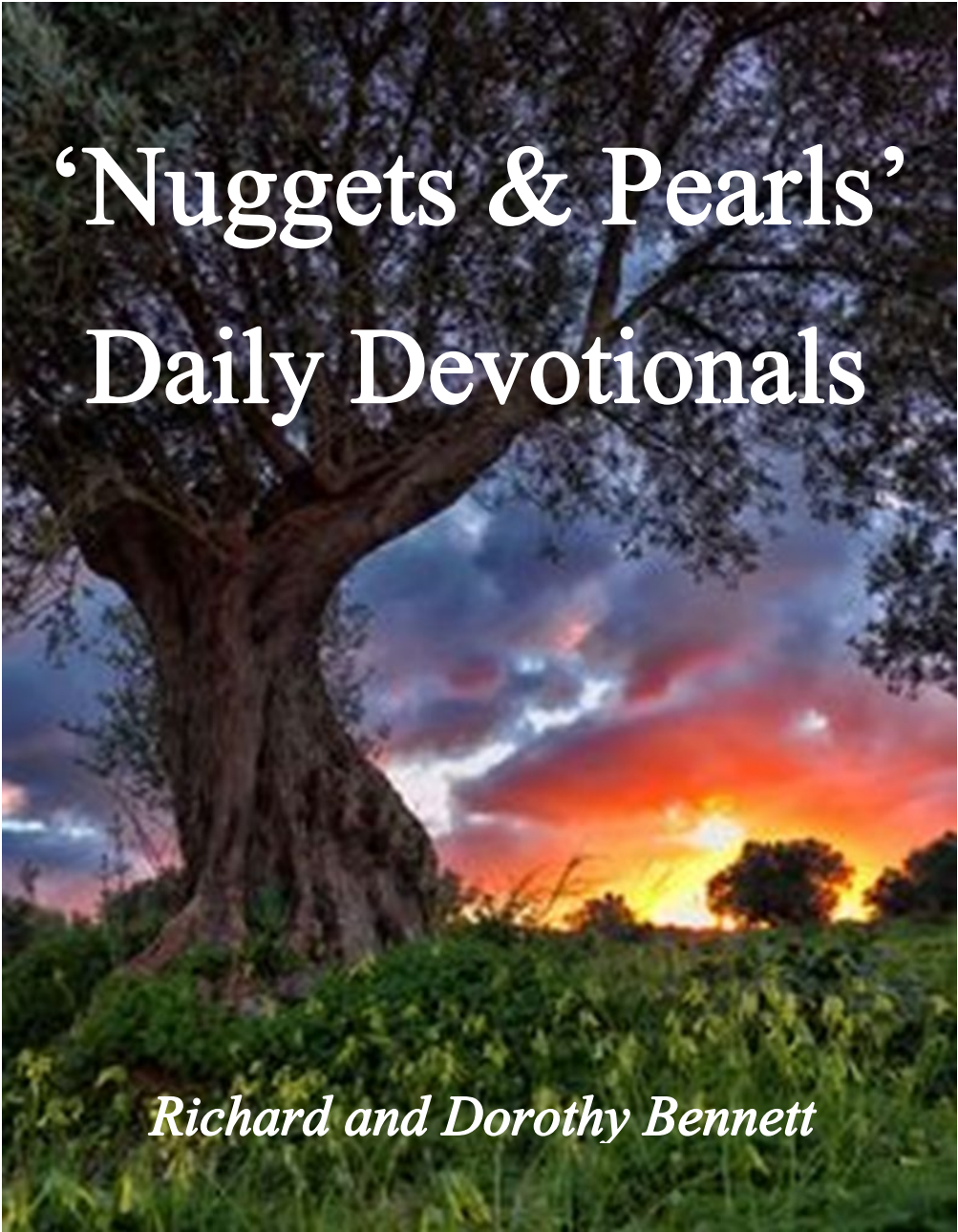


A large, gnarled tree with a thick trunk and dense foliage stands in a field of green grass. The background features a dramatic sunset with a bright orange and yellow sun partially obscured by dark, silhouetted trees. The sky is filled with colorful clouds in shades of orange, red, and purple. The entire scene is framed by a blue border.

‘Nuggets & Pearls’ Daily Devotionals

Richard and Dorothy Bennett

Preface

“Nuggets and Pearls” are short ‘appetite portions’ of Richard's *‘Nuggets’* (from his many writings) incorporated with some of “Dorothy's Daily Devotional” *‘Pearls’* (gleaned from her widely blessed broadcasts in fourteen languages).

Our sole desire is that each *‘Nuggets and Pearls’* will bring praise and glory to our Lord Jesus Christ and thus fulfill His sovereign purposes in reaching spiritually hungry peoples around this turbulent world! Please prayerfully join us in, *“redeeming the time, because the days are evil”* Ephesians 5:16.

May the Lord bless and daily encourage every reader that they too might have a living relationship with Him through His Word, and thus prove, *“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path”* Psalm 119:105.

Blessings in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Richard and Dorothy Bennett.

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~*Richard A. Bennett:* **www.ccim-media.com/support**.

His Life through us.

1.

It is so exciting that the ‘true’ Church knows no class limitation, no capacity limitation, and no color limitation! Poor and rich; uneducated and educated; old and young; red, yellow, black, and white are **all** welcomed into the fellowship of His ‘Body,’ the Church. However, membership of the ‘Body’ of Christ is not open for people who are not ‘born again.’ Have you been ‘born again’ and are you really a part of His ‘Body’—which is the ‘true’ Church?

The Lord Jesus did not die to ‘Christianize’ the flesh, but through His victory at Calvary, He died to ‘Crucify’ the flesh, that He **might demonstrate through us His resurrection Life by His indwelling power and only for His glory.** Do you realize that you do not need to settle for anything less if you are truly ‘born again’ but that you are meant to be a vessel for His indwelling Life living through you? It is exciting to know that the Lord Jesus **is** our Christian life!

Through His redeeming Love, the Lord entrusts a ‘saved sinner’ Heavenwards with all the necessary Life to go to Heaven in: *“If you then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with Him in glory”* Colossians 3:1-3. Yes! Christ is the believer’s Life and He lives through us. Amen!

Heart Knowledge.

2.

*“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and **we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren**”* 1 John 3:16. Am I willing to ask the Lord for His Love to reach others through me?

As a believer, have I found that my ‘head knowledge’ does not necessarily mean my ‘heart knowledge’? Do I even question how I can practically experience this Love of God, which the Bible promises, *“passes all knowledge”*?

Although, ‘head knowledge’ of the Word of God is absolutely essential and must daily need to be absorbed, shared and discussed, it can only be displayed to others when I am willing for God to express His compassionate Love in and through my life, as I reckon myself, *“to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord”* Romans 6:11.

To meet such demands I realize that, of myself, I cannot live the ‘Christian’ life and that the Lord never expected me to do so! He did not come to ‘Christianize’ my flesh but that it might be ‘Crucified’. When I live by faith and praise, thanking Him for what He will do through this saved ‘vessel,’ the explanation of my life will be the exchange of His Life working in and through me: *“The love of God is shed abroad in [my heart] by the Holy Spirit which is given unto [me]”* Romans 5:5. *“Christ [dwells in my heart] by faith, [that I may know] the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, [and] that [I] might be filled with all the fullness of God”* Ephesians 3:19.

Umbrella over the Head.

3.

As a believer, when I allow the Love of God to flow through my heart, whatever inconvenience, discomfort or personal pain I might experience, I do not have to ‘bear it alone,’ because His, *“Love bears up under anything”* 1 Corinthians 13:7 (Amplified Bible).

I am reminded how years ago, after traveling on a small ferry boat from Dover to Antwerp, we waited for friends to pick us up at the quayside in the pouring rain. The only shelter we found was in the entrance of a small Belgian shop from where we noticed an expensively dressed lady, with an immaculate hairstyle, holding a pretty **umbrella over the head** of her little son as he gleefully rode his tricycle along the water edge. The mother seemed oblivious to the rain, or even to her aching arm and, although her own hair and clothes were drenched, her protected smiling child obviously brought her great joy and reward!

Likewise, when the Love of God flows among believers, an ‘**umbrella over the head**’ is experienced. This love is proven in times of persecution: *“Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loves not his brother remains in death”* 1 John 3:13-14. *“Above all, have intense and fervent love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins, [that is—forgives and disregards the offenses of others]”* 1 Peter 4:8 (Amplified Bible).

Envy Not.

4.

You might think it is impossible to handle deep resentment and envy because of some hurtful experience. However, my obedience to Christ is not based on my 'feelings' but upon the enabling grace of my Lord Himself! Only the Love of God can powerfully set my heart free from self-centered living. All the emotions that bind and control my life, will be broken when I willingly allow Him to love through me and I, '*envy not*' 1 Corinthians 13:4.

We knew a Christian lady who proved the enabling Love and grace of God when she faced a heart-breaking situation because her husband suddenly left her and filed for divorce to live with another woman. Her attorney arranged a luncheon meeting to discuss and finalize divorce agreements. The Christian lady arrived before the other guests and placed a beautiful red rose on the table-setting of her husband's new wife to be. Carefully, beside the rose, she placed a note of well-wishes for the couple's future happiness. By this transformative experience of God's Love in her life, she prayed that this simple gesture would be interpreted as a testimony of His divine empowerment and that they might too receive Christ through her simple action.

"Hope makes not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us" Romans 5:5. Do I envy others, or do I allow the Lord Jesus Christ to love others through me?

A Runaway Prodigal.

5.

Am I willing to become God's devoted laborer in His harvest field and, wherever He places me, to be His vessel for His Love to compassionately reach hurting and needy people through me?

Many years ago, when talking with a passenger on the rolling windswept deck of an old Greek boat in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, a young man shared how he had just left his Christian fiancé and godly parents in Scotland without telling them of his intended departure until the very day he sailed. However, God was fully aware what this runaway prodigal was doing and, in His Love, had so arranged circumstances that he read the Scriptures that we shared from in Psalm 139:9-10, ***"If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me."***

Under the conviction of his sin, the 'runaway prodigal' gladly confessed his self-centered living and humbly asked the Lord for His forgiveness and restoration to a life of fellowship with Him. God loved this young man and knew every detail about who he would meet that he be restored by the right word of testimony from His Word. The Lord knows every detail about us!

Because of your own blinded sinful and selfish ways, are you also a 'runaway' from the God who loves you? As a Blood-bought child of God, why not, 'about turn' unto your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and receive His forgiveness and restoration as He welcomes you back into His fold?

A Life-changing Decision.

6.

A pastor friend told us of a beautiful, 29-year-old lady, who was approaching the height of fame in the operatic world. When he visited her in the hospital, her doctor had just informed both her and her husband that she was regrettably in the terminal stages of cancer. She was further told that her condition was irreversible, and that her life expectancy was now very limited.

Both the cancer patient and her unsaved husband listened attentively to the pastor's kind and tender biblical counsel as he wisely urged the necessity for them to receive the Lord. The husband promptly kneeled by his wife's hospital bed as she led in prayer: "Lord, I thank You that You love me so much that You allowed this cancer. If this had not happened, I would still be caught up in my operatic 'whirl', racing around the world. Thank You, dear Lord, that now I have been 'born-again' and have received the miracle of 'New Eternal Life' through Christ Jesus even though this body will return to dust!"

With tears streaming down both the married couples faces, the husband also received the Lord Jesus into his life! Yes, 'together in Christ,' 'together in hope' and one day, 'together in Heaven' with the Lord! What joy in Heaven as two more sinners are saved!

Do you really know the Lord Jesus as your Savior? He loves you, and has promised that: "*As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name*" John 1:12.

God's Message to You.

7.

It was an inhospitable prison to which Christians, constrained by the love of Christ, were given permission from the authorities to visit and distribute small copies of the New Testament among the prisoners. However, the thinness and the size of the New Testament paper was utilized by many prisoners to tear out, roll tobacco, and make cigarettes. When smoked, the cigarette stubs were scattered around the prison compound and one day, out of idle curiosity, a prisoner picked up a cigarette stub and read on the small piece of paper: ***“For God so loved the world.”***

“Whoever could love such a rotten world as this?” he thought, then as days passed, he reasoned: “If there is such a God as this, then I want to know Him.” At which time, God sent another ‘visitor’ to the prison who lovingly explained that: ***“All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”*** Romans 3:23, 6:23. And, ***“that through death He might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil”*** Hebrews 2:14.

Upon hearing these Scriptures, the prisoner gladly repented and joyously received Christ as his personal Lord and Savior and rejoiced that, ***“Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day”*** (1 Corinthians 15:3-4) for: ***“Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation”*** 2 Corinthians 6:2.

Strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

8.

God's astonishing Love is available to every person in every generation! However, to understand God's great Love for me, as I read my Bible, I need the illumination and the strengthening of His Holy Spirit. It is helpful to first pray: 'Spirit of God, my Teacher be, revealing the things of Christ to me.'

As a 'saved sinner,' I received the Lord Jesus and was miraculously born-again from above by the spotless shed Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ at the Cross! Then, following His triumphant Resurrection and, before His Ascension, He promised His disciples that: "***The Comforter**, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*" John 14:26.

As a believer, my 'inner' man is daily strengthened for every situation that I will meet. And this necessitates being available for His fresh infillings: He has promised, "***That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ.***" Ephesians 3:16-19.

Are you living in His victory today and are you proving His strengthening in whatever situation that you might be facing at this time? **He really does care about you!**

This Wonderful Fellowship!

9.

In the Garden of Eden, God freely expressed His Love to mankind as He communed with Adam in the cool of the day. **This wonderful fellowship**, which existed in the presence of Eternal Light and resplendent Glory, was abruptly severed when **Adam sinned, and plunged all his descendants into disaster and death, resulting in Adam and Eve being stripped of the glory of God and made shamefully conscious of their nakedness.** What a very sad day that was for us all!

However, even after he sinned, God further demonstrated His Love to Adam and, ***“The Lord God made coats of skins, and clothed them”*** Genesis 3:21. But to acquire a coat of skin, an animal had to be slain. This necessitated the shedding of blood because, ***“Without shedding of Blood there is no remission”*** Hebrews 9:22.

It was ***‘in the fullness of time,’*** that the invisible God stepped out of Eternity to become visible in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ: ***“The Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world.”*** Because ***“all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,”*** and ***“the wages of sin is death,”*** every person needs to hear how they can be saved and receive God’s forgiveness and loving provision! ***“BUT the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”*** Revelation 13:8, Romans 3:23, 6:23.

Do you really know **this wonderful fellowship with God** in the same way that Adam and Eve once knew when talking to God in the Garden?

Is it a Slow Leak?

10.

A devastating avalanche in the Swiss Alps was not triggered by an earthquake but by the sun's warm rays on the snow which caused the force of adhesion to gradually be overcome by the force of gravity. The resultant consequence of which was catastrophic, and sadly, many people were killed at the bottom of the mountain. Similarly, the deflection of a believer to the 'world' does not necessarily mean a sudden 'blow-out' but it is often caused by a slow leak! Is that secretly taking place in your life also?

Many Christians sadly deflect from their 'labor of love as unto the Lord' and become fascinated with what the 'world' offers. The Apostle Paul wrote, *"Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world"* 2 Timothy 4:10. Does this "present world" also deflect your life from having a vital, progressive personal relationship with the Lord?

The Word of God warns us of: *"All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh; the lust of the eyes and the pride of life"* 1 John 2:16. As a believer, do I guard myself so that nothing causes me to deflect from my absolute love and total commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ? Do I remember that:

The "Flesh," means—**pleasure** without responsibility?

The "Eyes," means—**possessions** without responsibility?

The "Pride," means—**position** without responsibility?

Am I experiencing a 'slow leak' in my spiritual life? Am I being 'conformed to His image,' or will it take an 'avalanche' for God to get my attention?

When facing daily testing—whether social; financial; the lust of the flesh, or even the loss of a loved one—it is vital that we should, “*walk by faith, not by sight*” 2 Corinthians 5:7. In Christ, we can appropriate the fact that we have been, “*raised up together, and made to sit together with Him in heavenly places*” Ephesians 2:6.

When Peter stepped out of the fishing boat to walk on water, the stormy waves that threatened Peter were already under the feet of Jesus. From this perspective, faith rejoices in that everything is under the feet of Jesus and therefore under our feet also, because as a believer, we are already in Him!

We do not fight a fight that could be lost, but we are to enjoy a victory in our Risen Lord, which He alone has secured for us! We can either live by faith or die by unbelief. Because the ‘born-again’ believer is already ‘**in Him**’ and, because the waves that are under His feet must therefore be under our feet, it is essential that in our life of faith, we be willing to triumphantly reign **in Him**! “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ ... to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ*” Ephesians 1:3, 6.

From my perspective of reigning, “*in life by One, Jesus Christ*” (Romans 5:17) do I understand the necessity to live on top of every situation? Am I willing to ‘quit my trying’ and trust Him as I walk by faith? Can I praise Him that the most impossible situation is already under His victorious feet? Amen!

According to the law of conservation of energy, “Energy can neither be created nor destroyed but simply changes form into something that can be used.” A wire is always needed to conduct energy from a generator or solar panel to the light bulb and a light bulb is a simple apparatus that converts electrical energy into light energy.

However, the Light of God cannot be destroyed under any circumstance because the Lord Jesus Christ—the God-Man, declared that He was “***the Light of the world***” John 8:14. And that every believer should be a reflector of that *Light*: “*Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light to all that are in the house. **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven***” Matthew 5:14-16.

Because God knows it is impossible for you and me to generate light in and of ourselves, He displayed His own Light in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and it is an inexhaustible supply!

Dependent faith is the conductor that transmits Life and Love, from its Source in the Eternal Godhead to the heart of the believer that he ‘in turn’ will **transmit the Light and Love of the Lord Jesus to others**. Are you willing to be ‘His Light Conductor’ in this world of spiritual darkness? Why not prayerfully respond to Him, even now as He is speaking to you?

Have I any Tears?

13.

Just nine letters in two words constitute the shortest verse in the Bible – “*Jesus wept*” John 11:35. After His disciples told the Lord Jesus that Lazarus had died, He did not go into a panic mode and rush to the scene, but delayed two more days before commencing His journey, saying: “*I am glad for your sakes that I was not there . . .*”

However, when the Lord Jesus later arrived at the home of Lazarus’s sisters, He lovingly joined in their grief with tears, but said: “*I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent that you might believe*” John 11:15. Again, we read that the Lord Jesus shed tears when, “*He beheld the city, and wept over it*” Luke 19:41. In both occasions, the Lord Jesus was confronted with unbelief—and He wept!

As a believer, do I shed tears for the foreboding future of a blinded, lawless, and rebellious Christ-rejecting world and His holy Word—the Bible—or am I living a self-bound life?

Am I willing, through the magnifying effect of His compassionate teardrops splashed from Heaven, to view the dying multitudes of lost people who live in spiritual darkness, fear, and spiritual delusion? Do I weep for others?

Also, by my being totally available to His indwelling ‘soul-winning’ Life, am I available to compassionately prove His influential Love through me, reaching boys and girls, men, and women, all for His glory alone? How will I respond to what His Spirit is asking me even now?

Walk in the Light.

14.

“God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” 2 Corinthians 4:6.

The moon was not designated to create light but to reflect light that is generated by the sun. For the believer, faith is the conductor that compassionately transmits the life and love from its Source in the Eternal Godhead to a world that is bound in darkness and sin.

*“God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we **walk in the light**, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. ... if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” 1 John 1:5-7, 9.*

As a believer, am I a reflector of His Light, humbly transmitting the Love of the Lord Jesus to spiritually blinded peoples, living in a world of spiritual darkness?

When did I last clearly explain the gospel to another person which He brought across my path? Do I realize that God had planned the encounter for me to be His instrument of Love and Light? If not, am I willing to seek His cleansing and restoration to be His glorious Light reaching others?

Every day, we mingle with people who, although physically, emotionally, and intellectually alive are, sadly, at the same time spiritually dead! It is easy, when of a common interest, to comfortably relate to their physical, emotional, and intellectual areas. However, only through the compassion of the Love of Christ in our hearts, will I relate to their deep spiritual needs and their eternal destiny.

We can confess Christ with our life and with our lips. It is equally important to know that we can also deny Christ by our speech and by our silence. The Lord told every born-again believer: ***“You shall be witnesses unto Me”*** Acts 1:8. That means each of us has our own special mission field: There is the bank teller, the hairdresser, the neighbor or the person sitting with us in the doctor’s office. The Lord has given us the privilege to lead each of these people to a personal knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ:

“For the love of Christ constrains us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again ... Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new... Now then we are ambassadors for Christ ... that we might be the righteousness of God in Him” 2 Corinthians 5:14-20. Do I daily live up to my high calling from God? How will I respond to Him even just now?

What is Gain to Me?

16.

Years ago, a young lad with tears streaming down his face, passed my husband as he shook hands after a church service.

Richard left the other people, knelt beside him behind the church building and carefully looked into his face. “What is wrong, sonny?” “I’ve disobeyed God” blurted out of the lad. Apparently, he was carrying his very own dime, with which to buy an ice cream after the service. But, as the missionary offering plate passed, he felt he ought to give his precious dime, but instead decided to clutch on to it in his pocket. “Sir is it too late?” he desperately asked Richard, who had his arms tenderly around him.

A prayer followed, in which Richard praised God that he had witnessed two miracles: The first, was a young boy who now wanted to obey God rather than lick an ice cream: The second, was that the young boy gladly gave his ten cents for Missions, to which such love offerings gave opportunity for boys and girls in faraway places to also hear of the love of Jesus for them.

As a believer, are we holding onto to what we think is ‘ours’. Are all our possessions available as unto the Lord? Do we really mean that, “***Those things that are gain to me, I have counted loss for Christ***”? Philippians 3:7. What do I really count as ‘gain’ as unto the Lord and what do I really count as ‘loss’ unto Him? **Do I live for this world and forget that all I have in my Lord Jesus Christ, cannot be compared with anything that this world can offer?**

Defeat and Despair.

17.

Are you experiencing a sense of defeat and despair? God declares “*Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting place. For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief*” Proverbs 24:15-16.

When, as a small child in school, we learned how the Danish Vikings invaded Britain and defeated King Alfred who retreated to hide among sympathetic peasants in a home in the marshlands. One day, when Alfred sat by an open fire contemplating the seriousness of his six recent defeats, he was interrupted by the owner abruptly asking him to carefully watch over the bread-cakes which she had just placed on the open fire burning in front of him.

However, Alfred became distracted by a spider making six unsuccessful attempts to make its climb before succeeding on its seventh attempt and this incident encouraged Alfred to reassemble his men and victoriously counterattack the Danish invaders. The part of the ‘history’ story which I liked the best was that, upon the return of the peasant householder, she severely scolded the King for her burnt bread-cakes!!

The Lord does not ‘scold’ the believer for failure but, He ‘gently’ reminds us by His Holy Spirit, that all the responsibility of our living the Christian life has been transferred to the indwelling enabling power of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ. He wants us to obey Him by faith, and to trust Him by praise and thanksgiving, as He alone is the Victor!

Is it Too Big for God?

18.

Never minimize sin, and never magnify it, so that you think your sin is too big for God to handle! *“Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain”* Psalm 76:10.

King David was the father and Absalom was his much-loved son. Tragically, **the son despised his father’s love** and incited an insurrection in his attempt to dethrone his father and **enthroned himself**. **This followed the same pattern of Satan, whose total ambition to enthrone himself** was expressed: *“I will exalt myself and I will be like the Most High [God]”* Isaiah 14:13-14. Satan incited the crowds to crucify ‘the Lord of Life’ which resulted in **the precious Blood of the Lord Jesus** being shed and ended with **Satan’s very own defeat!**

Similarly, when the heartbreaking news of Absalom’s death reached the ears of King **David**, he **sobbed**: *“Oh my son, Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would to God that I had died for thee!”* 2 Samuel 18:33. **Though David could not die for the sin of Absalom, the Lord Jesus did die for your sin and mine when He triumphantly cried from the Cross: “It is finished! And He bowed His head and dismissed His Spirit”** John 19:30.

Are you aware that that the Lord Jesus died for your ‘sin’? The Scriptures clearly teaches us how Jesus declared: *“I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me”* John 14:6.

God has revealed Himself in a Book called the Bible. If you turn from the Bible—the only reliable spiritual guide—you will shut yourself up in delusion and error! **But if, in your search for God, you turn to the Bible with a teachable mind, you will find it to contain ALL the spiritual light and direction that you will ever need.**

Only through the Bible, can any of us gain a clear understanding of God as to whom He has declared Himself to be: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was LIFE; and the Life was the Light of men”* John 1:1-4.

Yes, the ‘Word of God’ is the very Lord Jesus Christ Himself! The Bible declares: *“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him”* 1 John 4:9.

A millennia after Job triumphantly testified: *“Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God”* Job 19:26. The Lord Jesus Christ entered the home of a grieving family and declared: *“I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?”* John 11:25-26. Can you answer “Yes!” to that question?

When stormy clouds and threatening waves surround your life, are you fearful and do you forget to trust in the triumphant, indwelling, risen Lord Jesus Christ? Our God is fully aware of every detail of our life before we were even in our mother's womb. He is also aware of every situation which we will encounter: Sometimes it might not be to our choosing, but is meant to mature us, to save others and, that He Himself be **glorified!** Having paid so great a price with His Blood for our redemption at the Cross, by His Holy Spirit, the Lord seeks to live daily through us during this brief time here on earth!

The Lord is our Christian life. We can totally depend upon His indwelling Holy Spirit for us to abide in Him and for Him to abide in us! *"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that that abideth in Me, and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing"* John 15:5. Remember, that it was when Peter stepped out of the boat and the waves threatened to drown him on the Sea of Galilee, that he was **fearful for his life because he had taken his eyes off the Son of God**—the Lord Jesus Christ. It was the same threatening waves that were **under the feet of the Lord Jesus that were under Peter's feet**, and he had to learn the hard way not to turn his eyes to the threatening waters. *"I am crucified with Christ: Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"* Galatians 2:20. For the believer, the most difficult times that we might face, are already known unto the Lord and even the most difficult situation is already under His feet! Hallelujah! **'For this I have Jesus!'**

Victory in Jesus.

21.

Where are you directing your thoughts and affections in your present situation? Are they **below** the clouds of life as you dwell on your problems and this world's evil system, or are they directed **above** the clouds to where the Lord Jesus victoriously reigns?

