! It won't be easy, and you may miss some meals out of your awkwardness, and find difficulty in daily life for awhile (as you would in a country whose life you were learning!), but you will learn and you will change! Even the CHILDREN can learn what "scholars" cannot—when they are IMMERSED IN LIFE rather than in a test-tube.

“Impartation” is God’s Way... Mere “information transference” cultivated in emotional or sentimental or worldly religious contexts (man’s way) will never deliver very much. At best, the “formaldehyde” or “cryogenic” properties of “attendance-based” christian expressions serve the purpose of protecting His Lambs from both TOO much harm—and TOO much growth. At worst, those “traditions of men nullify the very Words of God.”

Impartation, Immersion into Life...is God’s Way to be all we can be!

“The LIFE became the Light of men” (John 1:4).

“He came to be WITH them, that He might send them out” (Mark 3:14).

“The Word became flesh, and DWELT for awhile among them” (John 1:14).

“The things you have SEEN and heard in me, amongst many witnesses....” (2 Timothy 2:2).

“I was a father to you, a mother, a brother...night and day, house to house, with tears” (Acts 20:18-20).

“Since I am baptized in the Spirit, and into one Body, I have NEED of you!” (1 Corinthians 12:13ff).

“ALL the Believers were together, and had all of life intertwined with one another.” (Acts 2:44, 4:32).

“The LIFE became the Light of men.”

“The LIFE became the Light of men.”

“The LIFE became the Light of men.”

Daily *immersion* into Life in the Body of Christ, similar to learning a human language is the only way to truly be who you were Designed to be! It IS God’s Plan, as the Apostles well knew from both their Experience with Jesus while He was here with them, and their lives together after His physical departure. *Even the children*, as our sports hero mentioned above came to believe, can and will surpass the Maturity and Understanding and TRUE Fruitfulness of those who have impressive speech or programs. (Don’t be confused by smoke and mirrors of the choreographed “show” on Sunday, or at the conference, or the boasts and claims of externals.) When we Learn of Him HIS

way—IMMERSION into LIFE, rather than bible verses and programs and meetings devoid of daily intertwined lives, “from the least to the greatest,” amazing things can happen.

Solo—is soooo low. It’s *not* the way to Fly! Jesus showed us and taught otherwise! Do whatever you have to do, barring some Audible Voice giving you a reason not to, to live where you need to live to lay down your life in vulnerability, “confessing sins to one another that you may be healed,” “admonishing one another daily, that you will not be hardened and deceived,” “bearing one another’s burdens, and so fulfilling the Law of Christ,” “submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ,” and “taking up your cross (for others—this is the cross Jesus spoke of and bore) daily, deny your very life, and come after Me.” This, *and this alone*, is “the Church” that He is building. Against THIS CHURCH the gates of hell can not prevail. “God’s Intent is NOW, through the Church to make known His many-faceted Wisdom to the principalities and powers.” Pray to the Lord of the Harvest, and the Comforter, and the Master-Apprentice-Maker. And do what you have to do to not allow self-satisfied thoughts, or compromising falsely motivated teaching, laziness or fear stand between you and IMMERSION into the Spirit of Christ and into His Body!!! (1Cor. 12).

You may be (read: “WILL be”) tested and tried to see how deep you run (Jdg. 3:1-4; 1Pet. 1:3-12; Deut. 13:1-4; Heb. 11:17), but you will never regret it! Satan will regret it deeply—but YOU and JESUS and all of those who love Jesus and need YOU...will never regret it. Life here is short. Don’t waste it by allowing yourself to be buffaloeed by those who have something to lose (Shame on them, but even that can change... “It’s HARD to kick against the goads!”), or by our own procrastination and fear. Let’s all go forward together! “None of us have it all together, but all together we have it all.”

“People who say such things show that they are looking for a Country they can belong to. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better Country—a Heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a City for them” (Hebrews 11:14-16).

That is, “A City set on a hill that CANNOT be hidden” (Matthew 5:14).

Let No One Steal Your Crown

Saturday morning, September 1, 2001

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

“So continuing daily with one accord in the temple courtyards, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:42-47).

What is “Church”? Nice people with a reasonable “belief system”? **NO!** It can be *nothing less* than Jesus’ Life come down from Heaven for us and in us, intimately Connected, “joined and knit,” “contending as One Man” together. JESUS lived again (as reported above)—living EXACTLY as He had for His physical life with His then-Followers—when He came IN His People!

The ONLY “Church” is JESUS’ LIFE expressed AS HIS BODY, every day. Anything else is weak form, without substance, leavening the entire batch.

Lived under Apostolic guidance demonstrated and Recorded above, and now commanded below, along with 10,000 other Truths...all with unbelievable consequences and rewards for living it daily, or not living it daily...

“Be careful then, dear brothers and sisters. Make sure that your own hearts are not evil and unbelieving, turning you away from the living God. You must warn each other every day, as long as it is called ‘today,’

so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God. For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ. But never forget the warning:

“Today you must listen to his voice. Don’t harden your hearts against him as Israel did when they rebelled.”

“And who were those people who rebelled against God, even though they heard his voice? Weren’t they the ones Moses led out of Egypt? And who made God angry for forty years? Wasn’t it the people who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom was God speaking when he vowed that they would never enter his place of rest? He was speaking to those who disobeyed him. So we see that they were not allowed to enter his rest because of their unbelief.” (Hebrews 3:12-19).

We need each other, Family! “A hundred mothers, brothers, sisters!”

“*I HAVE NEED OF YOU!*” is the testimony of the Scriptures, the heartbeat of the Spirit, the Plan of the Father, and the Life of the Resurrected Son that the gates of hell cannot prevail against!