By His death, resurrection and ascension, the Lord Jesus now sits and reigns at the right hand of God the Father in Heaven interceding for each blood-bought, born-again believer. He has, *“delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son”* Colossians 1:13.

It was through His spotless, precious Blood, that the Lord Jesus conquered Satan and, *“destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil”* Hebrews 2:14. And, *“the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly”* Romans 16:20.

That Victory was won on the Cross when the Lord Jesus Christ shouted, **“IT IS FINISHED!”** Therefore, why do we fight a fight that is lost, instead of enjoying a Victory that is irrevocably won? Hallelujah, what a Savior!

Instead of our going through an average day overwhelmed as we try to handle the problems of life **below** the clouds, let us trust the Lord Jesus to be in total control from **above** the clouds, *“reign in life by One, Jesus Christ”* Romans 5:17. This way, there will be purpose in our every situation and fruit for Him resulting in all glory to His Name!

Triumph through Brokenness.

22.

As a believer, do I claim to personally love the Lord Jesus, yet at the same time, do I act independent of His daily promptings for my life? **Perhaps I think I am ‘serving’ God, but have I ever realized the absolute necessity for the brokenness of my proud, independent spirit?**

The Bible reads, “*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning*” Romans 15:4. So let us learn that: **Brokenness of my ‘proud self-will’** must be replaced by His joyful, liberating, resurrection Life being outworked through me at whatever the personal cost. The Lord has given us His wonderful promise: “*A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*” Psalm 51:17.

In Genesis 32:24-32, we read about Jacob wrestling until the breaking of day and **how that God ‘touched and put his thigh out of joint.’** This life-changing incident resulted in a brokenness of his independent lifestyle and caused him to limp in total dependency upon God for the rest of his life.

Such dependency upon the Lord, effected God’s future promises and blessings, not only for Jacob, but also for all his people. God declared: “*Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed*” Genesis 32:28.

Biblical prophecies fulfill God’s plan for His people and their, Land of Israel. “*Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling ...and in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for ALL people*” Zechariah 12:2-3.

A Time to Respond.

23.

Satanic infiltration has blinded the minds of people, resulting in diabolical activity, which is rapidly increasing around the world. The psalmist well described, ***“I have seen violence and strife in the city. Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof: mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it. Wickedness is in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets”*** Psalm 55:9-11.

The Bible warns, *“the mystery of lawlessness is already at work”* and *“the coming of ‘the lawless one’ is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because **they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved**”* 2 Thessalonians 2:7, 9-10.

The Lord Jesus said, *“I am the way, the **truth**, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me”* John 14:6. Therefore, we are urged to, *“call upon the Lord in the day of trouble”* Psalm 50:15. ***“Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation”*** 2 Corinthians 6:2.

The Lord Jesus Christ promised He would **return in the air** for born-again believers, His Church, and suddenly ‘snatch’ them away (‘Rapero’- Rapture) before the impending terrible seven year ‘Tribulation’ period of His judgement upon a Christ-rejecting world. After which time, the Lord will **return to the earth** to victoriously deliver Israel at the battle of Armageddon, before ruling the nations for a thousand years!

Salvation is absolutely free, however it is not cheap! The judgement for your sin and mine fell on the spotless Son of God—the Lord Jesus, when, at the Cross, God judged the total aggregate of sin for all humanity: ***“For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin”*** 2 Corinthians 5:21. That is why the Lord Jesus said to the religious ruler, Nicodemus, ***“Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again”*** John 3:7.

Salvation is not achieved by adopting a religious culture or imbibing a second-hand theology. Christ’s sacrifice was sufficient for every person in the world, but it is only efficient for those who personally believe on Him.

Eternal life does not begin when a Christian arrives in Heaven but, Eternal life commences immediately when a guilty hell-deserving sinner asks the Lord Jesus for cleansing by His precious blood and invites the Lord Jesus to take up residence in their heart. ***“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself... And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life”*** 1 John 5:10-12.

New life in Christ is God’s purpose for you and me! The Lord Jesus said: ***“Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me”*** Revelation 3:20. Are you really convinced that you know His Life in you? If so, praise Him for all that He will do in and through you today!

My personal experience of salvation commenced the instant I received the risen Lord Jesus Christ, by the infusion of the Holy Spirit, into my life and I was born again from above! Just as a caterpillar has the potential to become a butterfly, so by the enabling power of the indwelling Christ, the new believer is equipped to defy the gravitational pull of the world, the flesh, and the devil! Would you prefer to be a crawly, earthbound caterpillar or a beautiful fluttering butterfly? *“For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; **much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ**”* Romans 5:17.

A caterpillar becomes a butterfly when breaking through its shell, the old life is discarded for the new. Our earthbound existence and interests are broken by the expulsive power of a new life. *“**Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new**”* 2 Corinthians 5:17.

When at the Cross, I was baptized into Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit, in effect God declared He had no further purpose for anything I had inherited from Adam. The Lord Jesus further clarified this: *“**Without Me ye can do nothing**”* John 15:5. The glorious antidote of this is that: *“**I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me ... My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in Glory by Christ Jesus**”* Philippians 4:13,19.

Just as you received the Lord Jesus by faith, so it is the same principle of faith that enables you to appropriate the sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ to meet every demand of life. In other words: Your initial act of faith opened the door for you to adopt a continual attitude of faith. *“As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him”* Colossians 2:6. Just before the Lord Jesus left His disciples to go to the Cross and then return to Heaven, He said: *“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me”* John 15:4.

With this exhortation He gave us the key how to live the Christian life by faith. Imagine if you will, a metal poker in a fire. When you look at it you could say: “The poker is in the fire.” But if you look more closely, you would observe that the poker itself is red-hot. At which time, it would be quite right to then say: “The fire is in the poker!” Likewise, imagine a cup when it is plunged into a bucket of water. The cup is in the water, but the water is also in the cup!

Because, from a human perspective, the risen Lord abides in the heart of a believer through the Holy Spirit then; family, friends and fellow workers will be introduced to a quality of life that can only be explained in terms of the indwelling Christ! **The glorious fact is that, from God’s point of view, a believer abides in His Son—there to be kept and protected until safely arriving in Heaven! Glorious indeed!**

The fact that you have been genuinely ‘born again’ does not mean that you are now able, in and of yourself, to mimic the life of the Lord Jesus! Millions of Christians have been sadly frustrated that their efforts to do so has led to frustration and even despondency.

The liberating secret of joy and victory, is that the Lord never expected us to imitate His Life, but offered an exchanged life. He made the provision to be available for His imparted Life. By an act of faith, we received the Lord Jesus into our life. When we become a believer, we are to follow the same principle to live the life of faith. **This demands a life of total dependency upon the risen Lord to accomplish His minute details in and through us.** Because we have already died ‘in’ Christ, we are now dead to all the demands of legalism and have been freed from the condemnation of the law!

A life of total dependency upon the Lord always brings glory to God. But contrast a life of independent action originating from a ‘pride’ of accomplishment that the self-life always wants to be recognized! God has already pronounced ‘dead’ my every vestige of self-confidence. Freedom, joy, and praise began with my new life in Christ – it was all by an act of faith and we are to continue living by the same dependent faith. “For if by one man’s offense (Adam) death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall **reign in life by One, Jesus Christ”** Romans 5:17. The Lord is my Life and I am but His vessel!

To express the victory of dependent faith, we need to gratefully acknowledge:
“Thank You, Lord Jesus that You are everything that I am not!”

The astonishing reality is that God has transferred the responsibility of our Christian living to Somebody else—the Lord Jesus Christ. Miraculously, He has taken up His residence in your heart and is the only Person who can succeed in living the Christian life!

The Lord Jesus—Who is Pure—is now our purity in a world of immorality.
The Lord Jesus—Who is Victor—is now our victory in a world of temptation.
The Lord Jesus—Who is Love—is now our love in a world of self-seeking.
Yes! The Lord Jesus—Who is *“the Resurrection and the Life”* (John 11:25), is our very own Christian Life!

Unbelief will question all that has been received in Christ, but faith will rejoice in that, “*of His fullness have we all received, and grace for grace*”
John 1:16. God’s unmerited favor (Grace) is bestowed at the time of new birth.
God’s unmerited favor (Grace) is relayed through me by the enabling of His indwelling! Grace given to me that His Grace may flow through me!
Amen!

When we humbly make our life totally available to the Lord Jesus, He Who, came *“to seek and to save that which was lost”* (Luke 19:10), will continue His soul-seeking work of ‘seeking and saving the spiritually lost’ through me.
This way, the Lord receives all the Glory as His **Life begets life!**

The Battle Rages.

29.

In spite of ‘so-called’ scientific enlightenment, the occult and ‘witches’ covens proliferate even to the high places in our lands. Satanic worshippers, séances and ‘black magic’ incite to rebellion, hate of authority, violence, and death. Increasing numbers acquiesce to the ‘majority thinking’ of bringing in their ‘savior’ of a ‘one world government’ with a resultant Utopia.

Often, young people in their total spiritual void, unwittingly succumb to the oppressive forces of unseen demons with resultant depression and suicide. The spotless Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the only Savior of the world who can change the most rebellious, sinful heart:

“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me” John 14:6. This necessitates turning in repentance to the Lord Jesus Who fully paid the price for our sin, when from the Cross He Kingly cried, *“It is finished.”* The grave could not hold His ‘incorruptible’ body and, three days later, He arose and was seen by many; He explained fulfilled prophecies to His disciples, and concluded with **a commission for them to witness to others:**

“I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets and in the psalms, concerning Me...It is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things” Luke 24:44-48.

Turn from Darkness.

30.

In their misguided quest, many people turn from the Light of God to the darkness of the occult, often because of some sort of false, empty spiritual fulfillment. In these last days, evil will increase. Already, deceptive signposts misguide and, 'peer-groups' darken the mind of others by their rebellious defiance. Great spiritual delusion, with its resultant apostasy, is caused by distain for God's inspired Word.

The platform is being set for the Coming of our Lord Jesus in the air to 'snatch up,' (Rapture) His Church of born-again believers before the master of deception, the anti-Christ, will head up 'a one world government.'

We read in 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10, *that sinister deeds will be "after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."*

"But as many as receive Him—(the Lord Jesus Christ)—to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name: Which are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" John 1:12-13. Turn now from 'darkness' to the 'Light of the world'—Jesus, the Son of God, Who shed His Blood on the Cross for you. *"And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And, whosoever will, let him take of the water of Life freely"* Revelation 22:17.

The dark practices of ancestral worship are not limited to some unreached tribe but, are increasingly prevalent among sophisticated people attracted by superficial spiritual curiosity. Even children fall prey to darkness by various games and movies. **Our godless society is increasingly fascinated by the supernatural and are easily controlled by the satanic powers of darkness. Our young people need the Word of God and deliverance from the mind-changing educational systems and media propaganda.**

The good news is that God sent the Lord Jesus Christ in a spotless body, that He might *“deliver us from the power of darkness, and translate us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His Blood and forgiveness of sins”* Colossians 1:13-14. Has this happened to you? If so, and if you have been ‘born again’, then, in Christ, God, *‘has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love and a sound mind’* 2 Timothy 1:7.

Speaking of the believer, we read in Revelation 12:11 that, *“They overcame him (Satan) by the Blood of the Lamb (the Lord Jesus) and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.”*

And, whether we face persecution, isolation or even martyrdom, the Lord Jesus has given us the wonderful promise: *“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me”* Hebrews 13:5-6.

Freemasonry is the largest international **secret society** in the world, presently boasting a membership of over ten million men. **In a demonic attempt to combine differing beliefs**—whether Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish or a ‘so-called’ Christian—**freemasons are initiated into a demonic bondage and eternal darkness.** The initiation ceremony into **the Masonic secret society** is both dramatic and full of symbolism **as the candidate is guided away from the biblical concept of God and introduced to a man-made deflection from the Bible.** Each candidate must confess that he is in darkness reaching for the light. A statement a Christian could not confess, because the born-again believer is already in the Light of our Lord Jesus!

*“The true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” John 1:9. “The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light” Matthew 6:22. Also, we read: “He that believeth in Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that **light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light**, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God” John 3:18-21.*

God asks all humanists, what must surely be a very humbling question, *“Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding”* Job 38:4.

Humanism, which is nothing more than the worshiping of man, is really not as new a philosophy as some may think but is the same old story as when: **Satan tempted Eve, he posed an impossibility as a possibility by saying:** *“you will be as gods”* Genesis 3:5. And, even in Paul’s day, God said: *“They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator”* Romans 1:25.

In our day, Satan continues his nasty work through the deceptive teachings of Secular Humanism as they reject the idea or belief in any supernatural being such as God Himself, and class themselves as agnostic or atheist. **Humanists** have no belief in an afterlife and so they focus on seeking happiness only in this life. **Humanism is heralded in universities, multi-national corporate seminars, popular magazines, in politics and in radio and television shows as a dressed-up ‘Pamper you’ selfish theme.**

The Humanistic philosophy is now advancing, at an exponential pace under the guise of a ‘one world government,’ and is no longer being confined just to a ‘religious’ world! May God deliver many to say: *“Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption, for Thou has cast all my sins behind Thy back”* Isaiah 38:17.

We are told in Ephesians 2:2 that Satan is, “***the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the children of disobedience.***” As a created being, originally, he was called Lucifer, but **because of his pride**, God threw him and a third of his angels out of Heaven:

*“How art thou **fallen from Heaven**, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst **weaken the nations!** For thou hast said in thine heart, **I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne** above the stars of God: **I will sit also upon the mount** of the congregation, in the sides of the north: **I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.** Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall... saying: Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof...”* Isaiah 14:12-17.

*“**The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand**”* Isaiah 14:24. God's sovereign purpose will always be outworked for His Glory, “*For to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done*” Acts 4:28. Satan was ‘thrown down,’ but in Christ, we are ‘raised up’ in Him: “*But God ... Even when we were dead in sins ... made us alive together with Christ, (by grace you have been saved); And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus*” Ephesians 2:4-6.

I wonder what kind of music you prefer when you sing praises to our Lord Jesus. Is it just a rhythm of 'what's in', or are your words sung with heartfelt response of true worship to the infallible living Almighty God? Do the words of your song express faith and total obedience to Him, or are you trying to impress others with your 'good' voice? Do you mean the words when you vow: **"Take my voice and let me sing, always only for my King?"**

The aged Apostle John, when he encountered the glorified Christ on the Isle of Patmos, cried: ***"When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead"*** Revelation 1:17. Likewise, the Prophet Isaiah was overwhelmed when he declared: ***"I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple . . . The seraphim . . . cried unto one another, and said Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of Hosts"*** Isaiah 6:1-3,5.

But you might say, that spoke of 'them' as they were 'special' people and not like us. ***"There is none righteous, no not one."*** In my innermost being, am I really willing for the Lord to bring me through 'a valley of brokenness' and conviction of my self-centered, barren living? Before our Almighty God, confess all arrogant pride and desire for self-centered 'worldly' recognition. In the Name of the Lord Jesus ***"worship Him in spirit and in truth"*** John 4:24.

Let the ‘Son’ Shine Through.

36.

Have you noticed that, on a dark day your windows look clean but, when the sun shines, you are amazed just how dirty they really are?

We are promised that: *“In Thy Light shall we see light”* Psalm 36:9. And similarly we read: *“God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin”* 1 John 1:5, 7.

Because of the precious shed Blood, the believer can thankfully claim God’s promise of His cleansing and **let the ‘Son’ shine through** because we are, *“in the Light!”* In the Person of His Son—the Lord Jesus Christ, God stepped into the world and declared: *“I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of life”* John 8:12.

Just as God made an awesome disclosure of Himself in the Person of His Son, our fellowship is restored when we personally make a full disclosure of our self in His Holy Presence! *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”* 1 John 1:9.

“For God, Who commanded the Light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” 2 Corinthians 4:6. The purpose of His Light shining through the believer, is that others might be brought to Him while there is still an opportunity in this very dark world of sin. May all be for the Glory of God!

As a believer, **am I enjoying a living fellowship with the eternal God?** If not, am I willing to humble myself and confess my sins? If I did not commit my sins in bundles, why do I try to confess them in bundles by quickly saying, “Lord Jesus, please forgive **all** my sins”?

On the contrary, let us keep short accounts with God! Only by such detailed confession, is our fellowship with a Holy God restored as the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all our sin: *“If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us* [keeps on cleansing] *from all sin”* 1 John 1:7.

This means that, the moment ‘a hasty word falls from my lips,’ or ‘a thought of lust crosses my mind,’ or the comment, ‘it is not fair!’ reveals my self-pity and I should immediately confess each specific sin and truly repent in my heart before His Holy Presence. Then, by the fresh infilling of His Spirit, daily confession of conscious sins and daily cleansing by His precious Blood, will prepare the way for a fresh daily infilling of fellowship through the Spirit:

“Be ye always being filled (empowered) with the Holy Spirit: Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord: Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God” Ephesians 5:18-21.

Live the abundant life of a living fellowship with Him Who is our Life!

Why He left Heaven.

38.

Peter, James and John caught a brief glimpse of the glory of God when, on **the ‘Mount of Transfiguration,’** *“His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light”* Matthew 17:2. This very same Lord Jesus, *“by Whom also He made the worlds; Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High”* Hebrews 1:2-3.

Surely, it is an awesome experience for every believer to have a living access, by His Name, into the presence of our all-powerful Creator and Redeemer! Shortly before our spotless Lord Jesus died on the Cross, rose from the grave and ascended to Heaven, He prayed to His Father: *“I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was”* John 17:4-5.

The Lord Jesus revealed His purpose for having left Heaven to clothe Himself as perfect Man in our midst: *“And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given them ... I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou has sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me”* John 17:22-23. **This is the Savior’s bequest to every ‘born-again’ believer who receives Him into their life by faith. Such amazing love and such amazing grace!**

Before the Lord Jesus dismissed His Spirit on the Cross, He triumphantly shouted, ***“It is Finished”*** (John 19:30) and, **through His redemptive work, secured a company of believers who will reign with Him forever in Heaven!** We read of an astonishing sequel of yet future events, ***“And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the Heavens are the works of Thine hands: They shall perish; but Thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed”*** Hebrews 1:10-12.

You may now be asking: **“In what way will this world be “folded up and changed?”** God gives us the answer in the book of Revelation. In effect, this change will be a very dramatic exchange: ***“And I saw a new Heaven and a new earth: for the first Heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea”*** Revelation 21:1.

“No more sea?” However, when John was exiled for his faith on a desolate prison island, the sea spoke of prison bars which isolated him from his brethren whom he dearly loved. Thankfully there will be, **‘no such separation and isolation in Heaven,’ ‘no tears,’ ‘no death,’ ‘no sorrow’ and, ‘no more pain’** Revelation 21:4. As Richard wrote many years ago:

‘For those who know the Savior’s care, the Heavenly home has **“no sea there.”** The Lamb Himself shall be the Light and round Him, all His children bright, with praise and worship shall adore, Christ Jesus, LORD, forevermore!’

Our Heavenly Home.

40.

Before the sun was created, God diffused His own Light and Glory throughout the world. Every born-again believer has the deep longing to be 'Home' with the Lord in Heaven! Just imagine living in the purity of His Presence with no more 'smog of moral pollution' and no more 'politically correct mental deception!' The Lord Himself is the Light and the Glory.

As the aged Apostle John was instructed to write about **the future Heavenly Jerusalem**: *"Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God. Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal"* Revelation 21:9-11.

When speaking of this 'New Jerusalem' we read, *"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof"* Revelation 21:23. His Light and Glory of God will radiate throughout His Eternal City with no need of the sun, as we know it today: *"... the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever"* Revelation 22:3-5.

He is Coming Again!

41.

In the light of our Lord's anticipated return, every day is a glorious opportunity for the believer to pray for, and to share Christ with others.

"I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days, scoffers, walking after their own lusts and saying, where is the promise of His coming?" 2 Peter 3:1-4.

Therefore, it is essential to be ready to meet the Lord 'in the air' when He comes for His purchased Bride, the Church: *"The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord"* 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

For the believer, the supreme joy of Heaven will be to gaze upon the face of the Lord Jesus Christ and to, *"see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads"* Revelation 22:4.

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" John 14:1-3.

The Bible is the unveiled revelation of God Himself! *“For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of both joints and marrow, and is a **discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart**”* Hebrews 4:12. The Bible declares that, only through the saving power of the spotless Blood of our Lord Jesus upon the Cross, can the vilest sinner be delivered from Satan's power and enabled to stand strong in Christ! *“**Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in Whom we have redemption through His Blood, even the forgiveness of sins**”* Colossians 1:12-14.

The believer is not called to be ‘conformed’ to this world but is to be ‘transformed’ into a distinctive person, and commissioned ‘vessel,’ for His Holy Spirit to work through according to His purposes only. The cutting edge of the Word of God was not meant to be ‘popularized’ in order to draw a crowd, but by the power of the Holy Spirit, it is meant to be His sharp two-edged sword to the hearer: *“**I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world**”* John 17:14. *“**Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in Heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you**”* Matthew 5:11-12.

In the book of Revelation, we read of the ‘Holy City’ where believers will live forever and ever with the Lord Jesus: *“And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven . . . And I heard a great voice out of Heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God . . . and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal . . . and the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof”* Revelation 21:2-3, 10-11, 23.

What a **Place** and what a **Person**! I will see my beloved Lord Jesus Christ. Also, what a **Promise** and what a **Presence**: *“Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the Presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen”* Jude 24-25.

As a believer, we will be presented ‘**Faultless**’ to the Father by our precious Lord Jesus Christ! With great joy, as ‘the Lover of our soul’ Christ brought us through some of the worst imaginable situations in order that He might conform us to Himself. Is there any wonder that, forever, we will love and adore Him in adoration and praise. **All glory to His Precious Name!**

It is vital that the believer understands that this world is not our home but, our priority of living must be to bring glory to the Lord in whatever situation He has planned. It is essential that we enjoy a personal, living fellowship with Him, and that we are swift to daily obey His every direction! To do this, we must cherish God's Word as, *"a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path"* Psalm 119:105. That necessitates, when cleansing is needed, that we are **willing to humble ourselves** and thus keep 'short accounts of our sins' before God. Avoid the attitude: 'Now I am saved and on my way to Heaven and well able of working out the common details.' Sadly, many with such an independent attitude, spend their lifetime sorting out their apathetic mess! The Lord knows what is best for each believer's life and gives His peace and joy when we obey the leading of the indwelling Holy Spirit!

With deep astonishment and wonder in knowing that, with exceeding joy **the Lord Himself will present the believer**—unworthy sinners saved by grace—**to His Beloved Father**, let us center our praise and adoration upon the Lord. It will not be because of what we can do for Him, but what He can do through us: *"He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied"* Isaiah 53:11.

As Frances Havergal wrote: "O the joy to see Thee reigning, Thee, my own beloved Lord! In Thy beauty all resplendent. In Thy glory all transcendent ... **Vindicated and enthroned; glorified, adored, and owned!" Amen!**

The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is not meant to be a ‘social kindergarten’ pandering to the wishes of the congregation, but it is a ‘boot camp’ preparing us for the battlefield: *“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand”* Ephesians 6:12-13.

Thank God that this battle has been fought and victoriously won by our Lord Jesus at the Cross: *“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He [the Lord Jesus] might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil”* Hebrews 2:14.

As the Apostle Paul testified: *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” Romans 8:35-39.

“Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come”

Revelation 4:8.

‘Eternity can be likened to the piece of paper on which the line is drawn. Both the beginning and the end of the line are visible at one glance.’ The late C. S. Lewis gave us this helpful illustration about the vital connection between ‘time’ and ‘eternity.’ He suggested that ‘time’ could be likened to a line that is drawn on a piece of paper: This line has a ‘start’ and a ‘finish.’

In the Bible **hundreds of prophecies about future events are precisely accurate because they were inspired by ‘the One who knows the end from the beginning.’** God has no yesterday, no today, and no tomorrow. Forever He will be what He always was—in other words—**He is the God of eternity!** To try to comprehend this, we could exclaim with King David: *“Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it”* Psalm 139:6.

*“Remember the former things of old: for **I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me,** Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, **My counsel shall stand,** and I will do all My pleasure ... I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it”* Isaiah 46:9-11.

As the Lord Jesus said: *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life”* John 5:24.

Whereas some people believe in reincarnation and others view suicide as a terminal solution for their pain and problems, **death is not the end of our life but moving from one realm to another.**

Many only think within the confines of a chronological sequence but, *“He hath made everything beautiful in its time: also, **He has set the world in their heart**, so that no man can not find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end”* Ecclesiastes 3:11.

Even when a doctor pronounces '**death**' over a body, it **does not mean the extinction of life, but of an eternal continuance of our being either in Heaven or Hell. The most important decision we all must make is in the context of time. It all depends upon whether we reject or receive God's provision through the shed Blood of His Beloved Son, the Lord Jesus.**

The Bible declares, *“**It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgement**”* Hebrews 9:27. The Lord Jesus came into this world to pay the price for your sin and mine and offers forgiveness to any who, will turn from their sin and by faith, receive Him into their life.

We are urged, *“**Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation**”* 2 Corinthians 6:2. Are you willing to receive the Lord Jesus today? He has promised that He will deliver you from *“all condemnation”* and make you a totally new person in Him by the power of His Holy Spirit so that you can live with Him throughout eternity. Praise be to God!

We shall be Like Him.

48.

What an astonishing miracle of the grace of God, that eternal life begins the moment we are 'born-again,' and that we will be transformed into the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ!

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is” 1 John 3:1-2.

Every true child of God will be transformed into His likeness, but our spiritual capacity will be distinctly different! Presently, what the believer is becoming here on earth will one day be crystalized in Heaven where we will have different capacities. I could hold in one hand a 10 ounce bar of gold and in the other a ¼ ounce bar. Both are gold but the potential of their usefulness is vastly different.

This ‘hostile’ world is not our Home. Our personal witness, love, service, worship and praise as unto our Lord Jesus Christ, will be exalted to a new dimension of adoration, praise and service in Heaven, where we worship our glorified and exalted Lamb of God upon His Throne!

“Every day will I bless Thee ... I will speak of the glorious honour of Thy majesty, and of Thy wondrous works. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth” Psalm 145:2, 5, 18.

Alpha and Omega.

49.

The Lord Jesus declared, *“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last”* Revelation 22:13. At Creation, the Lord Jesus was already there - ‘**Alpha!**’ When time is no more, the Lord Jesus will still be there - forever - ‘**Omega!**’ The Greek alphabet has 24 letters of which the first letter is ‘Alpha’ and the last letter is ‘Omega.’

Have you ever noticed a child who is given a box of wooden blocks? Each block is embossed with a letter of the alphabet, and it is hoped that, the child will become familiar with the letters and eventually compose a small word. Typically, however, the child ends up scattering the letters, resulting in an unintelligible and meaningless jumble with no evidence of even one ‘hoped for’ word.

For me to communicate my thoughts to you, I use words. Likewise, when God communicated His thoughts of love to ‘a world that had gone awry,’ He gave us His ‘**Word**’ in the inspired sixty-six books of the Bible: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God ... and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth”* John 1:1-2, 14.

The Lord Jesus said: *“It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life”* John 6:63. Will you ask Him to be the ‘Alpha’ and ‘Omega’ of your life?

Incredibly, the Lord Jesus Christ—God the Son, stepped out of eternity into a 33-year span of ‘time’ here on earth. While living in a bodily form as Man, He said: “***I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work***” John 9:4.

Likewise, you and I are allotted a limited timespan here on earth and are exhorted to be, “***redeeming the time, because the days are evil***” Ephesians 5:16. Every day is a gift from God and, every day that is given, is taken away forever. Yes, it has already melted into eternity! This explains the significance of our Lord’s Prayer to His Heavenly Father when He said, “*As Thou hast sent Me into the world, [as perfect Man] even so have I also sent them into the world*” John 17:18.

Although the Lord Jesus was never ever less than God, while here on earth, He acted as perfect Man. Accordingly, as perfect Man, the Lord Jesus said: “*Lo, I come . . . to do Thy will, O God*” Hebrews 10:7. **As perfect Man**—He also said, “*Truly, truly, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do; for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise*” John 5:19.

As God, the Lord Jesus had the sovereign power to do what He willed. But, while here on earth, the Lord chose to always be obedient to and utterly dependent upon His Father in Heaven. Likewise, as believers in the world, the Lord Jesus continues His work through us by the indwelling Holy Spirit!

There is a day coming when earth will be dissolved and time will be no more: *“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death”* Revelation 21:8.

Every person who has ever been born will either be in Heaven or Hell. God in His great love towards us, even amid such a solemn announcement of judgement, is ***“not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”*** 2 Peter 3:9.

When on planet earth, the Lord Jesus renounced His independent action and was totally obedient to and dependent upon, His Heavenly Father. He clearly taught the believer that, ***“Without Me, you can do nothing”*** John 15:5.

Therefore, it is essential for every believer to live a life of total obedience and dependence upon our Lord, that: *“From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water”* John 7:38. By His grace, Living ‘Water’ is given: ***“the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life”*** John 4:14.

By the same indwelling Holy Spirit, may we bring forth ‘**much fruit**’ for His glory: *“If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. **Herein is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, so shall you be My disciples**”* John 15:7-8.

The Glory of the Glory Land.

52.

The Bible teaches us it is the Lord Jesus Who makes Heaven-Heaven! He alone is the center and the circumference; He is the supreme object of attention, affection, and adoration; He is the Light and the Life; He is the Glory of the ‘Glory Land’! How heavenly will your Heaven be?

My capacity to worship the Lord on earth will determine my capacity to worship Him in Heaven! The Lord knows how to develop my capacity for Him on earth (whether pain or pleasure) for He has destined that which will be for His glory alone in Heaven. **So, whether here on earth or later in Heaven, God’s purpose for embracing sinners into His family, is that our lives may be rooted in God and centered in Christ!**

The absence of pain and poverty, together with our reunion with friends and family, are not of themselves the prime constituents of Heaven, **but it is about the reigning supremacy of our glorified Christ Who alone makes Heaven to be Heaven for every believer!** The centrality of Christ is the basis of Christian fellowship as many a suffering saint has proven, *“that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ”* 1 John 1:3.

“... Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God ... these words are true and faithful ... I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely” Revelation 21:3, 5-6.

A young graduate minister, from a very liberal Bible seminary, scoffed when Dorothy discussed the destruction of the ancient Canaanites and explained that her conviction was based on the truth that, **a Holy God must judge sin!**

The Prophet Habakkuk lived under the evil Chaldeans, and witnessed great national crisis and distress, such as we are increasingly seeing around the world today. Habakkuk cried unto God, **“What can I do in this present chaotic age?”** With fear and distraction gripping the hearts of so many people, we can identify with Habakkuk’s bewilderment and the reason he turned to God for an answer. Before God pours out His wrath upon this Christ-rejecting world, the believer also has the same Divine answer: **‘Everything is falling into place!’**

The present scene on earth, is being set for a terrible seven years of ‘Tribulation.’ For those of us who have personally received the Lord Jesus into their life and are Blood-bought ‘born-again’ believers, **the wrath of God has already fallen upon His beloved Son at the Cross.** Therefore, we anticipate meeting Him ‘in the air’ at His ‘trumpet call.’ With total dependency upon our indwelling Lord, because we are risen with Him, we are no longer a part of this world’s system:

“For if we have been planted together in the likeness of death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed that henceforth we should not serve sin for he that is dead is freed from sin” Romans 6:5-6.

Great Joy!

54.

The prophet Habakkuk was able to declare—even in the worst of situations, ***“Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation”*** Habakkuk 3:18.

Does the same **‘joy of the Lord’** replace your feelings, even in the worst of situations you might yet face? As in the days of the Prophet Habakkuk, we can totally trust God, even although we also might witness:

Violence in the nation: *“For spoiling and violence are before me.”*

Corrupt judiciary: *“The law is slacked, and justice doth never go forth.”*

Civil unrest and internal strife by lewd demonstrations and anger on the streets: *“For spoiling and violence are before me: and there are those who raise up strife and contention.”*

Sexual promiscuity and evil practices: *“Why dost thou show me iniquity”* Habakkuk 1:3-4.

Land-grabbing by environmentalists and ‘preservation agencies’: *“shall possess the dwelling places that are not theirs”* Habakkuk 1:6. As we anticipate meeting our Lord Jesus ‘in the air’ at the ‘Rapture’: ***“Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation”*** Habakkuk 3:18.

Behind all the evil of what we are daily witnessing around the world, let us totally trust the Lord Jesus, knowing that His sovereign purposes are being outworked according to His Word—***“Yet, I will rejoice in the Lord.”*** Amen!

Though **Habakkuk** accurately prophesied future events, he concluded his three brief chapters, not by looking to the future, but by looking at the past. **His faith and confidence in the power and providence of Almighty God** quickened him to believe that the God of yesterday is the God of today!

In chapter three, the word “***Selah***” is mentioned three times. This means, ‘**pause, and think about this**’—a practice seldom pursued in our quick, slick Christian culture. We might read Bible facts, but often miss their application! Each mention of the word “***Selah***,” is in the context of cosmological and anthropological miracles.

First: The mountains. **Second:** The river and sea. **Third:** The sun, moon, and the stars. To further fortify our faith as we trust in the Lord, let us prayerfully reflect on, **the Law-giving, the Life-giving and the Listening-God!**

The Law-giving God: “*God [approaching from Sinai] came from Teman [which represents Edom] and the Holy One from Mount Paran. ***Selah***”* Habakkuk 3:3. Stop and think about that! Mount Paran was in the same range of mountains as Mount Sinai and is where the Presence of a holy God gave Moses the Tablets of the Law. **This Law cannot be broken, but those who defy it will themselves be broken by it!**

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise” Psalm 51:17. **Are you surrendered to the Lord in true brokenness that the explanation of your life is Christ living in you?**

The God of the Impossible!

56.

Let us ‘stop and think about’ the power of the Almighty God Who divided the Red Sea to deliver the children of Israel from the wicked armies of Pharaoh: *“Was the Lord displeased against the rivers? Was **Thine anger** against the rivers? Was **Thy wrath** against the sea that Thou didst ride upon Thine horses and Thy chariots of salvation? Selah”* Habakkuk 3:8.

Surely this encourages us to turn from our feeble thoughts and set our mind upon **the God of the impossible!** *“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you”* Matthew 6:33.

The all-powerful God, similarly, halted the water flow of the River Jordan, making a way possible for the children of Israel to enter the Promised Land. As He did in the past, He is still the unchanging God Whom we love, trust, and adore. So let us praise His holy Name!

The Listening God: The children of Israel faced much resistance in the Promised Land and God commanded that the Canaanites and other licentious nations be judged and destroyed. Habakkuk reflected upon Joshua 10:13, *“The sun and the moon stood still in their habitation; at the light of Thine arrows they went, and at the shining of Thy glittering spear. Thou didst march through the land in indignation, Thou didst **thresh the nations in anger** ... Selah”* Habakkuk 3:11-12. **‘Stop and think about this’:** By repentance, praise, total faith and trust in the **God of the impossible**, why not receive the Lord Jesus and let Him be **your ‘Christian life’ living through you by the Holy Spirit?**

God can do the Impossible!

57.

Have you ever put yourself out on the limb of faith and trusted God to do the impossible? As you read the Bible, are you proving your Savior and Lord in **all** things even when facing days of increasing chaos and conflict?

Let us reflect upon when the orbital rhythm of the galactic system ceased for twenty-four hours. It was at that critical time, one man—Joshua, went before ‘the God of the impossible’ in intercessory prayer, knowing that five kings had made an alliance to unite and strengthen their defense against the advancing forces of Israel at a most critical battle:

“Then spoke Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel,

“Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Aijalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies ... And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord harkened unto the voice of a man; for the Lord fought for Israel” Joshua 10:12-14.

Let us rejoice and obediently, ***“walk by faith and not by sight”*** trusting that our Lord Jesus will be glorified in His way and in His perfect timing. ***“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him ... heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ”*** Colossians 3:17, 23-24.

Whatever conflict you might face, the outcome depends upon whether you are trusting in yourself or in almighty God! Rejoice to know that every ‘born-again’ believer will be ‘Raptured’- snatched away to the Lord, whom they shall meet ‘in the air’ before ‘the great Day of God’s Wrath.’ This period is called ***“The great tribulation”*** judgement and will be a seven-year period when ***the “Wrath of God”*** will be poured out on a Christ-rejecting world. Such as with the destruction of the Canaanites, it is but a preview of what the future holds for this rebellious world. **As our Lord Jesus said, “Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time”** Matthew 24:21.

At this current time, **we are already witnessing an increasing ‘Pre-tribulation’ Tribulation** which is, **‘the outpouring of the wrath of unbelievers upon born-again believers.’**

We are so blessed to know that over 27% of the Bible gives prophetic details, of which so much has been most accurately fulfilled to the smallest detail, including the birth, life, death, burial, ascension of our Lord Jesus.

Prior to going to the Cross, the Lord Jesus said, ***“Now is the judgement of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out”*** John 12:31. Today, we can also reflect that: ***“Through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil”*** Hebrews 2:14. **What a Savior!**

Rejoice!

59.

All satanic and demonic subterfuge was defanged as **chaos moved to conflict**, and **conflict to conquest** through the death, burial, and resurrection of **‘The Captain of the Host’**—Yeshua—Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior!

With a shout of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, we can prove that **the prayer of faith does not fight for the victory but rejoices in the victory that has already been established!** Just like the prophet, Habakkuk, only by faith in the Lord’s ‘Finished Work’ at the Cross, is the believer able to joyfully triumph in our days of severe testing!

“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no food; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls:

“Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation”
Habakkuk 3:17-18.

Rejoice! The joy of the Lord is made possible for you and me because He came into this world in a sinless body, suffered and died on the Cross, rose triumphantly from the dead, ascended to Heaven, and poured out His Spirit on earth for those who personally received Him—the Church!

Through His Resurrection Life, we can rejoice in every circumstance and look for His coming at any moment, remembering that **the secret of the victorious Christian life is Joy! Joy! Joy!** Let us **REJOICE in Him!**

Holy! Holy! Holy!

60.

It was a life-transforming experience for Isaiah when, 2,600 years ago, he said: ***“I saw the Lord.”*** Accompanying this vision of the Lord sitting upon a throne, there echoed through the temple the voices of seraphim. Each seraphim had six wings. Four of **those wings were used for self-effacement** and only two of them were used to fly. In today’s church, the very opposite can happen as **people imagine that to be successful in the work of the Lord**, they must convey the right ‘**image;**’ their own ‘**achievements,**’ ‘**abilities**’ and ‘**appearance.**’ But not so with the seraphim!

Ringling through the courts of the Temple, were the voices of the seraphim who said one to another, *“Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory”* Isaiah 6:3. In effect they were saying, ‘Turn your eyes from us and behold the Lord in His glory and holiness.’ **To catch an understanding of holiness is the prerequisite to understanding the absolute need of cleansing by the spotless Blood of the Lord Jesus.**

Do I seek His daily cleansing and fresh infilling of His Spirit in order that, *“They that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth”*? John 4:24.

Prior to his departure to be with the Lord in 2019, Richard wrote:

“If I am able to convey in these words a portion of the wonder, love and praise that has flowed from my heart in contemplating this theme, then my prayer will be answered.”

Toppled from your Pedestal.

61.

In this atmosphere of transparent holiness and glory, **Isaiah became conscious of his own sin and need and bewailed:** *“Woe is me! Because I am a man of unclean lips: and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts”* Isaiah 6:5.

The drama of the moment when the Lord Yeshua—Jesus, *“the Lord of hosts,”* made His appearance and **Isaiah was toppled from his pedestal** of ‘proclaiming the needs of others’ was, when he himself became a broken man—crying: *“Woe is me!”*

Revival commences when a believer, in brokenness, encounters the Lord God of holiness and glory. No need for stained glass windows or a spotlight focusing on the preacher, or emotive music to draw the crowds—but just an encounter with a Holy God of glory! To catch an understanding of His holiness, is the prerequisite to understanding the absolute need of cleansing by the spotless Blood of—God the Son—the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the Blood of Jesus . . . Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water” Hebrews 10:19, 22.

In the same way that Isaiah ‘fell from his pedestal’ by his saying: *“I am undone”* or *“I am finished,”* the Lord seeks that we likewise **approach His holiness** with a contrite brokenness before His holy Presence.

What about the Tongue?

62.

When Isaiah confessed previously unconscious sins of which he became aware of in the presence of a Holy God, he cried: ***“I am a man of unclean lips.”*** A ‘seared’ conscience becomes sensitized when we honestly and brokenly come before our Holy God: ***“But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison . . . Out of the same mouth proceeded blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be”*** James 3:8, 10.

I am master of my unspoken words, but I am a slave to the words I have spoken—angry words; boastful words; critical words; deceitful words; envious words; flattering words; gossiping words—the list could continue!

At the point of Isaiah’s problem of his ‘unclean lips,’ the Lord responded: ***“Then flew one of the seraphim . . . having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar”*** Isaiah 6:6. Yes, the live coal was taken from **the altar—the place of sacrifice where the blood was shed**. With brokenness and honest confession of sin and failure, Isaiah, who had been undone, was now made over anew. He was no longer dependent upon ‘his own ability’ but, ‘totally dependent’ upon the living God!

‘The fire of Pentecost’ can never fall on lips where ‘the fire of Hell’ is already burning. Only an open and honest confession of ungodly words, thoughts and deeds can bring a cleansing of the lips and a renewed commission to the life!

The commission, “*and who will go for us?*” was given from the Eternal Triune God who is One in Three and Three in One: “*Holy! Holy! Holy!*” Holy Father, Holy Child Jesus, and Holy Spirit.

Holy Father: Just before the Lord Jesus approached the ignominy of the Cross, He, “*lifted up His eyes to Heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come*” John 17:1. Then, in anticipation of His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, He prayed for His disciples who would remain on earth after His departure: “*Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are*” John 17:11.

Holy Child Jesus: As Peter and John faithfully proclaimed the gospel they were subject to vicious threats of possible imprisonment, and when correctly identified, **the real goal of such antagonism was always, “*against Thy Holy Child Jesus*”** Acts 4:27.

Around the world, **hostility to the gospel is increasing** by a Christ-rejecting civilization. This attack is primarily directed at true believers, as the light of the gospel is attracting people to the Lord Jesus Christ, with an apparent antagonism from those who resist all that is holy, pure, righteous, and true!

As Isaiah answered the Lord’s question, “*Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?*” May we, by His **Holy Spirit’s enabling**, also solemnly respond, “*Here am I; send me*” Isaiah 6:8.

Filled with the Holy Spirit.

64.

On the Day of Pentecost, the disciples, “*were all filled with the Holy Spirit*” Acts 2:4. Because the spotless Blood of the Lord Jesus had been shed at Calvary and accepted in Heaven, the Holy Spirit bears witness to the cleansing power of the precious Blood and, a believer with a repentant heart, can now cry: “*Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me*” Psalm 51:10.

Is it your desire to continually seek the fresh infilling and overflowing of the Holy Spirit in your life? If so, the provision has been made! “*God ... dwelleth not in temples made with hands . . . For in Him we live, and move, and have our being*” Acts 17:24, 28.

“*Christ in you, the hope of glory*” Colossians 1:27. Remember, that in this wicked world that it takes, God to be godly, and it takes **the Lord Jesus Christ**, to be the Christian! Also, it takes **the Holy Spirit** to be holy (that is to be separated as unto Him), “*What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s*” 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

All too often we ask God for what He has already provided and lack the faith to say, ‘**Thank you, LORD. You have already provided all that I need to be an authentic living witness.**’ Blessed and holy Triune God, “*Holy, Holy, Holy,*” forever to Your Almighty Name!

Worthy is the Lamb of God!

65.

In one of Richard's final letters, he wrote: "Whether or not this is my last ministry communication before I am heralded into the presence of my God of Eternal Light and Holiness, I want to point to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. There is no better way for me to do this than to quote the words of the Apostle John: *'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power.'* I would like that to be my testimonial when I leave this present scene of action! *'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain'* Revelation 4:11, 5:12.

"Now, for my present testimony: In stark contrast to the worthiness of the Lord, I identify with the words of Jacob: *'I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast shewed unto thy servant'* Genesis 32:10.

"Yes, **'Worthy is the Lamb'** and certainly **'I am not worthy!'** Accordingly, as the old Charles Wesley hymn says: 'It is all my business here below to cry, *Behold the Lamb*. Happy, if with my latest breath I might but gasp His name; preach Him to all, and cry in death, *'Behold, behold the Lamb!'* Speaking of our Lord Jesus Christ Who, *'taketh away the sin of the world'* (John 1:29) we can only say with grateful lips: *'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created'* Revelation 4:11.

Thank you, Richard, for this foretaste of Heaven we can all anticipate with your beloved Lord at our 'Home call.' Yes! *"Worthy is the Lamb!"*

The Triumphant Lamb of God!

66.

The Lamb of God, and the eternal glory of God, are compactly related as introduced to the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ in John 1:14: “*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.*”

“*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*” opens with the prophetic scenario of our glorified risen, triumphant ‘Lamb of God,’ standing in the midst of the ‘Golden Candlesticks’ which represent the light of the Church age from Pentecost to her Rapture ‘in the air’: “*In the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain*” Revelation 5:6. Could it be that a vivid reminder of our suffering Lamb of God will impel us to fall down in overwhelming adoration and praise before His Throne? Because “*all we like sheep have gone astray ... and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all ... He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter ... He was wounded for our transgressions ... and with His stripes we are healed*” Isaiah 53:5-7.

The Book of Revelation then goes on to describe God’s unsparing wrath that will be poured out on this Christ-rejecting world in which Satan seeks to blasphemously rule as very ‘God.’ The culmination of these seven years of ‘Great Tribulation’ will be when the Triumphant Lamb returns with His ‘Bride’ in His Second Coming to Jerusalem! Presently, prophetic dark clouds of ominous judgement are rapidly unfolding. Persecution of believers has increased, and satanic deception abounds but, in Christ, we have “***good hope through grace***” soon to be “***caught up together to meet the Lord in the air!***”

“Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own Blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father” Revelation 1:5-6.

The priesthood commenced with Aaron and his sons when they were all anointed with oil. **Oil is a type of the Holy Spirit.** However, there is a significant difference between the anointing of Aaron and the anointing of his sons who were also priests.

Aaron (a type of our Great High Priest, the Lord Jesus) needed no blood to be applied before he was anointed. Likewise, **the Lord Jesus Himself needed no cleansing before He was anointed by the Holy Spirit:** “. . . *a Lamb without blemish and without spot*” 1 Peter 1:19. And as a Voice, “*out of the cloud,*” declared on the Mount of Transfiguration: “***This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him***” Matthew 17:5.

When in Nazareth, the Lord Jesus read from the prophecy of Isaiah: “***The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised***” Luke 4:18. The believer today is anointed to preach:

“You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” 1 Peter 2:9.

The priestly sons of Aaron (a type of **born-again believers**) were not **anointed** until **‘after’ the sacrificial blood had been shed**. You and I live **‘after’** the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God, shed His precious Blood. **For the believer, the anointing of the Holy Spirit is not God’s reward for faithfulness but His provision for our need!**

It was **after His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension into Heaven that the Lord Jesus promised:** *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit has come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth”* Acts 1:8.

It is only by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit that our silent lips will witness well and frequently of the Lord Jesus Christ to those who do not know Him. **When did you last speak to an unconverted person about your Savior?** Not just about your understanding of prophecy, or about your pastor, or about your church, but directly about your Lord and Savior?

Such a ministry is not appointed to a select few with a special gift, but to all born-again believers. Perhaps the Holy Spirit is quenched, and our lips remain silent, in witnessing about our Lord Jesus. Could it be because we need to confess and forsake something that is preventing an intimate fellowship with Him? Praise the Lord! His precious Blood will never lose its cleansing power! *“He hath made us ... priests unto God and His Father”* Revelation 1:6.

Clothed with a Vesture of Blood.

69.

In a glorious crescendo of eternal blessing we read, “*I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb’s wife*” Revelation 21:9. Hosea had an unfaithful wife, Gomer. Hosea went to the slave market and bought her back out of her slavery to give her shelter and food. That is exactly what **the Lord Jesus did when He came down to the slave market of sin for you and for me:** “*For as much as ye know that you were not **redeemed** with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain [manner of life] received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot*” 1 Peter 1:18-19.

In the concluding chapters of “*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*,” John wrote: “*I saw Heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True . . . and on His head were many crowns . . . and He was clothed with a vesture dipped in Blood: and His name is called The Word of God . . . And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS***” Revelation 19:11-13, 16.

Let us join in the adoration and praise of saints, such as Josiah Conder (1714-1741) who wrote the inspiring hymn: “Thou art the everlasting Word, the Father’s only Son; God manifestly seen and heard and Heav’n’s belovèd One: Throughout the universe of bliss, the center Thou, and sun; th’eternal theme of praise of this, to Heav’n’s belovèd one. **Worthy, O Lamb of God, art Thou, that every knee to Thee should bow.**”

Evil must be Judged.

70.

Joshua was commissioned by the Lord to cross the river Jordan and conquer the land of Canaan. This was to be **an act of God's judgement** upon the Canaanites who were contaminated with multiple sexual diseases and worshipped idols: As an act of worship, **they demonically sacrificed babies** by placing them into the red-hot arms of their idol, Baal. **Such evil must be judged by a righteous God!**

Similarly, **our sin demands the judgement of a righteous God.** God's judgement for our sin was poured out upon His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus, when He died on the Cross. Although we rejoice to think of His death for us as an act of His supreme love, it was also an act of His righteous judgement. **His death was sufficient for everyone but only efficient for those who repent and personally receive Him and accordingly are born from above.**

As God: The Lord Jesus could not die. **As Man:** *"He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us"* 2 Corinthians 5:21. **He voluntarily suffered the judgement of God for sin:** *"No man taketh it (My life) from Me ... I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again"* John 10:18.

Following His resurrection and ascension, Jesus Christ as perfect Man, became the 'forerunner' for born-again believers to enter Heaven: *"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil: Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever ..."* Hebrews 6:19-20.

When by His spotless Life-giving Blood, a sinner turns from sin to the Lord Jesus and is born-again by the Holy Spirit, he will discover that **‘Out and In’ is the secret of a victorious Christian life!**

Moses, and the children of Israel, were delivered from their captors as they crossed the Red Sea. They “*went **out** of Egypt and **into** the land of Canaan*” Genesis 45:25. God, having rescued His children from their bondage in Egypt, did not leave them wandering in the sun-drenched and barren wilderness to succumb to the revengeful purposes of Pharaoh. Likewise, Joshua when standing at the brink of the river Jordan with the children of Israel, and having to face a humanly impossible situation, obediently walked by faith in following God's directions and told the people: “*Sanctify yourselves: for **tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you***” Joshua 3:5.

God never intended that His children should be left to languish in the wilderness. His purpose was always to safely bring His children into the Promised Land. **Likewise, the Lord Jesus never intended believers to live in the barrenness of their own self-effort.** His provision is: “*I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly*” John 10:10. As a child of God, we can praise the Lord that He is bringing us safely, by His power, to His promised “Father’s House” John 14:2-3. “*Giving thanks unto the Father—Who hath delivered us from [out of] the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son*” Colossians 1:12-13.

When Joshua faced the impossible task of crossing the river Jordan and conquering the Promised Land, God told him, three separate times, “***to be of good courage***” and promised, “***I will be with you.***” On one occasion He asked: “*Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; **be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest***” Joshua 1:9. As a believer, are you **resolved in your commitment to go into this Christ-rejecting world around you with the overflow of God’s love and ringing reality of the indwelling Christ? For some, real courage is in short supply! It is not easy to swim upstream and defy contemporary worldly trends.**

Spurgeon warned his students that, when the authority of the Word of God is not in the pulpit, it can become a coward’s castle. And when a pastor forgets his calling and ends up pandering to ‘Deacon-Dominant,’ ‘Sister-Sensitive,’ ‘Mr. Primary Pleasure,’ and ‘Brother Businessman’ because they are prime supporters of the church, the laymen forget how to sing: **‘Stand up, stand up for Jesus, ye soldiers of the Cross. Lift high His royal banner; it must not suffer loss.’** “*For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh ... what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ ... for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I might gain Christ ...*” Philippians 3:3, 7-8. **Be of Good Courage!**

Only by God's enabling grace will we have **the courage to stand against sin and Satan**. Around the world, believers are living in very 'restrictive' countries. They are tortured, imprisoned, and beheaded because of their total commitment to Christ. It has been reliably reported that, well over 100,000 believers have been martyred for Christ even this past year.