Man's Religion

Wednesday Evening, July 18, 2001

To whom does this note apply? To anyone, anywhere, in any generation to whom it applies. I'm sad to ask these questions, and to refer to such things—far from happy about it. But, I must be honest about what is stealing God's Heritage, and continuing to reduce His Chosen to pawns in men's games of religion. It must not go unopposed, no matter what the cost. There is too much at stake, and it has gone on too long unexposed for what it is and the fruit it bears.

“See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first” (Hebrews 3:12-14).

It seems some who claim to be Teachers and Representatives of Jesus of Nazareth are shipwrecking lives. How? By teaching, in essence, that there is no need to obey Hebrews 3:12-14. They would not often be daring enough to say out loud and clearly, “There is no need to obey God's Commands!” but this is where their teaching leads God's Lambs. They say, “No one need obey the ‘daily’ of Hebrews 3:12-14, or build in such a way as to anticipate Life being thus intertwined in the Church.” No matter that God has commanded, described and illustrated His Church this way. Obedience is therefore “not necessary.”

On the contrary, God's Word declares that disobedience and lack of “daily” involvement will result (100% of the time) in being “hardened and deceived.”

Well, by some men's teaching and example, “God is wrong.” They then must suggest by this academic disobedience that “leaven in the batch” will not “leaven the whole batch.” Don't think about it, and don't do anything about it. It's not important. Ai's disaster and God's Command are not relevant. And, in addition, they conclude by this that Acts 2:42-47 (1Corinthians 12 in Action) was nice, but not the automatic overflow of Jesus' True Unfettered Life welling up within any and all Believers. It must have been a “cultural expedient” or some

other diluted, compromised explanation. Bound by traditions of men and clergy/laity control and power and guilt techniques...they will just sit and listen to a speech (or an “amateur hour”) and then scatter into disconnected existence until the next calendar meeting. And we should all, of course, try to “live the good christian life” on our own until then.

Beware of the gangrene of those who talk “deep Truths,” but oppose His Words that would cost them something personally. If they love Him, they will obey Him. Yet, effectively they teach AGAINST obedience, it is reported. As an example, Jesus said, “*This is how* all men will know.” Some instead, teach by example and by whispering behind others’ backs, “Do your own thing. Live as you please. Isolation is fine. Daily admonishment is an *option*—no matter that Jesus Commanded it. Just attend my meeting. Or don’t. Whatever pleases you and your lifestyle. You don’t be involved in my life, and I promise not to be ‘daily’ infused into your life.” Clearly, that is not Jesus’ Representative who would erode a passion for things Jesus Desires and has Commanded, giving flesh justification for disobedience, and so to become “hardened and deceived” according to God’s Word. This popular teaching sounds more like Cain than Jesus. “Am I my brother’s keeper?!”

If some actually teach and live this way, perhaps for their own personal gain and ego and hiding place, may God have mercy upon their souls. This is religion of the mind, rather than Life: “*INFORMATION—RATHER THAN SYNERGISTIC EXCHANGED LIFE*,” is very dangerous and entirely unBiblical. The days of self-promotion and personal “ministries” (SO unlike the Teaching and Commands of the Master) are over. God is not amused with disobedient religion that wears His Name and uses Him, borrowing His Words for their own gain (Jer. 23:16-40) while disobeying His simple Commands and Ways. Hopefully this is not so where you live. If you ever hear of such a thing, even from “an angel,” “turn away.” “Warn them once, a second time, then have nothing to do with them.” The “fruit” of their ways has had many years to prove itself out—and take a look. There is nothing but words. There is little to nothing to show for such things. The warm fuzzies from the “sermon” wear off rather quickly, and men and women are left in poverty decade after decade, only able to repeat words they heard. Is this where you want to go? Surely not. “The Kingdom of God does not consist of mere words,” says the Lord. Turn away—or be digested into empty traditions and men’s self-exalting platforms for themselves.

This is a mark of Reality: “a KINGDOM of Priests.” Accept nothing less! GOD SAID, “If Revelation comes to the second, let the *first one sit down*.” This will not be the way of those who use Jesus for their own gain. Life is short. Let NO MAN steal your crown. “Woe to them. In the last days, some will travel the way of Cain (as referred to earlier), rush to gain reward for themselves in the error of Balaam, and then be fallen in the ‘speaking against’ as was Korah.” “They speak evil of what they do not understand.” Perhaps there are none so bold as what is reported, to oppose the Counsel of God, robbing God’s People (Nicolaitanism that Jesus “hates”) for their own gain and position and prestige, having hardened their hearts to God’s Ways in His Church. The gates of hell will continue to prevail all around them if this is the case. Don’t partake of this if you are wise enough and strong enough to walk away from such. If this ever has application in the world around you, now or a decade in the future, walk away from this if they “will not hear you.”

Worldwide, today and forever these truths are essential. Apply them where you live, whenever such a thing arises. They are universal Truths. No one can dispute the Essentiality or Scripturalness of what is contained in this letter. There is nothing even remotely disputable contained here. The Scriptures referred to herein have ALWAYS been in everyone’s Bible, but like the Word of God in Josiah’s day, buried under the rubble of the past. They will be discovered by those who care and dare. Life is too short to be squandered on what has already proven itself Lifeless and Fruitless—“mere words”—no matter how “good” those words may be. Good “sermons” aren’t that hard to find. The bookstores, cassettes, pulpits and lecterns are full of fine words. LIFE that is TRULY LIFE—“joined and knit together by every supporting ligament,” no one living their lives as if “I have no need of you,” “all the Believers together, and having all things in common,” “contending as One Man...” This is worth living for and dying for. *Let no man steal your crown.*

HIS Mark

Friday Evening, December 20, 1991

“Then I heard him call out in a loud voice, ‘Bring the guards of the city here, each with a weapon in his hand.’ And I saw six men coming from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with a deadly weapon in his hand. With them was a man clothed in linen who had a writing kit at his side. They came in and stood beside the bronze altar. Now the Glory of the God of Israel went up from above the cherubim, where it had been, and moved to the threshold of the temple. Then the LORD called to the man clothed in linen who had the writing kit at his side and said to him, ‘Go throughout the city of Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of those who grieve and lament over all the detestable things that are done in it.’

“As I listened, he said to the others, ‘Follow him through the city and kill, without showing pity or compassion. Slaughter old men, young men and maidens, women and children, but do not touch anyone who has the mark. Begin at my sanctuary.’ So they began with the elders who were in front of the temple. Then he said to them, ‘Defile the temple and fill the courts with the slain. Go!’ So they went out and began killing throughout the city.

“While they were killing and I was left alone, I fell facedown, crying out, ‘Ah, Sovereign LORD! Are you going to destroy the entire remnant of Israel in this outpouring of your wrath on Jerusalem?’ He answered me, ‘The sin of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great; the land is full of bloodshed and the city is full of injustice. They say, “The LORD has forsaken the land; the LORD does not see.” So I will not look on them with pity or spare them, but I will bring down on their own heads what they have done.’ Then the man in linen with the writing kit at his side brought back word, saying, ‘I have done as you commanded’” (Ezekiel 9:1-11).

“Go throughout the city of Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of those who grieve and lament over all the detestable things that are done in it.”

Have you ever noticed that this is not about people who are *doing* detestable things? This is about people that *don't grieve* and *lament* over detestable things. The people who refused to do detestable things were **also** destroyed by God. It was the people who grieved and lamented over the detestable things that were saved. If they didn't *grieve* and *lament* over the detestable things, they were not saved because they didn't love what God loves. If they don't love what God loves and they don't hate what God hates, then they're in the same category as the people that do the detestable things. There's no distinction made here between those that *do* the detestable and those that *blend in* with the detestable even if they don't **do** the detestable things themselves. They were all killed—men, women, children, elders, men at the sanctuary... Everyone who can blend in with it and doesn't stand against it, all of those will be wiped out according to the Word of God.

Lot was a man it says that in his day and his time was tormented in his righteous spirit by the lawless acts around him. If we're not **tormented** by it, we're in the same category according to God as those that **do** it. If we don't have any spine, any backbone, enough to say, "**Enough! Don't sing about Jesus and don't wear His name unless you're going to live for Him!**" If we won't stand up for it, if we won't grieve and lament over those things that are detestable in His sight, then we're in the same category as those that are doing the detestable things in God's sight. That's what it says. That is what God said about it. If we don't have any backbone, if we can just kind of smear our molasses over the top of it and say, "I'm ok, you're ok..." "Well, he says he's a christian..." "Well, they're a nice person, they seem sincere..." "Well, let's not be holier than thou..." If that's the way we are going to handle our lives, then we are in the same category as rapists and murderers and arsonists and liars and thieves and all those other things.

Stand Valiantly

If we won't stand valiantly against the detestable deeds around us, the contradictions and hypocrisies, if we won't stand valiantly and visibly against those things, then we might as well be doing them because we're going to fall in the same category in God's sight. Isn't that what God said? (Yes) And is that the only place where God said that? (No, not hardly.) It's pretty clear in the scriptures and we need to be willing to stand up for what God said and not blend in with it thinking that "Well, I'll just do it right even if everyone else does it

wrong, and that will make it ok.” That’s not what God said! Jesus was willing to die for it and those that are followers of Jesus are willing to die for it.

Don’t call yourself a follower of Jesus if you’re not willing to follow Jesus. I’m not talking about being arrogant and blowing over the top of people, but I’m saying there are things that are real and true that are not to be compromised. In our hearts and in our spirits we know when we’ve prostituted truth for our own well-being or for our own reputation or carnal sympathies or because of hidden sin in our own heart. We’ve compromised and we don’t have any courage left to deal with anything else. We know when we’ve sold truth. The Bible says “Buy the truth and sell it not.” Jesus IS the Word. Jesus IS the Truth. Don’t think you can white-wash over, or overlook Truth (in the name of “love”, of course!), and still have JESUS. No way! He is inseparable from His Word, and from Truth! That’s why He could say, “If you REALLY love Me, you will obey Me.” When we love Him, we “LOVE the Truth” and we “Love the Light” and “like newborn babies, we CRAVE the pure Spiritual milk of the Word.” If HE lives inside of us, we could never be content with lukewarmness within, or in others that wear His Name! (1John 3)

Wisdom

This does require God’s wisdom. If it doesn’t have God’s wisdom all over it, it will thrash people rather than set them free. The purpose of the Word of God is to set men free from their sin. You need to understand that. It’s not a matter of beating them with it, it’s a matter of saying, *“You may not realize this, but you are in bondage. You need to know the truth so the truth can set you free and if the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed. You’re in bondage. If you really knew your own heart, you would know you’re in bondage and as you pursue things on this level—the hypocrisy, the contradictions—you become a slave. And so, you can get mad at me if you want, but I only want you to be free because I care about you.”* That’s different than beating them with it. The courage is still there, calling a spade a spade is still there, but you’re doing it for their best interest, not to get even or for revenge or to puff yourself up. You’re doing it because you want them to be free. Even though they may not look like it in all their arrogance and all their casualness, they are slaves. God said they were, it’s a fact. No matter how comfortable or secure they look, they are slaves and they are in bondage and they

will suffer immensely in this life and the life to come. And so, it's for their sake in order to buy them back from the deceptions of the enemy that you dare to risk your reputation or your job or whatever. People can sense a difference between whether you're doing it for them or whether you're doing it to satisfy some self-righteousness. They know the difference. They can smell it. Help them! **And when the Son sets them free they will be truly free in practice and reality!!!**

Now, "Go throughout the city of Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of those who grieve and lament over all the detestable things that are done in it."