Interestingly, Joshua's credentials to be a leader were not attained in a seminar on 'leadership skills,' but in **the rugged reality of confrontational conflict**. So later, when in the Land of Promise the children of Israel were **in the midst of a critical battle**, Joshua himself was qualified to strongly exhort: *"Fear not, be not dismayed, be strong and of good courage"* Joshua 10:25. The Apostle Paul also wrote: *"Be ye followers of me even as I also am of Christ"* 1 Corinthians 11:1.

As children, Richard and I remember the desperate situation when thousands of soldiers had to be rescued from their entrapped position at Dunkirk. As a nation, we crowded our churches and prayed that God would mercifully rescue our men. Then, God miraculously becalmed the English Channel, and our soldiers were enabled to later return and see the enemy defeated. Churchill said: **"Defeat is not fatal; victory is never final; it is courage that counts."** Also, the Apostle Paul, with a courage that counts, encouraged others in a severe storm, *"be of good cheer: there shall be no loss of any man's life among you"* Acts 27:22. **Be of good courage!**

Have you, even though you were among many people, ever felt alone? The Lord Jesus Himself felt very much alone when in the shadow of the Cross He said: *“Behold, the hour cometh, yes, is now come, that you shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet **I am not alone, because the Father is with Me**”* John 16:32.

Alone, yet not alone! As the genuine disciple of the Lord might say, “Let the world despise and leave me, they have left my Savior, too. Foes may hate, and friends forsake me - And while Thou shalt smile upon me, show Thy face, and all is bright.” Henry Lyte. **There is a vast difference between knowing ‘about’ the Lord Jesus and knowing Him ‘personally and intimately.’**

In His Sermon on the Mount, the Lord Jesus said, *“You are **the salt of the earth**”* Matthew 5:13. The Lord did not say, ‘you are **the honey** of the earth!’ As a child, did your mother ever use salt to cleanse your scraped knee? If so, you will remember how salt produces a real sting! When a born-again Christian, is in the company of non-believers, the temptation is to make every conversation polite and friendly. However, when we truly ‘take up our cross’ and witness about the Lord Jesus, the atmosphere might rapidly change to a ‘salty sting.’ The Bible calls this, **conviction of sin**: *“When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement: of sin, because they believe not on Me ... Of judgement, because the prince of this world is judged”* John 16:8-9, 11.

Be Strong and of good Courage.

75.

Why do we want to live in a 'ouch-less spiritual delivery room' similar to a mother experiencing travail and pain before the birth of her child? Conviction of sin is necessary to fortify our faith and obedience to Him to be His witnesses.

Let us turn to the historic record about Joshua, when he and his people crossed the river, Jordan. *"And Moses called unto Joshua, and said ... in the sight of all Israel, **Be strong and of a good courage: for thou must go with this people unto the land** which the Lord hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; **and thou shalt cause them to inherit it.** And the Lord, **He it is that doth go before thee; He will be with thee, He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed**"* Deuteronomy 31:7-8.

God's Law: To lead and inherit the Land: *"The priests bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord"* Deuteronomy 31:9.

God's Promise: *"The Lord thy God is with thee wherever you go"* Joshua 1:9.

God's Procedure: Only for the priests: *"Take up the Ark of the Covenant and pass over before the people"* Joshua 3:6.

God's Purpose: *"The priests that bare the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan"* Joshua 3:17.

Commission: It was the same given to Joshua, as the Lord Jesus gave to His disciples: *"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature"* Mark 16:15.

The Lord said, *“All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach [evangelize] all nations, baptizing them [enlist] in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them [educate] to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age”* Matthew 28:18-20.

By faith, obey details! The procedure involved detailed obedient acts of faith as four Levites were to carry the Ark of the Covenant: *“When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan . . . And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap”* Joshua 3:8, 13.

When God demonstrated His mighty power at the Red Sea, **He used the Rod of Moses.** But, when God demonstrated His power to validate the leadership of Joshua, **He used the Ark of the Covenant!**

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him ... for ye serve the Lord Christ” Colossians 3:17, 24. ‘Trust and obey,’ might be easy to sing as a chorus, but could be more costly when outworked in our daily routine! Do I promptly obey what He directs? **To stand upon His blessed promises and be joyful in Jesus, by faith, let us trust in our risen Lord and obey His details of instruction!**

The Ark of the Covenant represented God's Presence among His people.

"And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony ... I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat" Exodus 25:21-22. "Bezaleel made the ark ... overlaid it with pure gold ... and made the mercy seat" Exodus 37:1-2, 6.

On the Day of Atonement, each year, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies to sprinkle the blood of a sacrificial lamb on the mercy seat. Because sin and holiness cannot co-exist, without that covering for sin, the high priest would die. Around the hem of the priest's robe there hung **golden bells** and pomegranates. These bells rang when he entered the Holy of Holies. But before presenting the sin offering, the priest disrobed his garments **and the bells ceased to ring.**

Outside the Holy of Holies, people listened intently. Would the bells ever ring again? After the blood had been sprinkled on the mercy seat and had been accepted by God as a sin offering, the priest put on his garment **and the bells rang again and, yet again it was only for one more year!**

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the examples of the real one: but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest...every year with blood of others ... but now ONCE ... hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" Hebrews 9:24-26.

On the Cross, the Lord Jesus shed His ‘precious Blood’ then dismissed His Spirit and died! As prophesied on the third day, He rose victoriously from the dead and was seen by many witnesses before, forty days later, ascending to His Father in Heaven. We read in 1 Peter 1:18-19: “***We are redeemed ... with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.***” At His conception, the angel announced to the virgin, Mary: “*The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God*” Luke 1:35.

The tabernacle on earth was a shadow of the Tabernacle in Heaven: “*It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these*” Hebrews 9:23. Recording his vision of future events, the Apostle John wrote: “*And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened*” Revelation 15:5.

There can be no ‘tabernacle’ or ‘temple’ without a Holy of Holies! There can be no Holy of Holies without a Mercy Seat: **There can be no Mercy Seat without the precious Blood!** After the ‘Rapture,’ the Temple will be built in Jerusalem. God will reveal the location of the Ark of the Covenant with His precious shed Blood on top of the Mercy Seat. By the second half of **the ‘Tribulation’ Satan will demand worship as ‘God’ (see Revelation 13:8).**

The Lord Jesus was overshadowed by God the Holy Spirit in the womb of His virgin mother, and the eternal life of the Holy Spirit was transmuted to His Blood. “*For the life of the flesh is in the blood*” Leviticus 17:11.

This sacred Blood would then flow through the veins of the Holy Baby Jesus, and **it was this precious Blood that was a onetime sacrifice for your sin and mine!** As the Blood of the Lord Jesus had been accepted in the resplendent Light of the God of Glory, so the bells of Heaven began to ring!

Soon thereafter the bells of Heaven would be repeated on earth and, by a mighty effusion of the Holy Spirit, come: “***As a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind***” Acts 2:2.

People from far and wide who were in Jerusalem at that time and witnessed the perplexing phenomena resulting from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, said, “***What meaneth this?***” Acts 2:12. Peter answered their question by delivering a model gospel message to hearts that were already prepared. This produced another question, “***What shall we do?***” Acts 2:37.

Peter did not give cozy words of comfort but in effect said, ‘**Turn,**’ ‘**Trust**’ and ‘**Take**’: “*Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*” Acts 2:38. **Today, the Holy Spirit still continues: “*To convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement*”** John 16:8.

The Lord Jesus was not only ‘the propitiation for our sins’ to remove them forever, but He **is also the Propitiator—The Mercy Seat!** In this way, the Judgement Seat of God has become a Mercy Seat for everyone who believes!

“Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His Blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission [removal] of sins” Romans 3:24-25.

Praise the Lord, He has made a way possible for sin to be removed forever—not just ‘covered’ for a year, as when the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies on ‘The Day of Atonement.’ Therefore, *“**Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need**”* Hebrews 4:16.

Every person who repents and receives the Lord Jesus into their heart and life and will humbly confess Him in a Christ-rejecting world, will forever be with Him!

“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

*“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture sayeth, whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed ... For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord **shall be saved**”* Romans 10:9-13. Have you really done this?

One significant content of the Ark of the Covenant was, *“The golden pot that had Manna.”* Another was, *“Aaron’s rod that budded”* and yet another was, *“The Tables of the Covenant”* [the Law] Hebrews 9:4.

The Hebrew word ‘**Manna**’ means: ‘**What is it?**’ That is a good question, and the answer includes the Incarnate Word: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us”* John 1:1, 14.

Before the beginning of time, God already existed. He is the God of eternity! The staggering fact is that this God, Who came from Eternity to Time, did so for you and me! He knew our perilous spiritual plight and knew that we, “were dead in trespasses and sins” Ephesians 2:1.

When we open the door of our heart to the incoming and indwelling Christ, a **vital living fellowship with the eternal God will result: “I will sup with him and he with Me.”**

Today, the Lord Jesus still pleads, *“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with Me”* Revelation 3:20.

“I am that bread of life ... This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die” John 6:48,50. Through His empowering the believer can have a vital living fellowship with the Lord by partaking of His Word and sharing [Fresh Manna - Living Bread] with others!

There were **three contents in the Ark of the Covenant**, one of which was *“the golden pot that had ‘manna’.*” Because of their unbelief and disobedience, the children of Israel journeyed in the wilderness forty years, of which, it could have taken seventeen days if they had not been disobedient!

In their weary wilderness wanderings, the children of Israel bemoaned: *“Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger. Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from Heaven for you”* Exodus 16:3-4.

The Manna was the ‘type.’ The Lord Jesus is the ‘anti-type.’ After feeding 5,000 hungry people, the Lord said: *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from Heaven; but My Father giveth you the true Bread from Heaven. For the Bread of God is He which cometh down from Heaven . . . I am the Bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst”* John 6:32-35.

Do you personally know this One who is: ‘The Bread from heaven’? Does the Lord Jesus live in and through your life so that your supreme goal is: *“That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death”*? Philippians 3:10.

One of the three contents in the Ark of the Covenant was “*Aaron's Rod that budded*” Hebrews 9:4. God poured out His judgement following the dissension of a rebellious, anarchistic crowd that rose up against their leadership. Thus, God visually confirmed that Aaron was Israel's High Priest!

“Take of every one of them a rod ... according to the house of their fathers twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod. And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers. And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you.

*“And it shall come to pass, that **the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom ... behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds**”* Numbers 17:2-8. And the **three stages of development** were in themselves a miracle—**buds, blossoms, and almonds**—all stages of growth from but one rod! Accordingly, Aaron was shown by God, to be the chosen High Priest.

Likewise, our risen, glorified Lord Jesus Christ conquered death; defied the grave, and ascended to Heaven in His resurrection Body. *“Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? **This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner**”* Acts 1:11. **Yes, there is a Man—Jesus—in the Glory land, and He is our Great High Priest!**

Mount Sinai quaked in the fiery Presence of Almighty God. There, Moses received the Law on “*Two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God*” Exodus 31:18. As God, the Lord Jesus was the **Law Giver**. On earth, as Perfect Man, the Lord Jesus was the **Law Keeper! When God, as Perfect Man, was manifest in the flesh, He was the only one in human history to fulfill the Law!**

How does this affect me? “*The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ*” Galatians 3:24. The late C.S. Lewis said: “Today’s educational system is like a giant harvest machine mowing down stalks of grain. Everyone is reduced to one level. No brilliant student can emerge, and no one can be thought to be a failure. **This prepares the way for ‘a strong man’ to come on the scene and take control of ‘an overripe’ democratic society.**”

As ‘perfect Man’ the Lord Jesus faced, and triumphed over, every foul satanic attack. Now victoriously in Heaven, “*He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them*” and is, “*touched with the feeling of our infirmities*” Hebrews 7:25, 4:15.

Our anarchistic age is fast preparing for that ‘strong man’ to emerge and head up this global system. Persecution of believers is already fast increasing around the world. The scene is being ‘set,’ but the believer is not looking for the Antichrist, but eagerly looking for the risen Lord at the ‘Rapture’ of the Church: Then, God’s wrath will be poured out for seven years on planet earth!

“In this was revealed the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him” 1 John 4:9. *“Not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another”* 2 John 5. And this will result in an **‘expulsive power of a new affection in Christ.’** This will mean that we, *“love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. [Because] “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him”* 1 John 2:15.

Similarly, the wonder of my ‘new life’ in Christ, will bring a ‘new priority’: ‘To know Him and to make Him known.’ Paul testified: *“I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord ... **that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death**”* Philippians 3:8, 10.

In his writing to Timothy—his son in the faith—Paul instructed: *“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also”* 2 Timothy 2:2.

“Me” is the first generation; **“Those who heard Me”** is the second generation; **“Faithful men”** is the third generation; **“Teach others”** is the fourth generation. That is God’s plan for the perpetuation of the Gospel!

Always remember that: What I keep I lose, and what I share I keep. This way, as I press **‘Forward in Faith’**, others will be reached by His Word and ‘built up’ to yet reach others for our blessed Lord Jesus Christ! **All Glory to Him!**

The ‘Hall of a Thousand Mirrors,’ in Asia, attracts many visitors. Upon entry, you are greeted with a thousand hands stretched out to meet you, a thousand smiles to greet your smile and a thousand eyes will weep if you weep. You are looking at your hands, your smiles, and your tears! What a picture of a self-centered man—*self* all around and *self*-multiplied. The self-life will readily volunteer to serve God— but when tested—will soon raise its ‘ugly head’!

It was while preaching His Word to a gathering of 500 Nationals and Missionaries in Africa, that the searching eye of ‘**The God of light and glory**’ exposed the deep needs of many in our midst. We separately gathered some depressed and disheartened missionaries who worked in demonically deceived and hostile environments, for a special time of prayer. God’s Love flowed in our midst and tears of mutual repentance were expressed at the realization that God was not counting upon us ‘working for Him,’ but of our being available for ‘His working through us!’ “***Not I, but Christ***,” was biblically understood as it was reckoned that the ‘self-life’ was crucified by His ‘Finished Work’ at the Cross. Now, when I walk by faith and total dependence upon Him, His Resurrection Life is free to accomplish His work, His way, through me. Amen!

Are you willing to quit ‘trying’ to live a life which only He can live? Is His overflow Life seen and bringing praise and glory to His Name alone? “*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; **yet not I, but Christ** liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh **I live by the faith of the Son of God**, who loved me and gave Himself for me*” Galatians 2:20.

“I Live by the Faith of the Son of God”.

87.

In my parent's retirement home, they had acquired a little 'budgie' bird and I taught it to say, "*Ye must be born-again.*" Unconverted visitors clearly heard the message! Would you say the budgie was an evangelist? No! It had no idea what it was repeating.

So, it is with many of us who can readily quote, "*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me*" Galatians 2:20.

It is only by "*the faith of the Son of God,*" in His 'Finished Work' at the Cross, that He alone is able to daily deliver us from our self-life! An evidence of which is so succinctly written, by the late A.B. Simpson. Perhaps, you might want to prayerfully read these words and make them your affirmation unto the Lord as to whether each statement is really true in your life:

Once it was the blessing, now it is the Lord;

Once it was the feeling, now it is His Word.

Once His gift I wanted, now the Giver own;

Once I sought for healing, now Himself alone.

Once it was my working, His it hence shall be;

Once I tried to use Him, now He uses me,

Once the power I wanted, now the Mighty One;

Once for self I labored, now for Him alone.

A clear illustration of the ‘exchanged’ life with Christ, is given to us in Joshua 3:11, when the children of Israel crossed the river Jordan. *“Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.”*

To make this crossing possible; God heaped up the water of Jordan at a place called ‘Adam.’ Interestingly, no geologist or archaeologist has ever been able to locate such a place called, ‘Adam.’ This illustrates God’s redemption for ‘fallen’ man, caused when Adam yielded to fleshly desires, obeyed Satan and ate the forbidden fruit. Adam’s disobedience to God, caused the disastrous results of **leaving us a devastating heritage of being born: “dead in trespasses and sins”** Ephesians 2:1.

In order that we might receive spiritual ‘Life’ by His Holy Spirit and have spiritual fellowship with Him, it took the Son of God to live a spotless life in the flesh and shed His Blood on the Cross in my place! The passing of the Ark of the Covenant through the Jordan, represented the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ in order that we might have His abundant, heaped-up waters of the Spirit, flowing through us and, Life with a capital ‘L’ as an eternal memorial to the Lord! *“Now, therefore, take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man . . . and take ye up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder . . . And Joshua set up **twelve stones in the midst of Jordan**, in the place where the feet of the priests who bore the ark of the covenant stood; and they are **there unto this day**”* Joshua 3:12; 4:5, 9.

Therefore, “*examine yourselves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that **Jesus Christ is in you**, except ye be reprobates?*” 2 Corinthians 13:5.

When in the presence of the Holy God of Light and Glory, such painful self-examination will reveal ourselves as to who we really are. Then, we will want to inscribe ‘self’ on our own stone, and similarly cast it into the ‘River’ to be: “***No longer I, but Christ who liveth in me***” Galatians 2:20. This will cause us to say: “*Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou hast created all things, and **for Thy pleasure** they are and were created*” Revelation 4:11.

My funeral procession must precede my victory march:

“***For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God***” Colossians 3:3.
“***Likewise reckon you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord***” Romans 6:11.

The purpose of God was not only to bring them ‘out’ but also to bring them ‘in.’ “***He brought us out from thence, that He might bring us in, to give us the land which He swore unto our fathers***” Deuteronomy 6:23.

It is wonderful to know that the Lord Jesus shed His Blood, ‘to make me fit for Heaven!’ It is also wonderful to know that, when I died with Him, He made me fit for His mighty purposes to be outworked through me while here on earth!

When the Israelites had been miraculously brought through the river Jordan, they took twelve stones out of the midst: *“take you up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes... **Those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal.**”* Joshua 4:5, 20. **It was to be a testimony and a memorial!**

*“That ... when your children ask their fathers ... **What mean you by these stones?** Then ye shall answer them, that the waters of Jordan were cut off before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off. And **these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel forever**”* Joshua 4:6-7.

The Apostle Paul, in Romans chapter six, proclaimed **the believer’s identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection.** However, in Romans chapter seven, we read: *“**But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of coveting ... For that which I do I understand not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.**”* *“**O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord**”* Romans 7:8, 15, 24-25.

The 12 stones testified to the mighty deliverance of God and the bringing of His children into the Promised Land. For the believer’s life, this also speaks of the mighty power God, wrought in raising the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, accomplished by the price of His precious shed Blood for us!

Gilgal was a place of memorial, but even more importantly, it was a place where the ordinance of circumcision was to be restored. All the men over 40 years of age had died in the wilderness of their wanderings. The younger generation had never been circumcised and it was important that these Jewish people should obey the commandment of God for them to do so. Today, for the believer, ‘circumcision’ is not merely an external observance, but is a vital heart attitude for us to have toward God in our daily living.

The Apostle Paul wrote to both Jew and Gentile: *“But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and **circumcision is that of the heart**, in the spirit and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God”* Romans 2:29. This transaction of faith, in which I am willing for my ‘self-life’ to ‘die daily,’ will revolutionize my life from **being ‘self-centered’ to ‘Christ-centered’!** However, this **does not mean that the sin nature, the flesh has ‘died,’** but that it will need many fresh infillings to maintain His ‘fullness’: *“be (ye being) filled with the Spirit”* Ephesians 5:18.

*“For if you live according to the flesh, you shall die; but if you, through the Spirit, do **mortify the deeds of the body**, you shall live”* Romans 8:13. The word, *“mortify,”* in the original Greek, is written in the **active voice** and it is ‘I’ who is responsible, to **‘render inoperative’** or, **‘to put to death’** the deeds of the flesh. For the *“circumcision of the heart,”* it is necessary that we keep ‘short accounts’ of any sins, seek His cleansing and fresh Holy Spirit infillings.

It is only “*through the Spirit*”—God’s Divine Executioner—that the deeds of the body will be mortified [rendered inoperative]. This is God’s wonderful provision for us to experience victory over the flesh. Though I must prayerfully and biblically be involved in the process, by myself I cannot bring my flesh to death no matter how hard I try. **Only the Holy Spirit can radically sever me from the deeds of the flesh.** Though it can be a transforming experience when the Christian first asks the Holy Spirit to deal with the actions of the self-life, this does not mean that my sinful nature has been eradicated! **The initial response of faith is intended by God to be a continual, ongoing, and ever-present experience!**

To illustrate this truth, let us go in our imagination to a courtroom where a man is being tried for murder. The evidence is sifted, the man’s guilt has been established and the judge has the solemn responsibility of pronouncing the sentence when he states: **“This man has been found guilty of murder and therefore is condemned to die!”**

With that somber statement, the task of the judge is complete. However, if the judge were to carry out his ‘sentence of death’ by taking a pistol from under his bench and shoot the murderer himself, he would become guilty of murder. His job is ‘to hand over’ the condemned man to the State Executioner. Similarly, none of us can crucify our ‘self-life.’ We are ‘to hand over’ the execution of the deed to the Holy Spirit and praise Him we are set free indeed!

It is only the Holy Spirit, the Divine Executioner, who can render inoperative the “*deeds of the body*.” Similarly, we can do nothing to improve our ‘flesh’ except to confess its guilt, but we are, ‘to hand over’ the sin-condemning ‘deeds’ to the Divine Executioner—the Holy Spirit. By so doing in this way, we pronounce the judgement of **death upon the “*deeds of the body*”** which have a preconditioned response to defend and promote the self-life even at the same time as attacking others!

Prayer: **“Lord Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, enfold me to the Cross and love my ‘self-life’ to death! I want it to be no longer ‘I,’ but Christ who lives in me for His glory alone!”**

To maintain the liberating joy of a life, truly ‘Christ-centered,’ requires my constant return to the place of my ‘heart;’ to my own personal ‘Gilgal’ of ‘circumcision!’ When God held back the river Jordan, so that the children of Israel could cross on dry ground, He commanded that they take twelve stones out of the midst *according unto the number of the tribes ... and those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal*” Joshua 4:20.

The 12 stones, set up at ‘Gilgal,’ were established as a Testimony and a Memorial. **Likewise, for believers, there is no experience which renders it unnecessary for us to live by faith in total dependence upon the risen Lord in all His resurrection power and for His glory alone. Praise the Lord for those that He will now reach by my availability to His Spirit through me!**

The book of Genesis and the book of John begin in similar ways. God, who is called ‘**Elohim**’ in Genesis, is referred to as ‘**The Word**’ in the Gospel of John. In **Genesis** we read: “*In the beginning God created the Heavens and the earth*” Genesis 1:1. In **John** we read: “*In the beginning was the Word . . . and the Word was God. All things were made by Him*” John 1:1, 3.

‘**Elohim**’ is ‘**The Word.**’ The Lord Jesus clothed Himself with flesh to walk among us—His own Creation. This awesome statement, in its complete text reads: “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made . . . He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name ... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth*” John 1:1-3, 10-12, 14.

For the believer, the Holy Spirit will bring: ‘**Truths**’ about you and God. ‘**Faith**’ before any ‘**Feelings.**’ The Holy Spirit will always give you **correct doctrines**. However, Satan always gives doubts of God’s Love by feelings of guilt, despair, hopelessness, and frustration. We have the glorious promise: “*Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*” Psalm 119:105.

Man has already demonstrated how hopelessly inadequate he is to govern the human race! Peace and justice for all, awaits the time until when, '**The Prince of Peace**' shall Himself sway the scepter of a Universal Empire! Only then shall they: *"Hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war anymore"* Isaiah 2:4.

An increasing division is rapidly being seen in our world: A division of 'Light' and 'Darkness'; 'Love' and 'Hatred', 'Peace' and 'Rebellion': *"In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, no self-control, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, conceited, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of religion, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away"* 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

The increasing conflict is centered on the Person of our risen Lord Jesus!
"For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work ... Then shall that wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His Coming" 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8.

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye wait for such things, be careful that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless" 2 Peter 3:14.

Astronaut Jim Irwin of Apollo XV wrote: **“God walking on earth is more important than man walking on the moon.”** Certainly, no feat that man has accomplished in space can compare with **‘the miracle of that moment’ when God stepped out of eternity into time!** After the prophecy, that *“a Child would be born and a Son would be given,”* there follows a more detailed prophetic ‘résumé’ of this unique Person: ***“His Name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace”*** Isaiah 9:6, 7.

Godless man increasingly rejects the ‘Lord Jesus,’ Who alone can offer true ‘Peace.’ Blinded by an awesome blend of ‘power’ and ‘purpose,’ a ‘Leader’ will emerge on a platform of ‘Peace.’ Then, sinful man in his spiritual blindness and global expectancy, will witness Israel sign a satanically inspired ‘Covenant’ with the ‘Antichrist,’ who deceptively offers a false ‘Peace,’ which will culminate in ‘hell on earth’ during seven horrific years of Tribulation.

Our risen Lord, **the ‘Prince of Peace,’** is the only ‘One’ Who has the power and the wisdom to rule and reign in this world. *“If we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By Whom also, we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God”* Romans 4:24-25, 5:1-2.

“His Name is Immanuel – God with Us”.

97.

To distinguish the birth of God’s unique child, and to set Him apart from all others, God promised that the birth of His Son would be authenticated by a miraculous ‘sign’: *“Behold, a virgin will conceive, and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel”* Isaiah 7:14.

How wonderful that His very Name ‘Immanuel’ means, ‘God with us.’ And through what was conveyed by this Name, we can begin to appreciate how the good news—as it is recorded in **the Bible**—**is distinctive from the teachings of all other religions**. Whereas false religions attempt to show how man is to reach up to God, **the Bible is God’s record of how He reached down to man**.

As recorded in His Word, when God established His ‘beachhead’ on Planet Earth, *“a virgin was with child.”* And that day, when the Creator of the Universe condescended to become a part of ‘time and space,’ has now become a matter of history! *“The angel of the Lord”* appeared to Joseph: *“a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly”* but, in a dream was told, *“Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit”* Matthew 1:19-20.

Later, after the Lord Jesus was born and had matured to manhood, He further asserted His deity in the presence of hostile skeptics by saying: “I and My Father are one” John 10:30. Yes, Immanuel - God with us!

There is something that divides mankind in a startling and permanent way: *“The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them”* 2 Corinthians 4:4.

In His revelation to mankind, God has never compromised the truth about His divine Being, but instead, has directed people how to really know Him: *“The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.”* God also gave details as to how this Light would be recognized: *“for unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given”* Isaiah 9:2,6.