Ancient Siamese Proverb

Wednesday Morning, July 30, 2003

ONE Problem with the Unbiblical, Disobedient Issues of: Clergy/Laity System, Ritual, Form, Programs, and Attendance-based Religion

An Ancient Siam proverb describes what the Clergy/Laity system, ritual, form, programs, and attendance-based religion do to people who CARE about totally living for Jesus. OF COURSE “many” (Mat. 7) are just interested in getting an emotional high once or twice a week and going back to “their own lives.” Jesus said to these “many” who are deeply “religious” and even charismatic, “I never knew you.” And, He said that it will often be “the Stone the BUILDERS (the “leaders”—those with something to protect for themselves) rejected” who has become the chief Cornerstone. So true, we hear daily from around the world.

“For all except the lead elephant, the scenery never changes.”

Some are satisfied with the adrenaline and the “ego drug high” of being a staged leader and “official” leader, teacher, speaker, boss—or drunk on “my ministry” kind of guy or girl. These have conquered the people (“Nicolaitanism”) for their rapt attention, or at least stroked their own egos enough to not see Reality any longer. They have acquired prestige, and have gained a false authority and respect from “position” or education or personality or talent—but not from God. These, then, having gained “feedback” that dulls the pain and strokes them to make them “purr”...are ever more tempted to feed on this false position and respect from “clergyism” or “my ministry.” They then fall into the pits of theatrics, voice inflection, pseudo-spiritual posture and speak, decision-making power, marketing of themselves or their “things,” flashy presentation to impress, extracting wealth from God’s People by “selling” what they claim to be from God, and a thousand other pits.

They have all they want and don't really have a way to know that others' dissatisfaction is not "divisive"—but INSPIRED by a God who does not support man-made systems that rob His Priesthood and Body of His Glory.

(Of course, the self-serving, ambitious, wander-lusters, or contentious "please me!" sorts of folks will often hide behind this, but not convincingly, as their selfishness and pride reveal that their desires are not for God, but for themselves.)

Some, because of their own love of the world, want nothing more than to "attend" something, or "run" something—and would NOT have "left their nets" lying on the ground to be a follower of Jesus. They would wait for Him to have some "services" they could "attend"—and that day would never come. He did not have anything to "attend" and still does not. These who love the world want it all—in a tidy conscience-salving box, while they stay in control and can pursue wealth and power and relaxation and entertainment and vacations and relocations and whatever they wish, on their own terms. They will be quite content with little of the daily Reality of 1 Corinthians 12, though God is not.

Some simply lust to "belong" and for a social connection that strokes them sufficiently, but clearly this "religiousness" is for THEM, not for God. Some are too busy for the REAL Bride of Christ and Kingdom of God because of their unBiblical side fixations on biological "family." Often this is nothing more than power lusts to be mini-kings, mini-clergy in our tiny four-walled "kingdoms."

In some ways, ironically, we become "worse than infidels" by hiding our offspring and spouses under this biological iron fist shadow, and merely substitute our mini-kingdoms for "the Reality that is in Christ": HIS Plan of "a HUNDRED mothers, brothers, sisters." Our little things will never fulfill God's Plan, or even change lives to His Glory, since we are building around biology and natural genes as Jesus, John, and Paul said the Jews were mistakenly continuing to do—instead of how Jesus has defined Life and Family: the Promise, the Spirit! In this faulty paradigm, leaven is ultimately cultivated rather than redeemed, and our progeny are robbed of the other daily Gifts in the Body of Christ... when we build on shadows, rather than the Reality of 1 Corinthians 12 daily Life. When we build this way, we rob ourselves and our families, and are "worse than infidels" because, for our own egos, we steal

from our families the sum of the greatest Gifts God has offered us: “a HUNDRED” intimate daily relationships by those endued with the Spirit of Christ and Gifted by Him.

Some, by their emotional makeup are easily manipulated to a temporary “emotional high” by speeches or conjured music during a “service” or “program.”

For those who REALLY want all of Jesus, this sage insight from Siam below describes what all encounter who WANT daily 1 Corinthians 12, Hebrews 3:12-14, Acts 2:42-47 LIFE that Jesus rose from the grave to bestow upon us, but are stunted by the teachings, structures, and methods of men! This saying describes what happens when we allow any of the things mentioned above to dilute the “daily” Together-Life He demonstrated with the Twelve, and then the 3,120 from Pentecost forward! This is to say: Life is hopelessly empty and greatly disappointing for those who REALLY care...when we build man’s way, for any of the reasons mentioned above. The “leaders” will think all is fine, but.....someone in Siam saw it coming....

“For all except the lead elephant, the scenery never changes.” ☺

AHHHHH! But there is SO much more “for all who Believe” and for those who “let no one steal their crown”!!

Hallelujah!

Trust Him and Obey, and Watch in Expectation!! ☺

Truth

~1523

Consider Martin Luther's words (a "troubler of Israel"), regarding Paul's thoughts to the Galatian Believers.....

"Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Galatians 4:16).

Paul's reason for praising the Galatians is to avoid giving them the impression as if he were their enemy because he had reprimanded them.

A true friend will admonish his erring brother, and if the erring brother has any sense at all he will thank his friend. In the world, truth produces hatred. Whoever speaks the truth is counted an enemy. But among friends it is not so, much less among Christians. The Apostle wants his Galatians to know that just because he had told them the truth, they are not to think that he dislikes them. "I told you the truth because I love you."