“For unto us a Child is born,” would of itself be unimportant to record had He not also promised, *“a Son will be given”* and, what was once prophecy is now history, but we should note that what God said would happen did happen! Yes, on earth a child was born and from Heaven a Son was given. God, through the birth of His spotless Child, sent His gift of His beloved Son.

Our Lord Jesus Christ—Who is the Image of God—is the only **‘Light’** to a people groping in darkness. His Light dispels the darkness and doubt of mankind for all who will personally receive Him. Then, as born-again by His Holy Spirit, the believer is commissioned to be His 'Light bearer,' available to His indwelling, that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ: *“Shine before men and glorify our Father which is in Heaven”* Matthew 5:14,16.

The Holy Spirit's Miraculous Workings!

99.

*“**Mary said**, behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to Thy word. And the angel departed from her. And **Mary arose** in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into the city of Judah; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth” Luke 1:38-40.*

Accordingly, **Mary met** her God-fearing older **cousin, Elisabeth** who, according to God's promise, was six months pregnant even though well past child-bearing age!

*“**And it came to pass, that when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit**” Luke 1:41.*

Yes, **‘the babe’ was John**, who upon hearing Mary's salutation, *“**leaped in the womb**”* of Elisabeth his mother! It was this **John**, who was the forerunner of the Lord Jesus, and who, **introduced the ‘Messiah’ as, “The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world”** John 1:29.

In those days of precious fellowship together, Elisabeth was intimately acquainted with the miraculous prenatal development of all that the angel had told Mary: *“**The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that Holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God ... for with God, nothing shall be impossible**”* Luke 1:35, 37. As a believer, do I constantly remember to seek His fresh infilling, and prove the intimate leading of His Holy Spirit?

The Greatest Gift for all Eternity!

100.

Simeon the priest, was a godly man, and well-versed in Old Testament Scriptures. It was with a zeal of enlightenment, that he recognized the Lord Jesus when as a distinctive sign of a true Israelite and was brought to the Temple for His circumcision on His eighth day.

Looking at the sacred baby, Simeon may have reflected upon the words of the Prophet Isaiah: ***“He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief ... He was wounded for our transgressions ... and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all”*** Isaiah 53:3, 5-6.

Yes, this beautiful Holy ‘Babe’ was to become our Crucified Savior! And the penetrating pain of Mary’s heart must have been sharp when, in the next words Simeon uttered, ***“Yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also”*** Luke 2:35.

Often, the pain to any parent at the loss of a precious child, cannot be expressed. But, when one day this mother would see her beloved Son—as prophesied—cruelly nailed on a tree, her own soul was to be, **‘pierced through with indescribable grief,’** as she witnessed the price that **He had come to pay. The terrible price for both her sin and for those who are saved!**

The ‘Greatest Price’ ever paid, and the ‘**Greatest Gift**’ mankind could ever receive, is our beloved **Lord Jesus Christ**. May we with Mary say, ***“My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden”*** Luke 1:46-48.

Have you thanked God that, in His great love He sent His beloved Son to “**become sin**” for you, so that you might have a living relationship with the Lord Jesus for both now and for all Eternity?

Simeon: *“Was just and devout, **waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Spirit was upon him.** And it was revealed to Him by the Holy Spirit, that **he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.**”*

*“And **he** [Simeon] **came by the Spirit** into the temple: and when the parents brought in **the child Jesus**, to do for Him after the custom of the law, then took he Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,*

*“**Lord, now let Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel**”* Luke 2:25-32.

Anna: *“And there was one **Anna**, a prophetess ... she was of great age, and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity; and was a widow of about four score and four years, which departed not from the temple, but **served God** with fasting and prayers **night and day.** And **she coming in that instant** gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and **spoke of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem**”* Luke 2:36-38.

In Heaven we will rejoice to see how the Lord brought us to Himself. And in turn, how we joyfully shared the Good News with others ‘**in that instant**’!

Christmas Day Blessings!

102.

Life from Above!

Angel Gabriel to Mary: *“thou shalt conceive in thy womb”*

Mary asks: *“How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?”*

Gabriel replies: *“The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee ... and the power of
the Highest shall overshadow thee ...*

*That Holy Thing which shall be born of thee
shall be called the Son of God”* Luke 1:31-35.

Life from Above enters a world of spiritually dead people!

The Lord Jesus to Nicodemus: *“... that which is born of the flesh is flesh;
and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee,
ye must be born again”* John 3:6-7.

Life from Above for every repentant heart!

With Christmas joy and loving greetings in our

Lord Yeshua—Jesus Christ.

May He outwork His life in each of our hearts.

Life from Above if you really want to know Him!

To receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, ask Him to forgive
your sin and ‘be born-again’ to receive His new Life in you!

With blessings to you in our risen Lord Jesus Christ!

As from: *Richard and Dorothy Bennett*

God finished His creative acts of the world with the creation of Adam and Eve in His own image: “*God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good*” Genesis 1:31.

Any satisfactory philosophy of history will conclude that, as Creation commenced, so it will finish—‘**Very Good.**’ However, the Bible also tells us that, before one thousand years of universal peace and harmony, there will be a seven-year period when things will be—‘**Very Bad.**’

It is becoming increasingly evident that the ‘Day of God’s Grace’ is about to conclude, and that the ‘Day of God’s Wrath’ is about to commence!

When iron spikes were driven through His hands and feet, the Lord Jesus gave us His **supreme demonstration of Grace**. In His great love He prayed: “*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do*” Luke 23:34. Later, following his Lord’s example of Grace, when kneeling as he was being stoned to death, Deacon Stephen cried with a loud voice: “*Lord, lay not this sin to their charge*” Acts 7:60.

The Apostle John had a vision of the time, when God’s purposes of extending His ‘Grace’ for the ‘Church’ would conclude at the ‘Rapture,’ before the seven years of “*Great Tribulation*” begins. As prophesied in Revelation chapters six through eighteen, **prior to His triumphant return with His believers to rule and reign from Jerusalem for 1,000 years, the Lord Jesus will pour out His ‘Judgements of Wrath’ upon planet earth!**

John, on the Isle of Patmos, saw a vision of those in Heaven who had been, *“slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held”* Revelation 6:9. These martyrs prayed for ‘Judgement,’ as they rightly interpreted the will of God to the circumstances in which they found themselves: *“How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?”* Revelation 6:10.

But God, in this ‘Day of Grace,’ *“is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”* 2 Peter 3:9. Every believer is commissioned to be His witness, praying for sinners to be ‘born-again’ and built up in Him by His Holy Word.

As violence and rebellion against the Lord God Almighty rapidly multiplies, a world-wide crisis of ‘Holocaust’ proportions will quickly head us to a time of greatly increased persecution of believers. Following the ‘Rapture’ of the Church, by our Lord in the air, the Antichrist will enter the scene on a platform of false ‘Peace,’ which is called by our Lord, *“the great day of His wrath.”*

Yes! A change from God’s ‘Grace’ to God’s ‘Wrath’ is inevitable! Therefore, *“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that ‘man of sin’ be revealed, ‘the son of perdition;’ who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God”* 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4.

History is replete with despots who misused their military/financial resources in a vain effort to, 'Play God.' This power lust originated in the courts of Heaven before the world was created when Satan boasted, "***I will be like the most High***" Isaiah 14:14. Because man was created in the image of God, Satan's first line of attack in this world was to project his foul ambition and tempt Eve and Adam with the words: "***ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil***" Genesis 3:5.

In this way, **Satan produced surrogates in his relentless pursuit to be 'the god of this world.'** This ploy, used on Eve, was quickly followed by the seduction of Adam. **Such anarchy against the Most High God, provided Satan with a lodging place in the affairs of humanity.**

Consequently, all subsequent generations have been infected. This was clearly lamented by David: "***Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me***" Psalm 51:5. It is further explained by Paul: "***For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God***" Romans 3:23.

It was none other than the Apostle Paul who, in both life and ministry, displayed God's grace, mercy and love: "***For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness***" Romans 1:18. In this 'love-dovey' world, the concept of a 'God of wrath,' can come as a truly **shocking thought to most!**

The womb of an expectant mother was designed by God to be a warm environment of love, nourishment, and protection. Parents do not make a baby but God does! *“As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, or how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God Who maketh all”* Ecclesiastes 11:5.

The Bible proclaims the sanctity of human life in the womb, but over 63 million babies have been aborted since ‘Roe V Wade’ in the States alone!

Such disregard for the sanctity of human life is an abomination. **The womb, designed by God for the protection of the baby, has become a battlefield where the baby has no means of defense.** And, such mass murder, cannot and will not continue without God's severe Judgement falling!

Also, with the alarming acceleration of pornography, child abuse, sexual promiscuity, corruption and exploitation in our lands, **God has given us a dire warning of the terrible doom that awaits every person who ignores His ‘Light of Creation’ and ‘Light of Conscience’ and rebels against God, refusing to repent of sin and to turn in repentance to the Risen Lord Jesus.**

“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death” Revelation 21:8.

Do I warn others of the tragic ‘Judgement’ awaiting every person who refused to repent of their sin and, with heartfelt thanksgiving, to turn by faith to the Lord Jesus Christ—to be their Savior? The risen Lord commissioned every ‘born again’ believer to be, “*witnesses unto Me*” Acts 1:8. **That means that we are to witness, not only by my life but also by my lips!**

“Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men” 2 Corinthians 5:11. That means, together with Bible truth, to share our personal testimony because of the urgency of what they are about to face! Sadly, multitudes leave their Bible Studies and worship services armed with details of the ‘End Time Judgement’ as ‘something to think about’ but, selfishly, have no desire to pay the price of persuading others to flee from the Wrath to come!

As the Lord Jesus prophesied: *“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake [that is for Israel’s sake] those days shall be shortened”* Matthew 24:21-22.

As the late Dr. Ed Hindson said, “Bible prophecy is not written to scare us. It is written to prepare us! God’s Word reveals these future events to assure us that He is in control even when the world appears to be out of control!” As men’s hearts fail them for fear at the approaching ‘**Terror of the Lord,**’ am I diligently witnessing to others of the saving power of our risen Lord Jesus?

True and Righteous are His Judgements!

108.

The terrible cosmic consequences which await a God-ignoring, Christ-rejecting, man-exalting, pleasure-pursuing idol-worshipping, conscience searing and sin-loving world, are solemnly recorded in detail in Revelation, chapters 6-18 which, if possible, you might urgently make time to read.

Devastating days of bloodshed are coming to this world which no ‘Middle East Peace Accord’ will prevent: *“And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another”* Revelation 6:4.

There will be **no more need for ‘physician-assisted euthanasia’** because, *“And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them”* Revelation 9:6.

In these critical days of ‘Global Warming,’ there will be **no more ‘climate change agendas.’** *“The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up”* Revelation 8:7.

You might ask, “Is such Judgement fair?” You might also question, “Was it fair when the spotless Son of God, the Lord Jesus, took the total aggregate of the sin, the suffering and the pain of the whole human race in His perfect body?” Have you ever personally thanked the Lord Jesus that He died instead of you? Revelation 16:7 declares: ***“True and righteous are Thy judgements.”***

Lord, hasten the day **when Truth and Righteousness will reign** in the Millennium Kingdom! Am I willing to stand, **girded in Truth**, and wearing, *“the breastplate of Righteousness”*? Ephesians 6:14.

Lord, **hasten the time** when there will be **no more vain promises from political puppets!** *“And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb . . . and who shall be able to stand?”* Revelation 6:15-17.

A glorious time, when there will be **no more ‘anti-Semitism’**: *“Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD. And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee”* Zechariah 2:10-11.

All is not gloom for believers! *“God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another even as also ye do ... In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you”*¹ Thessalonians 5:9-11, 18.

The believer is not delivered **in** the period of God's Wrath but the believer is delivered **from** that period. How can this be? The Bible answers: "***Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed***" 1 Corinthians 15:51-52.

In effect, there will be two comings of the Lord Jesus. The first is when the trumpet blows and He will come **for** the Church, "*Come up hither*" Revelation 4:1. The second is when He comes to this world **with** the Church "*on a white horse*" (Revelation 19:11) as **KING** of kings and **LORD** of lords.

An illustration, of how believers are delivered from the outpouring of God's wrath in the 'Great Tribulation,' is that of a farmer who saw a Prairie fire approaching. Knowing it would inevitably destroy his family, he lit his own fire and burnt the ripening grain around his home. As the roaring Prairie fires approached, the flames parted around the ground where the family stood—**so leaving them all safe!**

Already, 'the fiery wrath' of God for the judgement of sin, fell upon His beloved Son. If you are standing where the fiery judgement of your sin has already fallen on the Spotless Lamb of God, then, the fiery judgement will not touch you because, "***Your life is hid with Christ in God***" Colossians 3:3. However, "*This is the day of salvation*" offered us by '**The Great Deliverer.**'

The Apostle John testified: *“And I saw Heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war . . . And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in Blood: and His Name is called The Word of God . . . And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS”* Revelation 19:11, 13, 15-16.

On that glorious day, a resounding chorus of praise will ascend to the risen Jesus, the Lord of Glory: *“Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are His judgements... Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth”* Revelation 19:1-2, 6.

Then the Lord Jesus will rule the world, for a thousand years, with prevailing peace. Judgement will be according to ‘Truth & Righteousness.’ Old Testament prophecies will come to pass: *“For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea”* Habakkuk 2:14. And, *“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them”* Isaiah 11:6. In our Lord Jesus Christ, there will be: **‘Prevailing peace at last!’**

Almighty God is in Control!

112.

It is an awesome truth for the believer that, through obedience to His Word, we can count upon God's plan for our every moment: ***"I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure'"*** Isaiah 46: 9-10.

Years ago, while nursing at the **China Inland Mission** headquarters in Toronto, an **old missionary** shared about the 'peace' which God had given her at the time of the 'Boxer Revolution.' Villages were burned, people were killed and when facing her would-be killers, she calmly shared from the Bible, God's promise to her: ***"With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation"*** Psalm 91:16. At which Scripture, the rioters fled in fear from her!

Even when surrounded with the worst of situations, do I experience: ***"The peace of God, which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"*** Philippians 4:7. The Lord knows the time of our birth and the time of our departure! Also, He knows the time of the 'Rapture,' when believers will suddenly be snatched-up to meet Him in the air! Therefore, in the light of the prophesied seven year 'Tribulation' period, my daily duty and joy is to use every opportunity to warn others, while there is still time.

The Bible concludes with a great promise and a great prayer. **Promise:** ***"Surely I come quickly."*** The word 'quickly' means 'suddenly.' **Prayer:** Let us together each pray: ***"Even so, come, Lord Jesus"*** Revelation 22:20. **Amen!**

Dread not, neither be Afraid of Them!

113.

When God displayed His mighty power and piled up the waters of the river Jordan, it was **to provide a beachhead for the Children of Israel to first conquer, to cleanse, and then to occupy the Land of Promise!**

The crossing of the Jordan was **not the goal but the means to establish a beachhead for future victories as He had promised:** *“The Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little”* Deuteronomy 7:22. There is an absolute distinction between our possessing ‘the whole’ and of our then proceeding to possess ‘the parts’—‘little by little’!

“Dread not, neither be afraid of them. The Lord your God which goeth before you, He shall fight for you ... in all the way that you went, until you came into this place. And for: “Caleb ... to him will I give the land ... because he hath wholly followed the Lord.” Also, for: “Joshua, he shall go in thither ... for he shall cause Israel to inherit it” Deuteronomy 1:29-39.

Victory is accomplished in a battle when: **First a ‘beachhead’ is established before commencing ‘the battle’!** God selected two proven leaders of **fearless faith:**

Caleb, saw and reported of a land abundantly overflowing with fruit when in the wilderness, even though the other ‘spies’ could only fearfully report huge giants living in the land: *“He hath wholly followed the Lord.”*

And the other proven leader, **Joshua**, (of whom God told Moses), *“he shall go in thither, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it”* Deuteronomy 1:28-36.

Men of character and fearless faith are not forged in the company of 'like-minded people.' For God to produce a person of character and fearless faith, it is essential that they have been taught in the plateau of daily experience.

Unbelief sees a problem in every opportunity. **Faith sees** an opportunity in every problem!

Reign in life: The crossing of the river Jordan was a 'type' of our identity with Christ in His death and resurrection.

Only through His established Victory can we: "***Reign in life by One, Jesus Christ***" Romans 5:17. But **the 'flesh' often volunteers to replace 'faith'** as Paul bluntly warned the church in Galatia: "***O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you? . . . Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?***" Galatians 3:1, 3.

Therefore to reign in our Lord Jesus Christ, it is necessary that **we do not submit to Satan's deceptive devices**, but that we: "***Walk in the Spirit, and you will not fulfil the lusts of the flesh***" Galatians 5:16.

The Lord alone has gotten us the 'Victory' at the Cross! "***Reign in life by One, Jesus Christ***" Romans 5:17. With your life in total submission to the Lord Jesus, always be available to Him at any cost. Then at all times, from the advantage point of reigning with Him, seek that His Name be glorified through you! Walk by faith in prompt obedience to the guiding of the Holy Spirit and thus trust in the Lord as you "***reign in life***" with Him!

When David was in hiding from King Saul, he asked Nabal for ‘a rite of passage’ so that his army might pass through his territory. David anticipated Nabal would immediately grant him permission knowing that he had previously extended privileges to him. However, instead of granting permission, Nabal—who was “*churlish and evil in his doings*”—humiliated David and flatly refused his request! Such an unexpected rebuttal created a spirit of revenge and great anger in David and he determined to immediately act, “*by the flesh*” and prepared to destroy Nabal’s holdings.

Enter Abigail! “*Abigail ... was a woman of good understanding and of a beautiful countenance*” 1 Samuel 25:3. Good understanding and beauty all in one person! For single men looking for a wife, remember this order; first wisdom, then beauty! The Holy Spirit alone reveals such glorious truths that: “*the eyes of your understanding be enlightened*” Ephesians 1:18.

Abigail counseled David, “*Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God*” 1 Samuel 25:29. To which David humbly replied, “*Blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand*” 1 Samuel 25:33.

God took care of the situation His way. Nabal’s “*... heart died within him, and he became as a stone ... and it came to pass about ten days after, that the Lord smote Nabal, that he died*” 1 Samuel 25:37-38.

The amazing fact of **my co-ascension with Christ is implicit** in the Old Testament and **explicit** in the New Testament.

In the **Old Testament** we read, “*Yet a man is risen to pursue you and seek your life, but the life of my lord hath been **bound in the bundle of life with Jehovah thy God***” 1 Samuel 25:29. And in the **New Testament** we read the amazing truth which has the same thought, “***For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God***” Colossians 3:3.

Do you view your problems and dilemmas from ‘under’ the clouds or from ‘above’ them? Let us praise the Lord that, from His perspective, **everything is under His full control**. The Holy Spirit reveals: “*The exceeding greatness of His power . . . which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the Heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come: **and hath put all things under His feet***” Ephesians 1:19-22.

“***God . . . hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus***” Ephesians 2:4, 6. My frustrated ‘efforts’ of handling circumstances for God, dramatically change when I ‘walk by faith’ and understand my position ‘in Christ’! Then, instead of my trying to handle the details of life for God, to be ‘seated in Heavenly places’ will mean “***All things are under His feet***” and therefore, in Him, all things are under my feet also!

Two years before equipped armies assembled to liberate Europe in WWII, Britain stood alone in defense of their homeland. **The “Battle of Britain”** was won in the air as Spitfire and Hurricane fighter planes had the ability to **‘scramble’ fast in order to ‘gain altitude.’** Enemy bombers were detected as they fast approached the Coastlines by ‘radar’ and **Spitfires quickly gained altitude above** the bombers; they rendered humiliating defeat and **combatted the enemy** before the planes could unload their deadly bombs.

‘Altitude’ was vital for victory in this war and ‘Altitude’ is vital for the Christian in their spiritual combat: “Some believers do not enter into the **privilege of instant altitude and instant authority** because of all the obvious spiritual implications of conflict but prefer to enter into dialogue with the enemy on ‘strategic arms limitations’ and therefore fight **‘upwards.’** However, when we fight this way, the enemy always has the advantage. Therefore, in order to fight victoriously we must always fight **‘downwards.’”** Arthur Matthews.

We do not fight a fight that is lost but enjoy a victory which has already been secured by our risen Lord Jesus! We are already ‘co-ascended with Christ’ and because **God “*put all things under His feet,*”** we are already **‘up’ in Him.** Therefore, to view the horrific world scene pessimistically and horizontally, will negate the fact that, **“*in Him,*”** we **“*reign with One, Jesus Christ*”** and from His Heavenly perspective, **everything looks victorious!**

Always remember that ‘faith’ fights **from** the advantage point of victory and not **for** the victory! As believers, we are not called to confront demonic hosts and battle with powers and principalities of the air **in our own strength**. **‘Altitude’ is always the vital factor** for our position of total dependency upon the Risen Lord Jesus Christ and **our very ‘Victory’ depends upon it!** Satan’s cunning craft is dedicated to lure us away from our great spiritual advantage point **in Christ**, to the very depths of great vulnerability and defeat, because we forget our position in His ‘Victory’!

“This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” 1 John 5:4. Victory in Christ demands a life of faith! When a humble believer is anointed by the Holy Spirit, there is genuine authority in both their testimony and message. There will be no more ‘timidity’ in confession of the risen Lord Jesus Christ! ‘Make-belief’ is no substitute for a life available to the anointing authority of the Holy Spirit! Under the Holy Spirit’s anointing and authority, unabashed, a believer will readily testify that: *“He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement: Of sin, because they believe not on Me; of righteousness because I go to My Father ... of judgement because the prince of this world is judged”* John 16:8-11. **“The significance of being made powerful in the Lord, is directly connected to a faith that maintains its position, ‘far above all,’ in every circumstance and ‘puts on’ our Lord Jesus Christ as the only adequate Armor of God.”** Arthur Matthews.

Lucifer resisted the authority of the Most High when he rebelled against God: *“For thou hast said in thine heart, **I will** ascend into Heaven, **I will** exalt my throne about the stars of God; **I will** sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north; **I will** ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I will be like the most High**”* Isaiah 14:13-14.

Resistance to authority is commonly demonstrated on our streets; in our classrooms, in our political system, and is evident in multiple other societies. However, for the believer, we know that we are under the authority of the victorious power of the Lord, and: *“**We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life**”* 1 John 5:19-20.

In whatever situation we are in, the believer is to: *“**Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places**”* Ephesians 6:11-12. *“**For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light...and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, yet rather reprove them...redeeming the time because the days are evil**”* Ephesians 5:8,11.

Yet Very much Land to be Possessed.

120.

God said to Joshua, even when he was in his advanced years: “*There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed*” Joshua 13:1.

However, God also warns: “*But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for He that cometh to God [the eternal existing One] must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him*” Hebrews 11:6.

The Scripture urges us: “*But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind [of doctrine] and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord*” James 1:6-7.

Only by a personal understanding that we are **co-crucified, co-risen and co-ascended** in our victorious Lord Jesus Christ, will we be enabled to experience the joy of living in His triumphant faith. Only then, the risen Christ will receive all the glory as He accomplishes His eternal purposes through us: “*This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith*” 1 John 5:4.

As believers, the scene is set for increasingly evil happenings, but let each of us praise His Name and: “*Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy Name*” Psalm 103:1. “*I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall continually be in in my mouth. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together*” Psalm 34:1, 3. **For the Lord Jesus promised to be with us always for there is yet much land to be possessed!**

In the record of God's prime creation we read, "***Let there be light: and there was light***" Genesis 1:3. The Hebrew word for "***light***" does not indicate an original creative act, but rather that 'light' was made to appear or become visible. So, God bathed His created world with the inconceivable radiance of **His eternal light and glory**. This 'Light' would also have enveloped both Adam and Eve.

To understand, '**Light and Glory**,' it is important to contrast, "***the first man, Adam,***" with "***the second Man***"- "***The Lord from Heaven.***" "***The first man Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam, was made a life-giving Spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second Man, is the Lord from Heaven***" 1 Corinthians 15:45, 47.

In his arrogant desire to be worshiped in Heaven, Satan had coveted this glory for himself and was raged with anger to see God's glory bestowed upon 'created man.' **Hence, Adam and Eve became prime targets of Satan and he succeeded in seducing Eve and tempting Adam. As a result, both Adam and Eve were stripped of the glory of God.**

Believers are not surprised at the cataclysmic happenings in the world at this current hour, for Satan is: "***The god of this world***" 2 Corinthians 4:4. Satan, also is the root cause of today's apprehension as we witness, "***men's hearts failing them for fear***" Luke 21:26. Therefore, we can rejoice that, "***Ye are the light of the world.***[and] ***A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid***" Matt. 5:14.

Satan, gained a lodging place in human history when he successfully seduced Eve and tempted Adam, and they were stripped of the glory of God, resulting in: *“The spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past”* Ephesians 2:2-3.

This rebellion still persists in the heart of unsaved men. But, with an overture of mercy and grace, **the Lord came from Heaven to this earth in the form of Man**, *“that He might destroy the works of the devil”* 1 John 3:8. **Unlike the first Adam, who succumbed to Satan’s temptation, the “Last Adam,” the Lord Jesus, triumphed over temptation!**

In somber anticipation of the glory of the Cross, the Lord Jesus, *“lifted up His eyes to Heaven, and said, ‘Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee . . . And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was . . . And the glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them”* John 17:1, 5, 22.

The Lord’s wonderful bequest explains why Satan relentlessly attacks, in and through believers: ‘the glory of God.’ Consequently, it is essential for every believer to identify who their real foe is: **Satan, a created being, was, “full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty (from) the day that thou wast created”** (Ezekiel 28:12-13) **and, by his cunning devices and ambition, still seeks to destroy those who have been purchased by the Blood and are new creatures in the Lord Jesus Christ!**

In Heaven, Satan's name was "*Lucifer*," which means daystar, "*son of the morning*." But, this proud antagonist of both God and His glory, to only be a 'daystar' was not adequate: "*I will exalt my throne **above the stars** ... I will be like the most High*" Isaiah 14:13-14. This power lust originated in **Satan's insatiable pride and his unholy ambition to be worshiped!**

God is omnipresent, whereas Satan is 'limited' to "*the earth*" from which he travels: "*to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it*" Job 1:7. Therefore, when Satan is '*to*,' he is not '*fro*,' and when he is '*up*,' he is not '*down*.' And he continues to exercise oversight and administrative control over his demonic legions.