"They zealously affect you, but not well" (Galatians 4:17).

Paul takes the false apostles to task for their flattery. Satan's satellites soft-soap the people. Paul calls it *"by good words and fair speeches to deceive the hearts of the simple"* (Rom. 16:18).

They tell me that by my stubbornness in teaching Truth, I am destroying the harmony of the Church. They say it would be better if we would make some slight concession rather than cause such commotion and controversy. My reply is cursed be any love or harmony that demands for its preservation that we place the Word of God in jeopardy!

-M Luther

Still...the ONLY Way to Know

~1915

*“If anyone chooses to do God’s will, he will find out whether my teaching...”
(John 7:17).*

“**T**he golden rule for understanding spiritually is not intellect, but obedience. If a man wants scientific knowledge, intellectual curiosity is his guide; but if he wants insight into what Jesus Christ teaches, he can only get it by obedience. If things are dark to me, then I may be sure there is something I will not do. Intellectual darkness comes through ignorance; spiritual darkness comes because of something I do not intend to obey.

“No man ever receives a word from God without instantly being put to the test over it. We disobey and then wonder why we don’t go on spiritually. ‘If when you come to the altar,’ said Jesus, ‘there you remember your brother hath ought against you...don’t say another word to Me, but first go and put that thing right.’ The teaching of Jesus hits us where we live. We cannot stand as humbugs before Him for one second. He educates us down to the scruple. The Spirit of God unearths the spirit of self-vindication. He makes us sensitive to things we never thought of before.

“When Jesus brings a thing home by His word, don’t shirk it. If you do, you will become a religious humbug. Watch the things you shrug your shoulders over, and you will know why you do not go on spiritually. **First go**—at the risk of being thought fanatical, you must obey what God tells you.”

-O. Chambers

The Bride Made Ready

September 1996, Komba, Africa

Before very long, Jesus will come back for His Bride made ready (Rev. 19:7). And, the will of the Father for us is not to *attend* a bride, but to *be* a Bride...not to *attend* a house, but to *be* a House. We can only do this as we love each other and exchange our lives with each other *every day*.

We help each other to know Jesus better by helping each other put away sin, love one another more, and care for others' needs more than we care for our own. These are the teachings of Jesus. This is how He lived His life for us, and now He has called us to live this way for one another. This is how the Bride is made ready for the return of her Groom, Jesus.

The will of the Father is that we would become more and more beautiful as we learn how to truly love each other more. As we put away our selfishness and pride that keep us separate from each other, and as we willingly open our hearts to be vulnerable with each other, then the Spirit of God, the Grace of God and the Love of God pour out on us... and we become a beautiful Bride *READY* for the return of our Groom, Jesus.

This is a Church—to live this way *every day*, not *attending* the house of God, but *being* the place where God Lives. Then our homes, our workplace and our Church all become one. There are no more barriers from my heart to yours and no more barriers between my home and yours. I put away selfishness and pride, I put away laziness and unbelief, and I love others as Jesus has loved me. When everyone does that, from the least to the greatest, Jesus pours out His healing oil and we are a Church and a beautiful Bride. If we are content to just attend something on Sunday morning, we will miss the heart and the call of our God, and be like some other religions that are meaningless.

Invitation of God to the World

The Invitation of God to all of the world is to be a Home together for the Father, Son and Holy Ghost—to be a Bride that has made herself ready for the return of her beautiful Groom, Jesus (John 13-15, Eph. 2-5, Rev. 19:7). Jesus said, “this is how all men will know you are My disciples,”—not by how loud you sing on Sunday morning, not by how well you preach, not by your meetings—but “by how you love one another daily.” This is how all men will know that this is from Heaven. The world **MUST** see us loving each other. They cannot see through the walls of a room once a week. It is very hard to love one another in a room anyway. They see us loving each other when they see us carrying each other’s loads, when we take care of each other when we are sick, when they see us give each other the *best* things we have. This is how all men will know that we are His disciples—not just by what we believe, but by how they *see* us loving each other. This is the call of God for His People today.

Build on the Rock

Build on the rock of putting into practice His Word. If you ever hear *anything* that Jesus is saying, do something about it today. Take action, today, to change for Jesus. Don’t just *think* about it. Act on it. Jesus said this is building on the Rock—putting it into practice and not hearing it only. Disciples of Jesus do this! So, brothers and sisters, *be* the Church to the Glory of God. Be a Family together every day. Make Jesus very proud of you.

Let's Start Today On Holy Ground...? Together...?

Thursday Morning, October 28, 1999

Quietly let words like this form in your heart? These are mine, but we need to live here, in this Most Holy Place, together. Please?

Today is a new day. I start it with head bowed and a tear in my eye for my foolishness and selfishness of my yesterday and days past.

Yet, I begin. I DO begin. Now is the Time.

I begin with a firmness in my jaw and shoulders back, with the knowledge of God's resolute love for me, and determination that I can and will be like His beautiful Son. I start fresh, now.

I don't hide from the past, but rather turn and face it full on, and speak to it. Just once, at the Beginning of my future, my new today.

I announce to my past that I am responsible, but by the Blood and Spirit, I will not be enslaved. I AM a new creation, at this moment—as I bow my knee before Jesus of Nazareth and call out to Him for forgiveness, for His hope for me, for His future for me.

And because it's Him, and it's HIS will, I will not, cannot, be refused this total forgiveness...and this future of grace and freedom and meaning. It cannot be taken from me. No one can shut this Door that He has opened. It's HIS banquet, and I must be there. I must.

I do start with head bowed and an unmistakable tear in my eye. But I will be changed. I know I will. That's why He is called Messiah. And, OH, what a Messiah! Ride, our Beloved, Ride! Come for us, at this new dawning!

I will not be denied. I must forgive—myself and others. Memories and feelings, walls and imaginations, fears or weaknesses...will not haunt

me or control me. I turn my face in repentance from all that is not Him, and turn towards His graceful charm and strong leadership.

I must go forward. I must carry on. I am sorry for who I've been and what I've done. But I must accept a new day and its Message of Genesis, of Beginning...and step into it.

I'll make right what I can with humility and courage. And I'll allow Him to cleanse things communications and feelings cannot alone resolve.

And, because "Christ-likeness" and "God-lieness" are to be like the Son and His Father...I'll allow others to make this New Beginning this morning, too. We'll resolve together what we can—and, if they have that same tear in their eye that longs for forgiveness and change within, I'll help them start New today, with "no record of wrongs."

Emotions and memories and hurts and weakness, sin with heart-felt regret..."Where is your victory? Where is your sting?" He gives us the Victory through Jesus Christ, Lord! Therefore, my treasured Family, be STEADFAST, IMMOVABLE, always celebrating His Life by overflowing in His decisions and actions!

Welcome me into this new day. And invite one another into this new day, this place of the heart, this Holy Ground. Make it easy for me, and all my brothers and sisters, to find It. And make it easy for yourself to start again.

You've known the Path. Now take it. Bow your head, look at His hands, His feet, His side...renounce all that was not like Him, is not like Him... and accept your Destiny: TODAY, you are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing Glory, by the Lord who is the Spirit. TODAY IS THE DAY OF SALVATION.

I need this. And I suspect you do, too. Let's find Him at this Place, together?

Let every sunrise remind you...Will you?

In 4 a.m. tears, looking forward and upward. To Whom else shall we go? But what more could we ever need or want? SUFFICIENT, He is for all our yesterdays and all of our tomorrows...!

This Drama Earth

Monday Evening, December 27, 1999

The saga starts, the stage is set
The lights turned way down low
The seats are filled from every realm
So all may see the show

Angelic hoards from realms unseen
With fix-ed gazes stare
And wait with bated breath to learn
Of untold mysteries there

This drama earth, this spinning orb
This dark terrestrial ball
Despite how real it may appear
Is just the curtain call

For all you see, and feel, and touch
Is only just a vapor
Eternal things they lurk unseen
So join us on our caper

Just take a peak beneath the lid
Of this life's thin veneer
And find out why you are alive
If you have ears to hear

This Epic tale I share with you
Perhaps you've heard it told?
About a King in Distant lands
And glories from of old

There was a conflict in that land
The Kingdom tossed and torn
An evil prince reared up his head
And all the subjects mourned

This evil prince—he killed and cursed
Opposing all who loved
And loving was the natural course
Of living there above.

The King jumped quickly to their aid
Angelic armies fought
The prince was cast out of the realm
And with him those he'd taught

This made the King think long and hard
Deciding what was best
Should He just kill the banished prince
Along with all the rest?

A gleam now sparkled in His eye
A plan began to brew
The realm must know His cause was just
And fair, and right, and true

The prince is twisted in his ways
Despite how good a speaker
His cause is destined to decay
Not just because he's weaker

A love of self, a path of hate
A road of greed and pride
Are wrong no matter who it is
That clings to them inside

The Noble King, His ways are Pure
And lovely to behold
His Power's not the reason
That His Image is the mold

His ways are right because they Are
There's just not any doubt
But He wants His own to understand
And not just yield to clout

And so at last He built a stage
A world of space and time
To demonstrate to realms unseen
The reason to His rhyme

And for the unseen realms to see
The Monarch's way was best
This Drama Earth, a sphere of mud
The stage for this grand test

It all began one sunny day
In Eden's garden fair
While stalking in the cool of day
The serpent laid his snare

And so the play was underway
The game afoot indeed
And many hence would curse that day
The dragon killed our seed

From that day forth, the sons of men
Dripped poison from their veins
Yes ere from birth up to the grave
Sin firmly held the reigns

If our new play had ended there
A tragedy t'would be
But that was just the starting act
As all who watched would see

The next two thousand years of skits
Were filled with strife and shame
As Adam's sons, their sins full-grown
Had none to ease their blame

And so a nation was carved out
A man with faith was found
He fixed his eyes on things unseen
And saw beyond earth's ground

He withheld nothing from his King
Not land or wealth or son
And on his painful testing day
A victory he won

His tiny band of scattered tents
Windblown by desert sand
Would one day be a people great
A nation proud and grand

And so was born a tribe of men
Though small now might they be
Would one day number as the stars
Or sand grains by the sea

But several hundred year of scenes
Would pass before we knew
If anything would come of them
This tiny scattered few

They nearly starved to death one year
A famine they did flee
Protected by an unseen hand
Through Joseph's slavery

But down in Egypt's land they grew
Their numbers on the rise
Too many now to be ignored
Should they your land apprise

And so at last on Jordan's banks
They finally took their stand
And said farewell to Egypt's leeks
And conquered Canaan's land

Their victories we must condense
For time will not endure
To tell of all the mighty deeds
Their unseen King procured

Despite the many happy feats
The battles won at war
There still remained a sickness deep
A darkness at their core

The evil prince roamed near and far
Still seeking to devour
He loved to see men cringe with fear
He loved to see them cower

Oh when, Oh how, Oh what indeed
Oh who could heal their hearts?
And mend them in their broken souls
And wash their dirty parts

The law so thorough, and so grand
The Holy Truth did tell
Served only as a harsh remind
Of just how far they'd fell