When the Lord Jesus, born of a woman, died as '**The Lamb of God**,' on the Cross, He triumphantly declared "***It is finished***." Satan had met his demise, and "*the Seed of the woman*" had 'bruised his head' Genesis 3:15. The Cross of our Lord Jesus is the pivotal point of **all** human history and Satan became a defeated foe! Our Lord, "***spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it***" Colossians 2:15.

Since Satan's seduction of Eve, he hates God's 'Chosen people' and seeks to hinder our Lord's return to reign in Jerusalem. Satan continues his 'all-out' deviant rebellious attacks on earth with but a limited time before the Lord will throw him into Hell. But by the supreme act of love and sacrifice to redeem sinners back to Himself, our Lord Jesus victoriously defeated the foe for us!

The Deception of the Nations.

124.

It is written of Satan, “*Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty*” but the Lord said, “*I will cast thee to the ground*” Ezekiel 28:17.

Later, knowing the hostile environment into which the Lord Jesus would send seventy of His followers, He said, “*I send you forth as lambs among wolves.*” Upon their return, with great joy they exclaimed, “*Lord, even the demons are subject unto us through Thy name.*” To which the Lord Jesus replied, “*I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven*” Luke 10:3, 17-18.

Having lost his ambition to be worshipped in Heaven, Satan turned his attention to planet earth: “to deceive the nations” Revelation 20:8.

However, unlike the first Adam, the Lord from Heaven—the Last Adam—foiled this plot and said, “*For the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me . . . now is the judgement of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out*” John 14:30, 12:31.

At the Cross, the Lord Jesus eternally triumphed over Satan, “*That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil*” Hebrews 2:14. As “*strangers and pilgrims*” in this world and having been, “*called out of darkness into His marvelous light*” (1 Peter 2:11, 9) we are commissioned and privileged to fellowship with the Lord Jesus in His Word.

As His purchased vessels, we are to ‘snatch brands’ from the burning, taking reprisals from Satan’s demonic clutches on mankind.

In the game of chess, there can be a moment when the opponent is so positioned that it would be impossible for him to ultimately win. However, sometimes a stubborn and proud opponent might protract his final defeat with many more moves on the chess board before he will accept the fact that he is ‘check-mated’—defeated!

The Lord Jesus defeated Satan when, from the Cross, He triumphantly cried: *“IT IS FINISHED!”* John 19:30. At that time, God’s work of redemption for mankind was paid in full and Satan became a defeated foe and there is nothing Satan can do to take away the ‘Finished Work’ of God the Son!

However, like the proud stubborn opponent in the game of chess, Satan seeks to delay his ultimate banishment—which will be to, *“the lake of fire and brimstone”* Revelation 20:10.

In the meantime, many precious people need to be rescued from, *“the god of this world [Satan, who] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them”* 2 Corinthians 4:4.

“Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince and the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” Ephesians 2:2. As believers, through our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus, we now have victory over Satan!

You may ask: “Who is behind the increasing international violence, chaos, murders, terrorism, fear, lies, ‘control and power lust’ among political, military, and financial circles?” It is Satan—the liar and murderer—working behind the affairs of men. Our Lord Jesus, when confronting His ‘would-be assassins,’ clearly said: ***“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him”*** John 8:44.

Against such a scheming enemy, believers are instructed: ***“Finally, My brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil ... Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore having your loins girt about with Truth.”*** In order to ‘stand firm’ in spiritual warfare against the enemy, it is essential that we use all our spiritual armor and be equipped with the living Word of God! [Read all of Ephesians 6:10-17].

Only by the precious Blood of Jesus; the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, and by prevailing prayer, can we: ***“come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need”*** Hebrews 4:16. In this way, as the battle of Satan’s raging anger increases, supplicatory prayer is essential that men and women, boys and girls around the world be spiritually delivered by our Risen Lord Jesus from their darkness, fear, and the terrible infernal destiny of Hell. Yes! Jesus came to set us free from Satan and our sin!

Wake up!

127.

“What is man ... or the Son of Man...? Thou crownest Him with glory and honor, and didst set Him over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet, for in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him. But now we see not yet all things put under Him ... But we see Jesus” Hebrews 2:6-9.

Although, believers joyfully wait for the day when “*all things*” will be under the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ here on planet earth, we still live in that period of: “*not yet all things.*”

Every believer is called to be a ‘**watchman on the wall**’ (Isaiah 62:6) and, to warn men and women of the soon-return of the Lord “*in the air*” for the ‘Rapture’ of born-again believers. After which, “*the wrath of God*” will be poured out on this Christ-rejecting world during the terrible seven years of the fast-approaching “*great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be*” Matthew 24:21.

Wake up! “*And that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep . . . the night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light,*” and “*Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof*” Romans 13:11-12, 14.

How will I, even today, respond in heartfelt obedience to the Lord’s command?

‘**What**’ we believe can be open to dialogue, but ‘**Who**’ we believe is the important factor when we witness for Christ. *“For I know ‘**Whom**’ I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day”* 2 Timothy 1:12.

God provided a **spiritual armor for our spiritual warfare**. Every born-again believer, since being rescued from the bondage of sin, is to use the full armor in combat: *“**delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in Whom we have redemption through His Blood, even the forgiveness of sins**”* Colossians 1:13-14.

We must “**put on**” the armor of Light—the Lord Jesus Christ—to experience a new tone of spiritual reality and urgency when witnessing to unconverted people. And, such spiritual reality blended with personal humility, will be experienced in a natural overflow of God’s love through our lives to those we meet, including friends, relatives, and neighbors!

*“The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us **put on the armour of light**. Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness; not in strife and envying. But **put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ** and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof”* Romans 13:12-14. And may our risen Lord use each one of us to mightily impact this dark world by His indwelling glorious Light. Amen!

A father once shared how, when his sons were very young, he was a helpless and hopeless alcoholic and caused much misery for his family. But when he met Jesus, He became his Savior, Lord and Deliverer!

Knowing little about the Bible, the father knew that **there is power in the Blood of the Lord Jesus** and would therefore daily claim the protection of the precious Blood of the Lord Jesus upon each of his three young boys. Our victory over Satan is secured by ‘the **cleansing** of the Blood,’ ‘the **confession** of our lips,’ and ‘the **consecration** of our lives.’

When the children of Israel were told that, ‘*the angel of death*’ would visit Egypt and all the first-born of the family would be killed, God gave a provision for the believing Jewish families; “*When I see the Blood, I will pass over you*” Exodus 12:13. Thank God that today, the “*precious Blood of Christ*” (1 Peter 1:19) **is still our protective armor!**

Some believers might think that, if they leave the devil alone, he will leave them alone. That is certainly not so! For it is only through the Blood of the Lord Jesus, that the believer has provision to overcome the power against Satan, the accuser of the brethren:

“And they overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death” Revelation 12:11.

The Authority of His Name and Word.

130.

Satan tempted the Lord Jesus by offering Him, “*all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them*” Matthew 4:8. Jesus knew Satan was “*the god of this world,*” (2 Corinthians 4:4) because Adam had handed over his God-given dominion of the world to Satan. However, the Lord Jesus responded with the artillery of the Word of God: “*It is written!*”

In this way He verified the Scripture, “*Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy name*” Psalm 138:2. As we daily read, digest, and internalize the Word of God, we will thus be prepared for spiritual battles we will be involved in as we witness for Christ. Then, because the Word of God permeates our thinking, and prayer life, our witnessing will be peppered with His Word!

At “*the gate of the Temple Beautiful,*” Peter and John met a man who was lame from his mother’s womb. In the authority of ‘the Name,’ Peter said, “*Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk*” Acts 3:6.

Forty years of ‘religion’ had left this man sitting impotently at the gate of the Temple. But, **in the Name of Jesus**, he was instantly healed: “*his feet and ankle bones received strength ... and [he] entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God*” Acts 3:7-8.

Is your life governed by the impotency of a ‘religious’ routine or by the dynamism of the risen life of the Name of Jesus in you?

Moral abandon, shocking violence, financial exploitation, fear-ridden communities, and countries are all part of the dismal daily news flooding our media and minds!

Despite man's incredible achievements, we can surely say: 'Man has proved he is totally incapable of controlling the affairs of man!' **At such a time as this**, God has promised the believer in His Word that, "*When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him*" Isaiah 59:19.

Perhaps you feel very much alone and powerless to witness for Christ? If so, then **you are a prime candidate for the enabling power of the Holy Spirit**. Conscious that the work could only be completed by the power of the Spirit of God, Zerubbabel acted in obedience and faith: "*For whatsoever is not of faith is sin*" Romans 14:23. "*But without faith it is impossible to please Him*" Hebrews 11:6.

Sadly, many believers have more faith in apostasy than they do in the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit!

Let us be encouraged to remember that, in his God-given task of reconstructing the Temple, Zerubbabel was also faced with 'outward hostility' and 'inward lethargy.' But note, that it was at that time, that God encouraged and reminded him: "*Not by might* [collective strength], *nor by power* [cultural strength], *but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts* [the Lord of armies]" Zechariah 4:6.

“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world”
Galatians 6:14.

Do I recognize the spiritual battle around me and remember to, *“Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil”* Ephesians 6:11?

In my prayer life, fervency and expectancy comes as the result of a living faith: *“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much”* James 5:16.
This type of fervent prayer is only possible when we confess our sin and are filled with the Holy Spirit: *“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints”* Ephesians 6:18.

Without such a filling of the Holy Spirit there can be no overflow of life, victory, and power! Therefore, *“be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled [be ye being filled] with the Spirit”* Ephesians 5:18.

Only in this way will the power of God be **released**, the ploy of Satan be **resisted**, and God’s purpose for man be **restored** to bring Him all the Glory! And, by the Holy Spirit we will thus, *“reign in life by one, Jesus Christ”* Romans 5:17. This constant ‘infilling’ of the Holy Spirit is so vital for the believer. Having a close relationship with the Lord Jesus, will empower them to see others saved, as the Soul Winner works through them for His glory!

Following the vision, as given by God to Zechariah - of 'the seven lamps,' 'the seven pipes,' 'the two olive trees,' and 'a golden bowl' - we are blessed by the text the prophet Zechariah gave to Zerubbabel: ***"Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts"*** Zechariah 4:6.

This enormous encouragement from God was given to Zerubbabel when he was about to undertake the daunting task of rebuilding the desolated Temple. By the principle of exegetical constancy, we recognize that 'oil' is the uniform symbol of the Holy Spirit. As seen in his vision, 'oil' flows from the olive trees through the golden bowl to produce light for the seven lamps.

Likewise, as for Zerubbabel, we too will realize when faced with our own human deficiency, that God has a unique plan of His unspeakable joy to appropriate in us the all-sufficiency of His Son's 'Finished work' at the Cross:

By His precise provision of the infilling and indwelling of His Holy Spirit, and the encouragement of His Word, we can live a life of total dependence upon the indwelling Holy Spirit and bring all praise and glory to our Lord Jesus Christ! Without the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, like Zerubbabel, we cannot accomplish such an enormous task by our own strength or even with the help of an army. But, by His Spirit working through us, the task can and will be finished, bringing all praise and glory to the LORD alone!

Do you know of parents naming their child Zerubbabel? In Africa we have met a Jeremiah, Elijah, Moses and even a Zechariah, but have never met a Zerubbabel. However, this is our man! When faced with absolute failure, he both obeyed and applied God's secret of success, which was: *"This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but **by My Spirit**, said the LORD of hosts"* Zechariah 4:6.

After seventy years in captivity with but a small remnant of Jews, Zerubbabel, as prophesied, returned to rebuild the Temple. The previously magnificent Temple had been built by Solomon, who was a man of intelligence, possessing all the necessary resources to accomplish the task. But in comparison, Zerubbabel who lacked resources, saw only the construction stones laid even after seventeen dreary years of effort! Even those who returned with Zerubbabel, became very despondent after viewing unimaginable desolation and totally missed seeing, **God's undeviating purpose being fulfilled!**

Are you facing a similar hopeless situation around you? In His sovereign purpose for your redeemed life, He patiently waits for you to stop 'trying,' and by faith to 'trust' Him to accomplish His purposes '**by His Spirit**' working through you! *"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is ... **be filled with the Spirit** ... and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"* Ephesians 5:17-20.

After seventy years of captivity in Babylon, most Jews had readily adapted from being an agricultural nation to becoming a people of commerce. But, according to God's prophesied promises, when the opportunity came to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their desecrated Temple, many declined to leave their comfortable entrepreneurial lifestyles. Similarly, am I reluctant to totally allow God's purposes to be outworked through my redeemed life? Am I still in control of how my plans will work out around the details of my affairs?

In the Book of Haggai, we are told that God said to Zerubbabel: ***"I will shake the heavens and the earth . . . In that day, said the Lord of Hosts, I will take thee, O Zerubbabel, My servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the Lord, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of Hosts"*** Haggai 2:21, 23.

The 'signet' speaks of Pharaoh's ring which was given for Joseph to wear with the invested authority of his name. Similarly, by His grace, **God invested the believer to wear His authority, that His mighty purposes should be accomplished.** God always uses humble men—humbled in the valley of failure and brokenness—such as He did with His servant, Zerubbabel.

God's plan is the same for us in this generation. Do we seek His cleansing for our failure with a contrite broken spirit? Do we seek fresh infillings of His Spirit that we stand in His authority, such as Zerubbabel did, and prove the Lord's mighty promises that: ***"I will shake, I will take, and I will make."***

Because Zerubbabel was a humbled man, by the grace of God, this promise was given to him that: ***“The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you”*** Zechariah 4:9.

To become a ‘channel,’ whom God will also empower, instead of our usual cry to God for His ‘help’ when situations are beyond our handling or even our bargaining to work harder for His favor, let us in broken humility allow Christ to live His life, by His Holy Spirit through us!

The principle of living the Christian life is, *“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except you abide in Me”* John 15:4. As Richard succinctly wrote:

**“My ability is total inability,
His ability is total dependability, and
My responsibility is total availability to His ability!”**

Therefore, ***“reckon you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord”*** Romans 6:11. By humbling ourselves of our self-reliance and pride before God, and totally depending upon the Lord even in this hostile world, we can praise Him that: ***“The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost”*** Luke 19:10. And, that is His purpose for you and me when our lives are totally available to His indwelling Life at whatever the cost to me! Is that your worshipful response to Him today?

“Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shouting’s, crying, Grace, grace unto it” Zechariah 4:7. The Lord Jesus is: *“The Headstone,” a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed”* 1 Peter 2:8.

Prior to my dad’s conversion in his seventies, he shared a strange dream he had. As he languished in a hot desert, he saw a Man standing by a great cleft in a rock. The Man turned to him and said: **“Sinner, it is better out of you!”** Bewildered, he asked Richard and myself the meaning of his dream. To which we gladly explained, ‘The Rock was cleft at the Cross’ on behalf of sinners like us. Shortly following, we had the joy of leading dad to, ‘The One’—the only ‘Rock’—our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

God’s Son was ‘**cleft,**’ a ‘Rock’ split apart from **the Father**, to make a way that our sin can be forgiven, and the sinner receive ‘new Life’ from the Lord by the Holy Spirit! Is He your ‘hiding place’ and Savior? Augustus Montague wrote: “Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee; let the water and the blood, from thy wounded side which flowed, be of sin the double cure; save from wrath and make me pure. “Not the labors of my hands can fulfill thy Law's demands; could my zeal no respite know, could my tears forever flow, all for sin could not atone; thou must save, and thou alone.” **Have you ever asked the Lord to be your ‘Rock of Ages’? If not, why not respond now to His loving plea?**

The Church of Jesus Christ is facing fiendish satanic demons arrayed against her, in an all-out attempt to quench the ministry of the Holy Spirit and destroy our Christian liberty of proclaiming the Gospel. Some faithful believers appropriate our obligation to God to be ‘occupied’ in fellowship with others through prayer meetings and evangelistic opportunities. Although spiritual deception is increasing and spiritual battles are intensifying, the believer can rejoice that **all Heaven is for us even though all Hell is against us!**

Zerubbabel faced two mountains of impossibilities in his perilous days. One was **the mountain of outward hostility**. Because his enemies knew that the Temple represented the strength and national unity of Israel, they imagined there were political reasons for its reconstruction. These enemies of God accused Zerubbabel of ‘a hidden agenda’ in his reconstruction project, causing great opposition from these enemies situated outside of Jerusalem.

Zerubbabel also faced **the mountain of inward lethargy**. Despite the threat of their annihilation, the people of Israel - tired of their years of bondage - lived in “*paneled houses*” while allowing the Temple of the Lord to “*lie waste*” Haggai 1:4. However, the wages they earned were like putting money into “*a bag with holes*” (verse 6). Even though their salaries might have increased, by the end of the year, they had nothing to show for all their labor. “***For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also***” Matthew 6:21. Therefore, by His indwelling Holy Spirit, let us be His investment in the Kingdom of God!

Our Eager Anticipation.

139.

As a believer, **do you eagerly anticipate** the trumpet sound and being ‘Raptured’ **to meet the Lord ‘in the air’**? Just imagine being with Him forever and worshipping Him without the limitations of lethargy, a wandering mind, and any of the distractions of this life down here below!

As we witness the rapid, biblical international events unfold, we can daily anticipate that: *“The Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, **to meet the Lord in the air**: and so shall we ever be with the Lord”* 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

Yes! Soon, with all born-again believers, we will fall at His feet in worship, love, and praise forever! And, until that wonderful day, the Holy Spirit will continue His ministry here on earth. His ministry in the Old Testament was not the same as His ministry of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, to accomplish special ministries, the Holy Spirit moved ‘**from without**’ and ‘**upon**’ at certain times and in certain seasons. But, in this day of Grace, the Holy Spirit has come to take His residence ‘**within**’ the believer and to **move from ‘within’ to ‘without’** to bring all glory to our Lord Jesus Christ. The important question for us is whether we have the joy of His Holy Spirit filling our lives to overflow to others through us. Perhaps, that is what the Lord is saying to us. **He loves us and wants us to eagerly anticipate His coming!**

In resurrection victory, the triumphant Lord Jesus brought His precious Blood to the 'Mercy Seat' in Heaven. And in Revelation 11:19 we read: "***And the temple of God was opened in Heaven, and there was seen in His Temple the ark of His Testament***" or, as it is also called, '**The Ark of the Covenant.**'

There can be no 'Ark' without a 'Mercy Seat.' And there can be no 'Mercy Seat' without His Blood! In Heaven, 'the Blood' of the Lord Jesus Christ is an ever-living testimony to the fact that God's redemptive mission on earth had victoriously been accomplished—when, the Lord Jesus—the Son of God "... *likewise took part* (of flesh and blood) ... *that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil*" Hebrews 2:14.

Now, because His Blood is on the Mercy Seat in Heaven, and because God's grace has completed the work of redemption on earth, **the Spirit of God is poured out, not just 'upon man' but, wonders of wonders, 'into man' and 'through man.'** So, the Spirit of God, is bringing to birth, yet another Body which includes every believer here on earth: "*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body*" 1 Corinthians 12:13. Hallelujah!

In the meantime, the Holy Spirit continues His ministry of conviction of *sin, of righteousness, and of judgement to come*, as He draws men and women, boys, and girls, into the Body of Christ. We know not the hour, but we know that soon, **the Holy Spirit** will lift His eyes to the Son and to the Father and He in turn will say: "**I have finished the work that You gave Me to do.**"

Following the time of the ‘Rapture of believers,’ the current ministry of the Holy Spirit as the ‘Restrainer,’ will be withdrawn and this ‘Age of Grace’ will abruptly cease. Before God pours out His Wrath upon this Christ-rejecting world, His ‘Bride’—the true Church—will be ‘Home’ with her ‘Bridegroom,’ our beloved Lord Jesus Christ!

Knowing that the, ‘Signs of the Times’ are already upon us in this cataclysmic ‘global’ emerging world, *“let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation, **For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep**”—alive or dead—“we should live together with Him”* 1 Thessalonians 5:8-10.

Because our Lord Jesus died, was buried, rose again and ascended to sit on the right hand of the Father in Heaven: *“**We are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ**”* 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14.

We are to be totally available to the indwelling Holy Spirit. As we ‘occupy until He Comes,’ the Lord Jesus should always be glorified through His unique plan for our lives and witnessed by all we meet that, it is, *“**not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts**”* Zechariah 4:6.

King Solomon had both **collective and cultural strength**. He had great armies at his disposal and administered them with unique wisdom. He had 150 thousand men and three thousand superintendents to erect that massive structure—**the Temple in Jerusalem**. Money was no problem. Everything that was needed could be organized and accomplished precisely as intended. **However, that was not the case with poor Zerubbabel as apparently he lacked leadership, wisdom and material resources to motivate a comfort loving people to build the Temple of the Lord.**

With great encouragement, Zerubbabel was told: “***Not by might***”—the Hebrew word ‘koach’ means, ‘**the strength of an army**’—collective strength. And “***Not by power***”—the Hebrew word ‘chayil’ means, ‘**the strength of an individual**’—cultural strength. “***but by My Spirit,***” *saith the Lord of hosts ... The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath send me unto you*” Zechariah 4:6, 9.

Likewise, as in 2 Timothy 4:17-18, “***The Lord of Hosts***” will fulfill His work through us when we totally depend upon His indwelling Holy Spirit: “***Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me ... and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His Heavenly Kingdom: to Whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.***”

The Golden Candlestick in the Tabernacle, and later in Solomon's Temple (Exodus 25:31-40 and 1 Kings 7:49) required constantly to be refilled by the priest with oil to give light to the Holy Place (Zechariah 4:1-7). But in the vision Zechariah saw of the Golden Candlestick, it had **an unlimited, ever available, and constantly fresh supply of oil which automatically flowed from the living source of two olive trees and was channeled through the golden bowl to the seven-branched Candlestick.**

And so, it is today! God has made available to every believer a conduit of supply that we might have our necessary 'oil.' Flowing from the heart of the Eternal God, and through the Mediation of His Son—our Lord Jesus Christ, **a constant infilling of the Holy Spirit is available for you and for me.** Therefore, there is no need for us to run from 'gas pump' to 'gas pump' to keep power in the engine! **The personal and continual infilling of the Holy Spirit is not God's reward for our faithfulness, but it is God's provision for our every need.**

Out of God's heart of love and mercy and, because of 'The Finished Work' of the glorified Christ by the efficacy of His precious Blood—which constantly prevails on our behalf in Heaven—the fullness of the Holy Spirit is continually available to refill the cleansed and humble heart of a believer. *"Understanding what the will of the Lord is ... be filled with the Spirit—***'being continually' controlled, empowered in Christ, by the Holy Spirit.**

In the book of Revelation, we are introduced to seven lampstands, “*And in the midst of the seven lampstands One like unto the Son of man*” Revelation 1:13. Notice that the seven lampstands surrounded the Son of Man. The purpose of the free flow of oil (the Holy Spirit) is never to draw attention to the lampstand but, it is always to illuminate, glorify and exalt the One Who stands in the midst of the Churches, even our beloved Lord Jesus!

It is always the purpose of the Holy Spirit to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ—*“When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He shall show you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you”* John 16:13-14. Surely that is why, when He was here on earth, the Lord Jesus said: *“the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me”* John 15:26.

When the Holy Spirit anoints your lips and you speak well and often of your Lord, your personal ministry will merge with that of the ministry of the Holy Spirit: *“And ye also shall bear witness, because you have been with Me ...”* John 15:27. As Silas Fox, once wrote: **“Wanted! Wicks for to burn for God—the Oil provided free!”** Are you willing to be His expendable ‘wick’?

“When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning ... to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand” Ezekiel 3:18.

John saw the glorified Christ bathed in resplendent Light: *“The Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; And His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters... and His countenance was as the sun shineth in His strength. And, when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead”* Revelation 1:13-17.

It is only in our inner posture that all true worship and service begins!

That way, the ‘overflow’ will hide the vessel and others will see the Lord Jesus Christ in and through our lives! If the purpose of our life is ‘self-expression,’ others will never see the Lord Jesus in us. But, when the passion of my life is that of ‘Christ-expression,’ then His Holy Spirit ensures that others will see the Lord Jesus ‘overflowing’ His Abundant Life through us—His hidden vessels.

The Apostle Paul said, *“The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us”* Romans 8:16-18.

“When I stand before the throne, dressed in beauty not my own, When I see Thee as Thou art, love Thee with un-sinning heart; Then, Lord, shall I fully know, not until then, how much I owe!” R.M. M’Cheyne.

Are you at a spiritual crossroad in your life? Do you realize that the consequences of the spiritual decisions you make today can affect your life for both time and eternity? Instead of you trying to keep up and to spiritually perform before others, the Lord Jesus has made the full provision for all that you need in Him. That is, Life in Him, Life, with a capital ‘L.’ Life to be a much-loved part of His Body, the Church, made up of every color, background and nation. Always remember that *“God so loved **the world**”* (John 3:16) and that is not limited to the ‘world’ around us!

The Christian life is not about what **I** can do **for** Him, but it is meant to be, what **He** will do **through** me. Therefore, rejoice to contemplate what this verse really means to me: *“**Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily.**”*

The Godhead, Incarnate in Christ, makes the amazing truths available to the believer that, we are made ‘complete’ in Him! *“That **our hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge**”* Colossians 1:27-29, 2:2-3. D.W. Whittle wrote: “Dying with Jesus, by death reckoned mine; **Living with Jesus, a new life divine ... O Lord I am Thine!**”

The soul is the essence of who I really am. It is composed of my emotions, my mind, and my will. The soul is eternal and will live forever whether in Heaven or in Hell.

The late Major Ian Thomas said: “I would rather travel around the world to lead one young fellow to Christ, than I would to come into a million dollars overnight!” And that is the value the Lord Jesus places on the soul of each individual person: *“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”* Matthew 16:26.

When a person is ‘born-again,’ the Lord Jesus takes up residence, by the Holy Spirit within the soul. This leads us to a somber question: “How much of my life is explained in ‘soulish’ activity and how much of it is explained by the power and enabling of the Holy Spirit working through me?”

“The Word of God is living, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” Hebrews 4:12.

Why do so many of us spend more time and money on our body and too little time caring for our soul? The Word of God is our ‘Diagnostician’—revealing the difference between, ‘what we do’ and ‘why we do it.’ We feed our body and forget to feed the real jewel inside—the soul!