For while it showed the path of right
And told of evil's spell
It could not help them make "the choice"
So things did not go well

They needed more than words could give
And more than mind could hold
They needed new and better hearts
Made from a better mold

And finally, with that made clear
The King pulled from His sleeve
A plot He hid there before time
A plan you won't believe

Upon a dusty road one night
Inside a dingy stable
A virgin girl brought forth a child
The Spirit made her able

Oh Mystery of Life Divine
A human frame—the shell
The Word ALIVE, God's thought made flesh
Sent tremors all through hell

For now at last earth's cause did have
A Worthy Son of Man
To finally take that snake to task
Destroy his every plan

This child, no ordinary boy
As time would sure reveal
He'd crush that serpent's head at last
Though cost it would His heel

He paved the way for Adam's sons
To find their birthright lost
And though 'twas death we all deserved
He chose to pay that cost

For those brief years spent on our stage
For those few shining days
He showed us more than words can tell
We marveled at His ways

For every single choice He made
Was made without regard
Of any sort of private gain
Or if the choice be hard

His cross He took up every day
No matter who might see
In large but also tiny ways
For them and you and me

And though at last upon that tree
He died that we might live
'Twas daily death that modeled best
That life is lived to give

And in His last Heroic deed
Tossed caution to the wind
And paved the way with His own blood
To make us free from sin

And though that gift for all was giv'n
Not all give due regard
For most crave pleasure more than love
Because their hearts are hard

And so despite the high price paid
Despite the victory won
Men live in shackles to this day
Ignoring God's own Son

Oh let that not be said of you
In fate's last epitaph
Please bow your knee, accept His gift
Find pardon from His wrath

For everyone that does not choose
To leave behind dark ways
Will find that when their act is done
They've wasted all their days

Oh tragedy of tragedies
No mind can comprehend
The scope of loss, so high a cost
No time to make amend

Oh please dear friend, don't spurn His love
And cling to petty pride
Nor let affairs of earth distract
And keep you from His side

You'll hate yourself a billion years
If you this choice don't make
For clinging to your vain pursuits
And shallow life so fake

For who would trade immortal life
With meaning rich and deep
For temporal trinkets from this play
Which you don't get to keep

So finally with one last plea
Before you breathe your last
Your life slips by like hourglass sand
You won't believe how fast

Turn to the Maker of your soul
With your heart open wide
Repent of all the junk you've done
Let Jesus move inside

He wants to be your lifelong Friend
But He won't twist your arm
You must SEE through this skit you're in
The dragon means you harm

If he can keep you lulled to sleep
Content with status quo
You'll wait too late to bow your knee
The Truth you'll never know

Awake in haste while time permits
Don't let the sun go down
Beg Him RIGHT NOW to help you see
The Truth that can be found

Now catch your breath and stretch a bit
This tale is far from done
The grandest scenes are yet to be
This story's just begun

I see now by your startled look
I've caught you by surprise
Your wide eyes stare, your mouth agape
Your pulse now on the rise

For most have heard this saga oft
The story's widely spread
But few indeed have glimpsed a peek
Of scenes that lie ahead

So wipe away your old ideas
Old notions set aside
And ponder now, with angel hosts
The Mystery of the Bride

For we weren't saved from death and hell
To occupy a pew
Or hear grand speeches once a week
Among the "faithful" few

This old religion of our day
Was not part of His plan
T'was handed down in habit rote
Traditions made from man

For steeples, preachers, sermons too
Were not in His intention
Evolved they did from lack of Him
Are only man's invention

We have not time, the list too long
To show how wide they've spread
Or teach you how they came to be
So lifeless and so dead

Just take a peak inside the book
Upon your dusty shelves
You will not find them in His Word
No more than Santa's elves

Expedients they're often called
A word to justify
Our fear to let go of the mold
Despite how many die

For we weren't born anew inside
To be event attenders
All mixed inside a leavened batch
Surrounded by pretenders

No! Not a chance, we will not rest
Content with life so low
Yes fight we will, with every breath
Despite how few will go

Thy Kingdom Come! Thy Will be DONE!
Is still the battle cry
For all those not content with words
Pretense to pacify

Oh, please, Dear King, look down on us
With Mercy on our plight
And rouse Yourself, please one more time
And lead us in the fight

This whole event was Your idea
'Twas You that made this stage
To show the wisdom of Your plan
That culminates this age

And so we beg and we implore
Let scales drop from our eyes
And steal the thunder of false prince
Behind religious guise

Your lambs are scattered, tossed and torn
And worn from all the years
Of milk-toast food from hirelings sly
Whose words don't heal our fears

So launch anew Your plan so pure
In this our barren land
And give again Your healing balm
And lead us by Your hand

Your Church is lofty by intent
The price You paid Your Blood
Pour out Your Glory once again
And drown us in a flood

Make desert lands to bloom once more
Make oceans from this stream
Please wipe away our dismal past
Let us fulfill Your Dream!

Earth's valley once so full of bones
Ezekiel saw that day
Could be an Army brave and Strong
With YOU to lead the way

I see a Nation, brothers all
A City on a hill
Who'll give their all to see Your House
Consumed with Father's Zeal

Who'll live like You did every day
In every thing they do
With all their heart, soul, mind, and strength
With many or with few

The hand not saying of the eye
I'll see you here next week
I'll sit right by you on this pew
Though rarely do we speak

No EVERY day they live to seek
The Kingdom buried deep
Inside the heart of every saint
Who gave his soul to keep

With Love and Light they burrow deep
And penetrate each one
And fight with sweat and tears and blood
Conforming to the Son

And arm in arm they take their stand
To march against hell's gates
With Warrior's hearts and Prophet's eyes
They conquer pride and hate

No more are they just on their own
An isolated soul
But woven now with cords of love
A part of one large whole

Yes members now, not of a club
Or weekly singing crew
But melted in to daily lives
And one loaf through and through

The dragon knows he has no hope
'Gainst those who build God's way
Who cut him off at every turn
And give his voice no sway

They stand apart from common men
Not lured by reindeer games
Unlike their kin who build with straw
Their work endures the flames

Not swayed by men, with shallow cords
Like puppets on a string
Earth's pattern's scorned, and all its lies
They live to serve the King

If none of this has raised your pulse
And fanned your soul with flame
If you like life the way it is
And want to sidestep blame

Then be a "prop," the choice is yours
A plant upon life's stage
You'll get your due when time is done
But you won't like the wage

You'll forfeit more than you can dream
It's why this earth was made
And you'll regret when skit is done
The shallow role you've played

The car, the house, your little job
It all can seem so real
But isn't worth your mortal soul
Despite how it may feel

Oh, stir that longing deep within
Oh, wake up from your slumber
Redeem your life while there's still time
Before He calls your number

His Kingdom will go forth in Power
In those who guard His seed
And water it with tears and prayer
And fertilize with deed

Who turn their tear-stained faces up
And look upon His Glory
With faith renewed and courage strong
They'll be part of this story

For this is not a fable made
To tickle tiny minds
Or simply words to toss about
And still keep living blind

No, this is meant to be a door
A way to get you through
A window that leads off the stage
To live with Heaven's view

So off your chair, get on your knees
And step behind the curtain
There's more to life than meets the eye
Of that you can be certain

And ask your King in realms unseen
With angels full attention
To help you find His Kingdom's call
And enter His dimension

The road not easy and not wide
The world will not applaud
If you decide to follow Him
And leave behind the fraud

The World will heap abuse on you
To make you feel a fool
And mock your choice to die to self
And let your new King rule

But if you have the eyes to see
You'll not regard their noise
They live life like a shallow game
Distracted with their toys

No you'll not envy, you'll not want
The shallow earthlings path
His petty choices don't add up
But he can't do the math

He doesn't see from Heaven's view
But you've a window seat
To firmly face this life with poise
No matter what you meet

In just a few brief scenes from now
The crew will clean this stage
And all the things that men held dear
Will perish with this age

So make the choice to follow Him
And leave behind sin's ways
We've got a feast we must attend
To last through endless days

Hoorah! Hooray! The play is done
The evil prince cast out
The wedding party's starting soon
The trumpet sound will shout

We long, we ache, we cannot wait
We hasten final day
But first there is much work to do
There is no time for play

For first the Bride must be prepared
As John's last note made mention
So give yourself no rest my friend
Give Her your full attention

We must oppose the substitute
Religion will not do
And everyone that names His Name
Has got to follow through

So get up off religion's bench
And get INSIDE your brother
And fight to help ALL find the Lord
He's hid within each other

Confess your sin, lay down your life
And help your brother see
The blind spots that we all do have
That's HOW we'll all be free

For all who have been born anew
Have all been giv'n a part
A piece of Jesus planted deep
To serve your brother's heart

If you love Jesus like you say
Then find out where! You must!
He has dispersed the parts of Him
In redeemed men of dust

For yes! You need the body's gifts
Much more than you might know
The treasure hid in pots of clay
His way for you to grow

You're not complete all by yourself
In case you just can't tell
An eye without a foot or hand
Does not survive so well

And while you may have done some good
With tiny fruit to show
'Twill multiply one thousand times
If melted in His dough

And with that good that came to mind
If honest, some decay
For we weren't made to walk alone
Upon the narrow way

You owe it to your children dear
You owe it to your spouse
You even owe it to yourself
To be built in God's House

You might not find in your small town
Those hungry for what's true
Who aren't content to "go to church"
But daily be with you

Who want to see Him lifted High
Not merely sung about
Who'll give their lives to see His Dream
And help us end our drought

So if you've looked real hard to find
True Saints and come up dry
You might just need to up and move
And bid your town goodbye

For where we live and where we work
We do it for a reason
Perhaps the pay, or relatives
Or changes in the season

Now that's no way for us to live
If sons of God we'll be
Just driven like the common man
And steered so shallowly

Now do not think that my intent
Is geared to make you leave
You very well should just stay put
Though it might make you grieve

I only say, what're you do
You have the highest goal
For job, sunshine, or relatives
Aren't cause to lose your soul

For every single thing we do
And where we live included
Is laid down at the feet of Him
And nothing is excluded

Seek first the Kingdom every day
This simple rule of thumb
Will help you hear the still small Voice
And know where it came from

Now I'm afraid I must go soon
At last bid you adieu
I hope you'll ponder what we've said
And let the light sift you

For if you don't on bended knee
Decide what path you'll choose
You'll choose the wrong one by default
With oh, so much to lose

The dragon knows what you've just heard
He wants to calm you down
And send his birds to steal the seed
We've lain upon your ground

So right away, without delay
Just take a spade in hand
And plunge it deep into your heart
Turn up the fallowed land

And take these seeds that were just sown
And press them deeply in
Then cover back with softened flesh
Don't let the serpent win

He only means to do you harm
And lull you back to sleep
And sing to you his lullaby
While all the angels weep

Oh please dear friend, oh please, oh please
Don't let this day pass by
Until you've spoken to the King
Who watches from on high

And if you'll seek with all your heart
He promised that you could
Find life with Him that knows no end
I really wish you would

Goodbye dear friend, I may not know
Perhaps we've never met
I hope that when acquaintance comes
There is no sad regret

And those who take to heart this rhyme
Though we may never meet
I'll see you when this play is done
We'll worship at His feet