In the beginning, mankind was created to be dependent upon God, and a transparent fellowship of light and love existed between created man and his Creator. But, when Adam and Eve became independent of God and dependent upon themselves, a far-reaching tragedy penetrated humanity. **God did not move away from Adam, but Adam moved away from God.** “*The Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*” And **Adam replied**, “*I heard Thy voice...and I was afraid*” Genesis 3:9-10. The “*god of this world*” made Adam fearful because he had lost his vital communion with God and his assigned dominion over the earth!

Faith and fear cannot co-exist! Fear springs from insecurity; insecurity produces anger; anger spawns’ hostility; hostility leads to irrational and fateful decisions. Likewise, today, when they compromise with Satan, men’s hearts are failing them for fear.

The believer’s promise: “*God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God*” 2 Timothy 1:7-8.

The secret of a panic-proof life! The old hymn says: “Fear Him, ye saints, and you will then have nothing else to fear.” **A life that is rooted in God and centered in Christ is panic-proof, resulting in a transparent fellowship of Light and Love existing between you and your Creator —our Lord Jesus!**

Despite the counterfeit of personal psychological counsel and international peace accords: “*The way of peace have they not known [because] there is no fear of God before their eyes*” Romans 3:17-18. Peace can only be found by our, “*being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*” Romans 5:1. Do you know this peace?

Such peace in God brings: “*boldness to enter the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus*” for “*Vengeance belongeth unto Me*” and “*the Lord shall judge*” for “*it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God*” Hebrews 10:19, 30-31. Through the precious shed Blood of our victorious Lord Jesus Christ, we have a living communion with God and can personally appropriate the words of an old hymn by Tate & Brady, 1696:

‘Oh, magnify the Lord with me; with me exalt His name;
When in distress to Him I called, He to my rescue came. The hosts of God
encamp around the dwellings of the just;
deliverance He affords to all who on His succor trust.

Of His deliverance I will boast, till all that are distressed,
from my example comfort take and charm their griefs to rest. Fear Him, ye
saints, and you will then have nothing else to fear; make you His service your
delight, your wants shall be His care.

Oh, make but trial of His love, experience will decide how blest are they,
and only they, who in His truth confide. Through all the changing scenes of
life, in trouble and in joy, the praises of my God shall still my heart and
tongue employ.’

Only then, the believer who fears God, will have nothing else to fear!

The ‘eye’ is a miracle of God’s creative genius! This delicate and precisely designed instrument of sight can either be used to incite **passion** or inspire **compassion**. Sadly, Samson made the wrong decision and his ‘eyes’ were incited to passion instead of compassion: “**He saw** a woman in Timnath” and said to his godly parents, “**I have seen** a woman in Timnath ... of the Philistines ... Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well” Judges 14:1-3. “Samson went to Gaza and **saw there an harlot** and went in unto her” Judges 16:1. And, when Samson went to “seek occasion against the Philistines” (Judges 14:4) in his compromise, he flirted with the very people he should have been fighting!

Whenever “**the Spirit of the Lord came upon him**” Samson’s super-human strength was his long hair. While in his mother’s womb, God told his parents that Samson was to be a Nazarite - separated unto God - signified by his hair length. After his secret was revealed when “**he saw Delilah.**” Her seduction spelt Samson’s demise; his hair was cut, and the Spirit of God was no longer upon him: “**the Philistines took him and put out his eyes ... and bound him**” Judges 16:21. At last! His ‘eye’ problem was radically dealt with!

Therefore, let us remember to, “**Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh**” Galatians 5:16. And with the Psalmist say: “**Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee ... I will meditate in Thy precepts and have respect unto Thy ways. I will delight myself in Thy statutes: I will not forget Thy Word**” Psalm 119:11, 15-16.

“His compassions fail not!” Lamentations 3:22. As a believer, does His indwelling compassion for the wandering sheep - heading for Hell - compel me to ask the Lord to: ***“Be renewed in the spirit of our mind: and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness”***? Ephesians 4:23-24. By His many infillings of His Spirit, will His shed abroad through my heart, can the overflow of the love of the Lord Jesus reach perishing men, women, boys, and girls. Only by my total dependence upon Him, will **His compassion flow through my life.**

May we know, and respond, to His indwelling burden for the wandering sheep heading for Hell, expressed in R.A. Jarvie’s song: “With a soul Blood-bought and a heart aglow, Redeemed of the Lord and free, do I ask as I pass down the busy street, is it only a crowd I see? Do I lift my eyes with a careless gaze that pierces no deep-down woe? Have I naught to give to the teeming throng of the wealth of the love I know? Let me look at the crowds as my Savior did, until my eyes with tears grow dim. Let me look until I see the wandering sheep and love them for love of Him.”

During our Lord’s earthly ministry, a leper urgently cried to Him, *“If Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean,”* Then, was ***“Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand, and touched him and said unto him, I will; be thou clean.”*** And, on another of the many occasions: *“when He saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd”* Mark 1:40-41, 6:34.

The Humble Mind.

152.

The brain can be likened to a precisely engineered luxury car. The ‘mind’ can be likened to the driver who sits at the wheel of the car. It is the driver who determines to turn on the ignition and decide the direction and the destiny of the vehicle. Only our Creator God can Xray our thoughts!

Unlike the ‘brain,’ which is a physical organ, **the mind is a metaphysical reality**. To blame the brain and ignore the mind, is the wrong way to explain and excuse deviant behavior which the Bible describes as ‘sin.’

A humble mind: *“Let this **mind** be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, **He humbled Himself**, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross”* Philippians 2:5-8.

The Lord Jesus, co-equal with God, portrayed His genuine humility of mind when He was willing to humble Himself, and became a servant. Our self-humbling will mean that, *“nothing be done through strife or vain glory,”* and we look not, *“on our own things, but...on the things of others”* Philippians 2:3-4. Accordingly, be encouraged that, around His Throne, *“**Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time**”* 1 Peter 5:6.

“God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble” James 4:6. Only in such manner of humility, will the preaching of the Word and the witnessing of the believer be explained in terms of the overflow of His Resurrection Life reaching this sin-drenched world!

However, if our understanding of ‘Truth’ is only cognitive knowledge of the Bible, doctrine or even eschatology, it will reach the ‘brain’ but bypass ‘the mind’, resulting in lack of spiritual reality. *“The Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it”* Hebrews 4:2.

If our ‘mind’ does not delight to focus on Heavenly things, then our conversations and actions will respond accordingly! As James wrote: *“purify your hearts, ye double-minded”* James 4:8. The ‘mind’ always follows the affections of the heart, so *“if ye then be risen with Christ ... set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth”* Colossians 3:1-2.

A whole-hearted mind: *“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and **with all thy mind**”* Matthew 22:37. Also, in Philippians 4:8, we read: *“Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, **think on these things.**”*

Do you experience real ‘peace’? *“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, **whose mind** is stayed on Thee: because He trusteth in Thee”* Isaiah 26:3.

A living spiritual knowledge of, and fellowship with the Lord Jesus, is not attained by human calculation but by divine revelation. *“If any man will [that is to desire] to do His will, he shall **know** the doctrine, whether it be of God”* John 7:17. The ‘desires’ **speak of emotions**: “to do” **speaks of the will**, and “shall know,” **speaks of the mind**. Some of those who doubt the infallibility of the Bible, will ask superficial questions to cover their ‘intellectual problem.’ However, their problem is not necessarily rooted in their ‘mind’ but it is rooted in their ‘will’, and founded in their ‘desires’!

To give satisfactory answers to such people, does not necessarily mean that they will receive Christ as Lord, but their reluctant answers will reveal that their real problem is not in their ‘mind’ but is rooted, both in their ‘will’ and in their ‘desire’! Paul wrote of this ‘humanistic mindset’ which brings a spirit of delusion, permeating the minds of professing Christians:

*“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, **may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know** what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, **when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the Heavenly places**”* Ephesians 1:17-20.

What Controls your Decision-making Process?

155.

The children of Israel were **deceived** by the Gibeonites and made a fateful decision **because they**: “*asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord*” Joshua 9:14. Each of our days is full of decisions: Some decisions are small, and some decisions are very significant. Have you ever stopped to consider **what controls your decision-making process**? Is it based on your emotions and self-pleasing opportunities or, is it entirely on the Word of God in your life?

My decision-making should not be about my bending God’s will to mine but, of my bending my will to the will of God! God’s way of pre-conditioning our thoughts to make choices according to His will require that we bathe our mind with the consistent reading and application of His Word.

Remember to always commune with Him in your heart “...*for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success*” Joshua 1:8. ‘O give me Samuel’s mind! A sweet un-murmuring faith, obedient and resigned, to Thee in life and death; That I may read with child-like eyes, truths that are hidden from the wise.’ James Burns.

His glorious plan for my life can only be outworked in and through me when I deliberately give Him control of all my decision-making “*O Lord: give me understanding according to Thy word*” Psalm 119:169.

For God “...*hath made us alive together with Christ... it is the gift of God... For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*” Ephesians 2:5, 8-10.

“Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” Romans 12:2. Before a bushel of wheat can produce an abundant harvest, it must first be planted in the soil - there to die. And, the prerequisite of a spiritually fruitful life is in the understanding, and continual application, of ‘death’ to my self-centered living. By the grace of God, He mercifully made provision for both!

“The just shall live by faith” Romans 1:17. *“For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live”* Romans 8:13. ‘Dying to live’ simply means that God, and God alone, is my very life and I am His available vessel all for His glory! Therefore, this does require that: *“by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service”* Romans 12:1.

Always remember that it is not the gift that sanctifies the altar, but, by the mercies of God it is the altar that sanctifies the gift! Only by the shed Blood of Jesus can my self-centered, sin-infected life be accepted by Him. And only by faith, with my thanksgiving, can His Spirit outwork His plan through me with all the glory going to my victorious Lord Jesus! A.B. Simpson wrote: ‘Risen with Christ, my glorious Head, holiness now the pathway I tread, beautiful thought, while walking therein: **‘he that is dead is freed from sin.’**

There are two types of gold. There is the intrinsic earthly gold which is valued in 'karats' ranging from 10K to 24K. The higher the purity the greater the value. There is also the eternal gold which is of inestimable value.

The ancient city of Laodicea was very affluent. Sadly, the cultural value system of that city had penetrated the Church: ***"I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing"*** Revelation 3:17. The **'Divine Diagnostician'** said of this church: Thou *"knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked"* Revelation 3:17.

When introduced to ourselves and the kind of person we really are, it will be a very humbling experience! But, after the Lord Jesus has exposed our need, He graciously offers to replace our deficiency: *"I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; [true spiritual value] and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; [true spiritual virtue] and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see [true spiritual vision]"* Revelation 3:18.

'New life in Christ', enables us to enjoy an intimate fellowship with the Lord: *"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with Me"* Revelation 3:20. *"He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold"* Job 23:10. And all glory be to the sacrificial Blood of the Lamb, Who alone can make that possible for you and fellow believers!

Let us prayerfully evaluate what the Lord is saying to us as we consider the:

Value: It is only as our personal faith is tried, and found faithful, that our gold is refined: *“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth”* 1 Peter 1:7. And *“The fining pot is for silver, and the **furnace for gold:** but the Lord trieth the hearts”* Proverbs 17:3. Also, *“He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver . . . and **purge them as gold** and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness”* Malachi 3:3.

Virtue: The Marriage Supper of the Lamb will be an occasion of great joy: *“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for **the marriage of the Lamb is come**, and His wife hath made herself ready, and to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints”* Revelation 19:7-8.

Vision: *“Where there is no vision, the people perish”* Proverbs 29:18. Accordingly, let us ask the Holy Spirit to give us **an understanding of the incredible value that the Lord places on every human soul:** *“Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men”* 2 Corinthians 5:11.

“Yes, Thy Cross was Thy glorious plan, (Though I see how unworthy I am) ‘tis there I behold Thy riches untold, ‘tis there **my dross is transmuted to gold**. The light of Thy love I’ll always esteem, now cleansed by His Blood, let me walk in His beam!” ~ Richard A. Bennett (age 19), immediately following his being ‘born-again’ and confessing the Lord Jesus to others!

“That in all things He might have the pre-eminence” Colossians 1:18.

As a believer, the Lord Jesus is ‘**present in** our life’ from the day we were ‘born again.’ Since then, some might even be recognized as an ‘active’ Christian in their church and community as the Lord Jesus is **prominent in** and through them. But for each believer, the vital question is to whether the Lord Jesus is really **pre-eminent in** every aspect of our being.

For believers who are blessed to own our own Bible, it is essential that His Word is the vital part of their life as He conforms us: *“to the image of His Son”* Romans 8:29. Being a part of the family of God, I am to pray for and exhort, other fellow pilgrims scattered around this world: *“that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection”* Philippians 3:10.

The supreme purpose in my studying the Bible should be more than acquired ‘head knowledge’—good though that be, it should be to have a living fellowship with the Lord Himself! Do you enjoy a living fellowship with the Lord and is He really preeminent in your life? As we face increasingly difficult days as a believer, may we be able to meaningfully say:

“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us, For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” Romans 8:37-39.

The Bible teaches us that, it is the Lord Jesus Himself Who makes heaven-Heaven! He alone is the center and the circumference; He is the supreme object of adoration, attention, and affection; He is the Light and the Life! The **Lord Jesus is the Glory of the ‘Glory Land’!**

How heavenly will my ‘Heaven’ be? **My capacity to worship Him on earth will determine my capacity to worship Him in Heaven.** The Lord develops my capacity for Him on earth—whether by pain or pleasure—for how He has destined that it will all be for His glory in Heaven. The absence of pain and poverty, together with reunion of family and friends, are not of themselves **the prime constituents of Heaven. But it is the reigning supremacy of our glorified Christ that will make Heaven, Heaven!**

The centrality of Christ is the basis of Christian fellowship, *“that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ”* 1 John 1:3. Whether here on earth, or later in Heaven, God’s purpose for embracing us ‘sinners’ into His family, is that we be, **‘rooted in God and centered in Christ.’** Until then: “Make my life a bright outshining of Thy life, that all may see Thine own resurrection power, mightily put forth in me. Ever let my heart become, yet more consciously Thy home. Oh! What joy to trust Thee, Jesus, mighty Victor o’er the grave, and to learn amid earth’s shadows, Thine unceasing power to save! Only those who prove Thee know what the grace Thou dost bestow.” Jean Sophia Piggott 1845-1882.

The centrality of Christ is the basis of Christian fellowship: *“that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ”* 1 John 1:3. The Apostle Paul speaks of God’s corporate Body—the Church: ***“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”*** 1 Corinthians 3:16.

And, the Holy Spirit addressed the moral pollution of the city of Corinth, which had permeated in the lives of believers—‘particular members,’ of that same Body: ***“What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are God’s.”*** 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

Our whole-hearted discipleship should be unto Him and the centrality of Christ should be known in our lives because, *“in the last days perilous times shall come”* 2 Timothy 3:1. And we are warned: *“Now, the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils”* 1 Timothy 4:1.

Therefore, may our lives be totally available unto the Lord as, *“the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer, and above all things have fervent love among yourselves”* (1 Peter 4:7-8) and that, *“the time is come that judgement must begin at the house of God...and, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?”* 1 Peter 4:17.

The call to discipleship demands a call to commitment! At the time when the Lord Jesus performed many miracles, it brought Him great popularity. But the Lord recognized that many of the crowds followed Him for what He could do for them and not for Who He was! Consequently, He did not enlist superficial followers, but instead gave principles for ‘genuine discipleship’!

Three times the Lord clarified why many in the excited crowd could **not be His disciple** because He knew that discipleship would demand:

No refusal: *“If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, **he cannot be My disciple**”* Luke 14:26. **No return:** *“And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, **cannot be My disciple**”* Luke 14:27. **No rival:** *“whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he **cannot be My disciple**”* Luke 14:33.

The Lord Jesus is not interested in us counting the numbers of ‘decisions’ that were made, but instead, He looks for the reality of His Life in those who have professed to know Him! The Lord looks for a continual commitment of our fellowship with Him in His Word. This is only ‘attained’ by a ‘life’ of total dependence upon Him that He might do His works through us. The Lord freed us from Satan’s hold at the Cross when He cried: *“It is finished”*! Hence, with **‘no refusal, no return, no rival’** we can walk by faith in His victory, totally dependent upon our risen Lord Jesus!

A body is very important to the head! The Church, which is the Body of Christ, is the object of the love of God as manifested to us through His beloved Son, Yeshua HaMashiach—Jesus Christ! In Him, the ‘true’ Church of Blood-bought sinners is secure, permanent, abiding and cannot be touched!

“And He is the head of the body, the Church: Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead . . . for it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell; and, having made peace through the Blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself” Colossians 1:18-20.

When the Apostle Peter confessed that, *“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,”* the Lord replied: *“for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven. And I say also unto thee...I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it”* Matthew 16:16-18. ‘His Church’ is built on the solid foundation of our risen Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul wrote, *“For we are laborers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon.*

“But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay that this is laid, which is Jesus Christ”
1 Corinthians 3:9-11.

Is His Word precious to you? If facing a ferocious fire and, you are only able to pick up one object, would you choose your Bible? ***“Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not pass away”*** Mark 13:31. Though it is essential to study the Bible, **the supreme purpose of our study should be, not only to get to know the Bible, but to progressively experience a living fellowship with the God of the Bible!**

A church leader may have winsome ways and even a magnetic personality, but only those who have submitted themselves unreservedly to the leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ, are biblically qualified to exercise leadership. Neither the Pastor nor the Elders or the Board are the ‘head’ of the Church, as only the Lord Jesus Christ is the ‘Head’ as He is, **‘The Word of God’:**

*“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, **by the Word of God**, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the Word of the Lord endureth forever. And **this is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you**”* 1 Peter 1:23-25.

When we walk in total dependence upon the Lord, ***“... all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts...helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand”*** 2 Corinthians 1:20-24.

The Power of the Word of God!

165.

“The Word of God is living, and powerful. And sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is able to judge the thoughts and intents of the heart” Hebrews 4:12. It has been estimated that there are 30,000 promises of God but not one has ever failed! Many Bible prophecies have already been literally fulfilled, and those promises that still await fulfilment will be fulfilled in His perfect time! As Paul declared, *“For **I am not ashamed** of the gospel of Christ: for it is the **power of God unto salvation** to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek”* Romans 1:16.

The Word of God has:

Power to convict, *“...when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart and said...what shall we do?”* Acts 2:37.

Power to convert, *“The Law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul”* Psalm 19:7.

Power to cleanse, *“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word”* Psalm 119:9.

Power to comfort, *“Remember the Word unto Thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction: for Thy Word hath quickened me”* Psalm 119:49-50.

Power to counsel, *“Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory”* Psalm 73:24.

In the eons of time, it was determined in the Godhead, that God the Son—the Lord Jesus—would willingly lay aside His glory and come in a ‘Body’ to become the ‘God-Man’ in this sin-cursed world. *“Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not, but **a body hast Thou prepared Me . . . Lo, I come** (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God . . . Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God . . . By the which will **we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all**”* Hebrews 10:5, 7, 9-10.

What God wills, He alone can perform! The Lord Jesus came in a spotless ‘Body’ prepared for Him to be born at Bethlehem. Throughout His earthly ministry, the Lord knew of the perfect time when He must, “set His face” to go to Jerusalem and, as previously stated, give His spotless ‘Body’ as our sin-offering: *“**By the which will** [that is God’s will—we are] **sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all**”* Hebrews 10:9-10.

On the third day, in an incorruptible Body, He rose triumphantly from the grave, was seen of many, ascended to Heaven forty days later and is seated at the right hand of God the Father! *“**We have this Treasure**”* [this is the Lord God Himself] *“**in earthen vessels**”* [by the work of His Spirit, He lives through our body] *that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. . . . our light affliction . . . for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory...*” 2 Corinthians 4:7, 17.

In your imagination, try to join those spectators who viewed the terrible events of that first 'Good Friday.' Around the Cross, a gaping crowd gathered and watched the horrific spectacle. They were confronted with a shocking scene of gory contrast. On either side of Jesus there hung a criminal. Both men were guilty before their fellow-men, and both were guilty before their Creator God. Of them both, the penalty of death was required by the Law of the land.

Between these two men, in vivid contrast to the thieves, the sinless Lord Jesus hung innocently upon His Cross. The thieves had to die, but not the Lord Jesus for He was not only guiltless and sinless before men but was perfect before His Holy Father! When, *"as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot,"* the Lord Jesus went to the Cross (1 Peter 1:19), *"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself"* 2 Corinthians 5:19. The Lord Jesus stated: *"Therefore doth my Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father"* John 10:17-18.

Prior to facing the Cross, the Lord Jesus explained to His disciples, the extent of His Love. **The substitutionary death of Christ for sinners was volunteered by the amazing heart of God's Love. Yes! *"Greater love has no one than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"*** John 15:13.

The Lord Jesus was Sinless.

168.

The Lord Jesus was sinless! The Apostles, Peter, John, and Paul, wrote this truth in their personalized testimonials:

John had a special friendship with the Lord Jesus and frequently observed Him when He was away from the critical scrutiny of the crowds that: *“He was manifested to take away our sins, and **in Him is no sin**”* 1 John 3:5. **Paul**, a scholar of renown learning and knowledge, declared about the Lord Jesus, that *“**He knew no sin**”* 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor of Judea, even though no friend of Christ, upon answering accusers of trumped-up false charges against the Lord Jesus with the intent of securing His death, declared: *“I, having examined Him before you, have **found no fault in this man**”* Luke 23:14.

However, human testimonials cannot be compared with the declaration of **God the Father** from His Throne in Heaven: *“**This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him**”* Matthew 17:5. The Father knew that, while the Lord Jesus had been in human form as God Man in this world, **He had lived as God had created man to live**, and that every other person has *“fallen short of the glory of God”* Romans 3:23. But that was not so of the Lord Jesus—Who, at all times, was perfect in every way!

As God the Father had introduced God the Son, at the commencement of His public ministry, so, His *“**Holy Father**”* expressed good pleasure as His beloved Son lived as **the perfect sinless Man** among men. (See John 17:11).

In Christ, Heaven launched its triumphant rescue operation for lost humanity. And it was Love—the Love of God for each of us—that prompted the Lord Jesus Christ’s incredible act of sacrifice and suffering on the hill of Golgotha.

During His last hours of excruciating suffering, **one of the criminals** ventured to express his opinion about the quasi-judicial system under which all three had been condemned to die. Amazingly, **his concern was** not for his own pain-racked and tortured body but, that how the Roman judiciary was out of line in **their condemnation of the Lord Jesus** to the same horrific death both criminals were suffering. It was **this glaring injustice**, that seemed to trouble him, as he made **three astute observations** in his final moments:

“We are receiving what we deserve for our deeds” and, thus confessed his personal responsibility for his crime, and therefore acknowledged his own personal guilt.

“We ... die justly” and, his three brief words, expressed his conviction that, his sentence of death was legal and just.

“This man has done nothing wrong.” The thief thus acknowledged his own guilt and accepted his punishment. But astonishingly, speaking of the Lord Jesus he said, that *“This Man,”* was guiltless and unjustly condemned to die!

And for us, let us thank and praise Him continually that the Lord paid so great a price for us and that, *“by grace are you saved through faith: and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God”* Ephesians 2:8.

On that awesome day, at a place called Golgotha, one of the two dying thieves, realized that the Man, who hung between them was: **Guiltless!** Under conviction of his own sin, the thief pleaded: ***“Remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.”*** Lovingly, the God-Man, the Lord Jesus, responded: ***“Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise”*** Luke 23:42-43.

Like all repentant sinners who turn to the Lord Jesus for forgiveness, the criminal was assured of eternal life because **he asked for mercy, of the right Person, at the right Place!**

That Person was the Lord Jesus Christ—the Son of God. The place was the Cross where He shed His spotless Blood: ***“... God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world”*** Galatians 6:14.

Speaking of the Lord Jesus, the Apostle Peter testified that, **He “*did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously. Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls*”** 1 Peter 2:22-25.

Prayer: Have I met and responded to the right Person at the right Place?

The Victory of Christ's Death!

171.

The Lord Jesus brought spiritual life out of spiritual death! It is impossible to conceive how great a price He paid for the redemption of lost sinners: *"For, all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God"* Romans 3:23.

But it is possible, to catch a glimpse of **the terrible spiritual pain** the Lord Jesus endured when, with deep intensity of agony He cried, *"My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"* Mark 15:34.

The intimate, eternally enjoyed perfect accord of **the fellowship in the Triune Godhead** of perfect Peace and Love, **was abruptly severed when the Lord Jesus took upon Himself all the sins of the world!**

"After He cried: "It is Finished" John 19:30. "And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst... [Christ] gave up the ghost" Luke 23:45-46. He "descended first into the lower parts of the earth. He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things" Ephesians 4:9-10. "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations" Luke 24:47.

"Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" 1 Corinthians 15:57. "He has saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us...before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light" 2 Timothy 1:9-10.

“I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, and have the keys of hell and of death” Revelation 1:18.

The undiminished deity of the Lord Jesus, which was clothed in perfect humanity, is God’s marvelous provision for the salvation of sinners and the defeat of Satan. As we were all born spiritually dead, only the Lord Jesus can give us spiritual Life ‘here and now’ and, ‘New life in Christ’ is the heritage for every ‘born-again’ person!

“And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” 1 John 5:11-12.

It is our ‘new birth’ experience, and only that, which assures us of eternal life in the presence of a Holy God who can never look upon sin. *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”* 1 Peter 1:3.

To have this ‘living hope’, we need ‘new life’ in Christ. The risen Lord Jesus, emphasized: ***“Ye MUST be born again”*** John 3:7. ***“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage”*** Hebrews 2:14-15.

He is Risen Indeed!

173.

What does the glorious Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ mean to you? For those who were living in Jerusalem, it was with joyful astonishment and perplexity when, it was noised abroad that **Jesus had risen from the dead!**

Then, when the risen Christ appeared among His eleven disciples, He questioned them: ***“Why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, have ye here any meat? And they gave Him a piece of broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it and did eat before them.***

“... These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written ... concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures...It is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things” Luke 24:38-48.

‘Risen with Christ, my glorious Head, holiness now the pathway I tread, Beautiful thought, while walking therein: He that is dead is freed from sin. Glory be to God!’ A.B.Simpson.

The believer has been both ‘purchased’ and ‘sanctified’ [set apart] that we might be a living sacrifice for the glory of the Lord Jesus: *“For you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you ... And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness”* Romans 8:9-10. The Son of God came to earth in order ‘to do the will’ of His Father: *“a Body hast Thou prepared Me ... Lo, I come ... to do Thy will, O God ... By the which will we are sanctified by the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all”* Hebrews 10:5, 7, 10. As the Lord Jesus ‘did,’ His Father’s will in His Soul and Spirit, so He ‘did’ in His Body: *“By the which will [of God] we are **sanctified**” to “**present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service**”* Romans 12:1.

To present my body as ‘a living sacrifice’ to God, I am to, *“likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord”* Romans 6:11. *“A living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service,”* made possible by His shed Blood for every believer at the Cross: *“He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [make alive] your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.”*

*Therefore, brethren, **we are debtors**, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: But **if ye through the Spirit do mortify** [to render inoperative] **the deeds of the body, ye shall live**”* And, *“as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God”* Romans 8:11-14.

Job, encompassed with family bereavements, bankruptcy, and incredible physical suffering, was able to exclaim: *“For **I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand in the latter day upon the earth**”* Job 19:25.

Thomas verified His **physical resurrection** when the Lord Jesus appeared to the Apostles in His resurrection body: *“Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto Him, **My Lord and My God**”* John 20:27-28.

Because the Apostle Paul proclaimed that the Lord had risen from the dead, he endured much hostility. In Jerusalem, Paul stood before a motley throng, and then before Felix, and eventually before King Agrippa where, in his defense he testified that: *“**Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead**”* Acts 26:23.

The difference in our Lord being *“**the first**”* to rise from the dead was that the Lord Jesus was not only raised from **the dead physically**, but **He was the first to be raised from the dead spiritually and eternally!** Others had miraculous resurrections, but they were only physical, and eventually they all died again—such as the raising of Lazarus; the widow of Nain’s son, and the daughter of Jairus, as well as others mentioned in the Old Testament.

Let us live, knowing that our Lord is alive! *“**But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ**”* 1 Corinthians 15:57.

Assured that the triumph of the resurrection of Christ was physical and literal and not an apparition! His disciples, knowing He was alive, were obsessed with publicly proclaiming and personally displaying the transforming power of the risen Christ! This effusion of resurrection life in and through the disciples resulted in 'the new birth' experience of multitudes of the people.

Later, the Apostle Paul warned of those who responded to a form of godliness and not to the power of the risen Christ: *"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins [a vicarious death] according to the Scriptures; [a verified death] and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures"* 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.

A vicarious death: Is a substitutionary death endured for another person. Which, for the Lord Jesus, meant the shedding of His precious Blood: *"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not **redeemed** with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but **with the precious Blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"* 1 Peter 1:18-19.

A verified death: *"His visage was so marred more than any man"* Isaiah 52:14. *"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief...Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him **stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted**"* Isaiah 53:3-4.

The Lord Jesus was never ever less than God. It is therefore awesome to realize how that God had humbled Himself, and having condescended to be born through the womb of a virgin mother, took upon Himself the form of man. However, if the Lord Jesus as ‘Man’ had not been totally submissive to His Heavenly Father, He would never have brought Him undiluted pleasure. Yet, throughout His earthly pilgrimage, the Lord Jesus was always obedient to, and dependent upon, His Heavenly Father. And thus, His humanity became the earthly expression of His Heavenly Father’s holiness, Love, and purpose in a world of suffering, selfishness and sin!

Yes, as ‘Man,’ the Lord Jesus walked upon the very planet that He—as God—had created! Although the Lord Jesus was never less than God, for 33 years, He showed man how God intended man to live. **Nothing in the humanity of the Lord Jesus ever violated what God had made man to be.** During those years, He was always totally available to His Father in Heaven. *“As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down My life for the sheep. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father”* John 10:15, 18.

Therefore, the Father was *“well pleased”* when He gazed upon His own beloved Son, who lived as the **perfect Man** among men. Guiltless, Sinless—the ‘Perfect Sacrifice,’ He took my place upon the Cross—before a Holy God!

The Only Source of Eternal Life.

178.

You may be wondering how God, the heavenly Father, could be glorified at such a gory scene when He watched His Beloved Son being crucified. Such amazing Love is both wonderful, and incredible to consider. Sadly, some people callously choose to reject the offer of forgiveness through the sacrificial death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Alternatively, for true believers, **Eternal Life is not only the assurance of our future in Heaven, but also our glorious, present Life in Him:** *“God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life”*¹ John 5:11-12.

The Lord Jesus died, not only to get the believer out of hell and into Heaven, but also to get God out of Heaven into us!

At the very moment we are ‘born-again’ of His Spirit, we have Eternal Life, which is found in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ! Praise the Lord for His substitutionary death for our sin and **for His victorious risen Life now made available to the believer—the only source of Eternal Life!**

It is possible to actively reject the Savior or passively ignore Him. Sadly, the result will be the same. That is, separation forever from **the only source of Eternal Life, Eternal Light, and Eternal Love!** For those who reject Him, this terrible condition has been described:

“Dying you will die, Will die so great a death, Will die Eternally, Be ever dying, yet never dead.” Therefore, we urgently plead that you to **choose Life!**

Following the resurrection of our Lord Jesus, and before His ascension to return to Heaven, He told His disciples: *“After a little while the world will behold Me no more; but you will behold Me; because I live, you shall live also. In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you”* John 14:19-20.

In our deep desire for **a faith that functions**, we may ask: “How can all the resources that God has given me in Christ become real and practical in my daily life?” As a believer, we have the privilege to deliberately make ourselves available to His indwelling Life, and by faith, count upon the fact that the Lord Jesus lives in our heart and that He is my *“Resurrection and the Life!”*

As the Lord Jesus is the only ‘Soul Winner,’ my responsibility is therefore to humbly make myself available to Him to, *“seek and to save that which was lost”* Luke 19:10. *Without faith, it is impossible to please Him”* Hebrews 11:6. When, by faith and thanksgiving, I prayerfully anticipate what His indwelling Holy Spirit will do through me, my mental faith will become an experiential faith bringing a wide practical difference in the results!

A triumphant life in Christ recognizes that, the Lord Jesus is totally sufficient for all things. My trying to obey and please Him in the energy of my flesh, is of no avail! Therefore, by faith, let us prove His victorious Life, accomplishing through us what can only be explained in terms of our risen Lord Jesus, with all glory to His Name.

When Peter wrote to Christians who were suffering persecution because of their loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ, he exhorted, “*Sanctify [set apart; magnify; give full reign to] Christ as Lord in your hearts*” 1 Peter 3:15.

Therein alone lies God’s open secret of how to cope when facing persecution for your faith by, **giving ‘full reign’ to the Lordship of Christ in your life!**

You may remember that one of the names of God in the Old Testament is, Adonai. Adonai means ‘The Lord,’ in the sense of His being my ‘Master.’ It is with this concept that Peter used, ‘The *Lord God*’ as my ‘*Master*,’ when he admonished believers by saying: “*sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts.*” Then, as the Lord Jesus is ‘Master’ of your life, you will enjoy His constant fellowship. Only then will you be truly free to trust Him with the daily demands and opportunities that daily occur in your life.

Let us pray what George Matheson wrote: ‘Make me a captive, Lord, and then I shall be free; **Force me to render up my sword, and I shall conqueror be!**’

Contrary to the popular idea of freedom, **real freedom** is not found in ‘my having the right to do what I want’ but, in ‘**my having the power to do what I ought**’: “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*” Philippians 4:13.

“*Be filled with the Spirit...Giving thanks always for all things to God and the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ*” Ephesians 5:18, 20. This ‘Power’ is only enabled, by faith, “*through Christ.*”

“Break up the Fallow Ground.”

181.

*“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; **break up your fallow ground**: for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you” Hosea 10:12.*

Before the ‘seed’ of God’s Word can flourish through a believer with His fruitfulness and penetrating spiritual authority, it is necessary to have a personal encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ by His shed Blood at the Cross!

Then we are to, *“**sow to yourselves in righteousness and reap in mercy.**”* That necessitates allowing the Holy Spirit to convict us of any hidden sin and to, *‘**break up the fallow ground**’* that His ‘seed’ will bring forth His fruit:

“Lord, show me the things of which I am unconscious.
Lord, put Thy finger now upon my heart;
Whisper to me, Thou blessed Holy Spirit,
Tell me what grieves Thee, that it may depart.”
Mrs. J.L. McClelland.

Thus, when the believer is simply the ‘ground’ for Him to bring forth His living fruit for His glory alone, the explanation of our life will be, *“**God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world**”* Galatians 6:14.

Then, as *“God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, **to give the light of the knowledge** of the glory of God in the face of Christ. For we have this treasure in earthen vessels. **That the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us**”* 2 Corinthians 4:6-7.

The story of Saul’s **‘power lust,’** as recorded in 1 Samuel 18:8-12, speaks of his covetousness for man’s approval: When he heard the women singing the latest ‘pop song’ about David’s victories in battle, he became very angry as he recognized his popularity rating was in decline and a resultant spirit of jealousy and murderous intent was born: *“Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before jealousy”* Proverbs 27:4.

*“And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: And what can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day and forward. And it came to pass on the morrow ... there was a javelin in Saul's hand. And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it. And David avoided out of his presence twice. **And Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul**”* 1 Samuel 18:8-12.

Saul jealously lusted for David’s power: *“Let not sin ... reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and members as instrument of righteousness unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. **For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace**”* Romans 6:12-14.

Keeping up appearances before others and trying to cope with the ‘details of life’ in my own strength and ability, is a subtle form of pride! Instead of my depending upon the Lord to accomplish His eternal purposes of blessings in and through me, I sin whenever I independently try to handle all the frustrations of daily living. Let us learn from the Mary – Martha story:

The dependency of Mary: *“Now it came to pass, as they went, that He entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who moreover **sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard His Word**”* [Communion] Luke 10:38-42.

*“**But** Martha was **cumbered about much serving**, and came to Him, and said [complaining] Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me [commanding]. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath **chosen** that good part, which shall not be taken away from her”* [convicted].

And there is only One Person who can live the Christian life, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ! *“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen”* Hebrews 13:20-21.

The terrible lust of having that, ‘little bit more,’ can devastate the believer’s life. It leads to an unsatisfied occupation of self-sufficiency because the priority of the mind contemplates upon being, ‘*increased with goods.*’ And of which, the Lord solemnly warned was the sad outcome of the church of the Laodicean’s spiritual bankruptcy:

*“These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; **I know thy works**, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, **I will spue thee out of My mouth.** Because thou sayest, **I am rich, and increased with goods**, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that **thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:** I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.”*

“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”

Before you go further into this day, why not **ask the Lord to show you His evaluation of your life?** *“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hears my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me...He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches”* Revelation 3:14-20,22. Why not thank Him for His love to ‘chasten you’ if you need to repent of your, **‘little bit more lust’?**

Diotrephes, coveted a prominent position in the local church and sowed discord, ‘infection’ by his gossip and dissent about the Apostle John. The believer in our Lord Jesus Christ needs to **be on guard against the subtlety of ‘power lust’**:

*“I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, **who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not ... I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church. Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God**”* 3 John 9-11.

The Lord Jesus, in absolute contrast to Diotrephes, prayed to His Father: *“**I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever Thou hast given Me are of Thee ... and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that thou didst send Me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine. And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them**”* John 17:6-10. And for the believer, we can ask: ‘Is the Lord being glorified through my life, or do I want to ‘reign’ on His Throne?’

When we give place to mental and sensual lusts, it will sadly affect others also. This was exemplified by King David when he lusted after another man’s wife and craved for sexual fulfillment ‘outside of God’s boundaries.’ David’s attempt at ‘cover-up’ then involved the murder of her husband.

A sensual lust pattern is applicable to a ‘mental lust’: *“At the time when kings go forth to battle, **David sent** Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel ... **but David tarried** still at Jerusalem. At eventide ...David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof and... saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful... And David ... enquired after the woman. And one said... Bathsheba, the **wife of Uriah** ... And David sent messengers, and took her ... and he lay with her”* 2 Samuel 11:1-4.

*“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving kindness: according to Thy tender mercies ... blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledged my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. **Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight:** “That Thou mightiest be justified, when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, **Thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part ... The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.**” Psalm 51: 1-6, 17,*

“It is Time to Seek the Lord.”

187.

*“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till **He come and rain righteousness upon you.** Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; **ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way in the multitude of thy mighty men**” Hosea 10:12-13.*

The root of evil begins with a divided heart. Instead of ‘living waters’ flowing through us, having been co-crucified and co-resurrected with Christ, we cling to the ‘security’ of our ‘old’ self-centeredness, acceptance and popularity and reject living by faith and total dependency upon our Lord!

*“For thus saith the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, **Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem** lest My fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings” Jeremiah 4:3-4.*

If we ‘sow for righteousness’ **we must, not only turnover a new leaf, but also tear out the old one!** The opposite of sowing righteousness and reaping mercy necessitates the ‘old man’ being slain to enable the new man to live!

When the ‘root’ has been humbly dealt with, then the ‘fruit’ will flow!

God, Who is merciful to every lowly soul that seeks Him, has promised: *“**to come and rain righteousness upon you**”* which will **all** result to His glory alone!

The Lord Jesus Christ is the only One Who can fill our hearts with His love and concern as we: ***“Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body”*** Hebrews 13:3.

Christians are under persecution in over one hundred countries. As fellow believers, we are commanded to carry the burden of praying for those who are isolated, suffering, persecuted, tortured and even meeting **terrible deaths whose only ‘offense’ is that they confess the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ!** The enemy is fast creating an all-out attempt to rid this world of the believers and the Living Word of God.

Whether it be for the four-year old Nigerian child who, having witnessed the brutal massacre of his Christian mother, sobbed: “I want my mommy! I want my mommy!” Or for the person the Lord brings to my life, that they might know His compassionate love flowing freely through my available heart to them. When I have an intimate relationship with the Lord Jesus, His fervent compassionate Love will overflow through me as, ‘teardrops from Heaven.’ His Love will then have the magnifying affect towards others, and I will bear their suffering as a mother does for her child.

“Since by your obedience to the Truth [through the Holy Spirit] you have purified yourselves for a sincere affection of the brethren, [see that you] love one another fervently from a pure heart” 1 Peter 1:22 Amplified.

The Lord Jesus said: “*A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another ... By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another*” John 13:34-35. Every believer is in the same ‘Body,’ of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head, and we are to: “*Love one another; as I have loved you*” John 15:12. As one family, we need the love and fellowship of other believers, and see past background, color or nationality, with our hearts ‘knit together’ in His overflowing Love.

God chose us, and by His Love, comforts us to comfort others: “*And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us*” Romans 5:5. “*And above all these things put on charity (love) which is the bond of maturity*” Colossians 3:14. By His Love: “*The multitude of them that believed were of **one heart** and of **one soul**...And with **great power** gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and **great grace** was upon them all*” Acts 4:32-33.

Knowing that, “*He ever liveth to make intercession for them*” Hebrew 7:25. Spirit-filled believers can lovingly: “*rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep*” Romans 12:15. When saying our ‘farewell’ to persecuted believers we ministered to in different countries, the European nationals would sometimes quietly sing in their own language (usually we were weeping) – “Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above” John Fawcett (1739-1817).

One thing we all have in common is that, as babies, we arrived into this world and some of us were noisier than others! Our first birth was into our family, but our second birth was into the ‘divine’ family of God: *“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever”* 1 Peter 1:23.

“The sincere milk of the Word” 1 Peter 2:2. Milk is absolutely essential for the growth of a Christian! In a similar way as a baby obviously needs milk to develop in strength to grow in capacity and experience, so that it one day will become an adult so, the unadulterated, abundant Word of God is vital for us to sustain, strengthen and to assist us in our growth to spiritual maturity!

In Colossians 3:9 we are commanded to: “... ***put off the old man with his deeds.***” It is essential that we ‘put away wickedness,’ craving for, and prove that the Lord is indeed good!

“So be done with every trace of wickedness [depravity] ***and all deceit and insincerity*** [pretense, hypocrisy] ***and grudges*** [envy, jealousy] ***and slander and evil speaking of every kind. Like newborn babes you should crave*** [thirst for; earnestly desire] ***the pure*** [unadulterated] ***spiritual milk, that by it you may be nurtured and grow unto*** [completed] ***salvation. Since you have*** [already] ***tasted the goodness and kindness of the Lord”*** 1 Peter 2:1-3.

Prayer: Speak Lord to my heart and show me where I need to repent. May Your Word again become alive to me and my fellowship with You, restored!

“Turn to Me with all your Heart.”

191.

When we forsake evil and seek forgiveness of the Lord and those who we have offended, we will, *“taste and see that the Lord is good”* Psalm 34:8. Sometimes, radical spiritual surgery is needed in our life for us to break free from Satanically inspired evil! To be freed from being ‘Satan’s stooge’ and harming the family of God, why not turn even now and radically repent of every shameful work of darkness which dishonors His Name in your life?

“Therefore, also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to Me with all your heart and with fasting and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart and not your garments and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful; slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil” Joel 2:12-13.

In the same manner that we ‘take off’ and change our clothes to go to bed, so spiritually speaking, we are to: *“Put away wickedness,”* and deal with ‘*malice*’ –which is often rooted by ‘*anger*’ that, when cooled down, is like a double-distilled malignity producing an attitude of rejoicing in the misfortunes of others! *“Put off envy,”* which resents another’s good and can also cause our evil speaking of another person. *“Put off hypocrisy,”* which Judas the disciple displayed when, under the garb of friendship, he concealed his treacherous intent to betray the Lord Jesus Christ at Gethsemane.

Prayer: I praise and thank You for Your forgiveness, cleansing, and a fresh infilling of Your Holy Spirit with my renewed fellowship with You!

Years ago, when visiting Holland, I met a disillusioned gang leader who was known for being able to push down a door with one finger. I asked him what was hindering him from turning to the Lord as He already knew his past. Dejectedly, he answered that it was impossible for him to be forgiven because of all the great sins he had committed. To which I asked: 'Do you think it necessary for the Lord Jesus to die for you the second time?'

The exciting news is that this young man, realizing that the spotless Lamb of God had paid for his sin, and with deep brokenness and repentance; received the Lord Jesus into his life: *"For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him"* 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Perhaps you also feel 'lost' inside and your mind is tormented with demonic accusations and hopelessness. You might even be contemplating suicide. God loves you and has a purpose for your life. The Lord Jesus Christ died to set you free from Satan and alive in Him! This book will give you more help:

'Your Quest for God' is available without charge at www.ccim-media.com. The Life-changing good news is that: The God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ died on the Cross and rose again on the third day, having paid the price to set us free from our terrible bondage of Satan and our sin: *"That He might be 'Just' and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus"* Romans 3:26.

*“Unto you therefore which believe **He**, [The Lord Jesus Christ] **is precious**: but unto them which be disobedient, the Stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the Head of the corner; And a Stone of stumbling, and a Rock of offense, even to them who stumble at the Word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed”* 1 Peter 2:7-8.

The esteem, in which our Heavenly Father regards His beloved Holy Son, is altogether **precious**. Amazingly, because we were purchased by His precious Blood, we too are most precious to Him! The Lord Jesus is our most beloved and precious Friend! And my close fellowship with Him, will attract others to find how **precious** He is to me! In Christ, we are part of *“a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a dedicated nation; a special people that we might set forth His wonderful deeds and display the virtues and perfections of Who He is”*!

We are a people called out of darkness into His marvelous Light, and through the circumstances of daily life which the Lord allows to happen, we are being changed into His likeness!

As Charles Wesley wrote:

*“Jesus, Thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love Thou art. Visit us with Thy salvation; enter ev’ry trembling heart. **Take away our bent to sinning; set our hearts at liberty. Changed from glory into glory, ‘till in Heav’n we take our place, ‘till we cast our crowns before Thee, lost in wonder, love, and praise...** Serve Thee as Thy hosts above ... **pray and praise Thee without ceasing, glory in Thy perfect Love.**”*

What a miracle when, through Christ, the believer is delivered from a life of *‘disobedience,’* to a life of *‘obedience’*: *“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet [fit] to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: In Whom we have redemption [been set free] through His Blood, even the forgiveness of sins... having made peace through the Blood of His Cross...to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight”* Colossians 1:12-14, 20, 22.

“As ‘obedient’ children, not fashioning yourselves [shaping up your way of living] according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as He who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [living]; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy ... call on the Father, Who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning [pilgrimage] here in fear ... as ye know that ye were redeemed ... with the precious Blood of Christ.”

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold [empty manner of life] ... But with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot: Who was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by Him do believe God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God” 1 Peter 1:14-21.

“Now you are a People.”

195.

As believers, our Lord Jesus is uniquely working in each of our lives, conforming us to His image. We can praise Him that He is adequate for any situation we might face!

Let us always remember that our most valuable possession in life, **the Word of God**, *“is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but **all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do**”* Hebrews 4:12-13.

Yes, the Lord knows our every motive—and He patiently conforms us to His image—sometimes through circumstances which we would not choose! As a child might attempt to ‘fix’ something, which then ends up being a complete ‘disaster’, the Lord patiently brings us through our ‘messes’: *“**Come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need**”* Hebrews 4:16.

Praise the Lord that we can bring all our ‘problems’ to Him: *“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For **we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin**”* Hebrews 4:14-15.

The Lord has given us the uniting force of His love for fellow believers to:
“Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.” Romans 12:15.

Where once we were ***“not a people... of God,”*** living as a solitary unit held in darkness and fear, we had no spiritual fellowship with God and one another. But now, under the ‘Headship’ of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are united as members of His ‘body,’ in a mutual inter-dependence upon each other.

We “are now a people of God ... a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar [God’s own] people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous ‘Light’; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy” 1 Peter 2:9-10.

As God’s own people and His pilgrims in this world, let us encourage each other to, ***“show forth the praises of Him,”*** ‘reflectors’ of His Light in this very dark environment!

Under His power and authority—the King of kings and LORD of lords—we are vessels through which He can, ***“seek and save that which is lost”*** Luke 19:10. Time is short before the ‘Rapture of the Church’ and the ‘great Tribulation.’ In humble obedience to our Lord, let us today, ***“show forth the praises of Him”*** that others too might know Him as Lord and Savior. Amen!

In the Bible, the Apostles begin their Epistles by laying a solid foundation of Gospel truth. This solid foundation is vital so that there may be erected upon it a super-structure of exhortation to practical godliness! Similarly, Peter as a fisherman, mellowed what he had learned by also opening with basic doctrinal truth. And, in a practical manner, Peter addressed his readers as his ‘dearly beloved.’

“Beloved, I implore you as aliens and strangers and exiles [in this world] to abstain from the sensual urges [the evil desires, the passions of the flesh, your lower nature] that wage war against the soul” 1 Peter 2:11.

When by his fleshly lusts, a Christian is led captive by Satan, it totally impairs his energies as all purity is lost and he loses any moral strength and, feelings of defeat, depression and isolation follow. Such war against the soul will imply hindrance and opposition to spiritual progress and, even actual physical injury, might result. Yielding to fleshly lusts, result in disease, despair and even at times death, which always affect other people also.

The command to: ***“Abstain from,”*** carries a ‘promise’ from God at its heart! It hides a divine undertaking as it entreats for a better, purer life from which we will benefit. ***“Waging war against the soul”*** needs combat maneuvers by putting our foot on ‘flesh’ and ‘self’ and to be filled afresh by His Spirit.

The Lord Jesus is your ‘Overcomer’ and, ***“there is no condemnation to them ... who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”*** Romans 8:1.

Praise the Lord that it is possible for us to abstain from warring fleshly lusts when we walk in His Spirit: *“They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts”* Galatians 5:24. Unconquered ‘lust patterns’ of the flesh, with their destructive bondage, were conquered for us by **Christ’s victory on the Cross** where we also died ‘in’ Him! *“Likewise, reckon you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord”* Romans 6:11.

Therefore, we are to ‘reckon’ ourselves to be dead—which means to count upon an accomplished fact! Let us imagine we are in the ‘grave’ where Jesus lay, shut in with a heavy stone and count all things as ‘dross’ for His sake that we might ‘win’ Christ. We have been ‘crucified with Christ’ and now, by His resurrection, we are also ‘risen with Him.’ Amen!

Now, turn to the Word of God and *“Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh”* Galatians 5:16. As a vessel for His abundant, resurrection Life to flow through us with joy and reality, anticipate a living communion with Him: *“Forgetting those things which are behind”* Philippians 3:13. The Lord Jesus paid the price to set us **free from our ‘Affections and Lusts.’** The mind and soul will lose the taste for things we once enjoyed and: *“Detecting them at a distance, shudder at their approach. Satisfied with the provision of the Father’s house, it will turn with disgust from the husks of the swine trough where we once lived.”* Anon.

“But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” Galatians 4:4-5.

God prepared the perfect timing for the advent of His Son: The iron claw of Rome had engineered roads across the known world and the Greek language was universally understood to spread the glorious Gospel following witnessing His sinless life, cruel death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. The promised Holy Spirit brought conviction to sinners and empowerment to believers.

Paul testified: *“We are come as far as you ... to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you”* 2 Corinthians 10:14, 16. In another quoted context, we are living, *“in the fullness of time.”*

The scene is set; the black backdrop of the present order of things is ‘falling into place.’ *“The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with a voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord”* 1Thessalonians 4:16-17.

The Lord said, *“Then shall be Great Tribulation!”* Matthew 24:21. While we have today, let us each be ‘occupied’ in sending forth the Gospel:

“The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light” Romans 13:12.

“My Words Shall Not Pass Away.”

200.

*“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own ... but because... **I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you**”* John 15:18-19.

The believer is, *“Born again, **not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever**”* 1 Peter 1:23. Our love for God and our saving faith are inseparable, therefore: *“**Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him ... And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever**”* 1 John 2:15-17.

The Lord God Almighty is in total charge of all that might seem strange that is happening around the world: *“**Whose voice then shook the earth but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also Heaven**”* Hebrews 12:26.

We are blessed: *“God...hath **in these last days** spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things”* Hebrews 1:2. He has also declared that *“**Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My Words shall not pass away**”* Mark 13:31. Only that which is of eternal value in Christ will stand as: *“For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the Word of the Lord **endureth** forever. And this is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you”* 1 Peter 1:24-25.

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word...as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition” 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3.

The Apostle Paul encouraged believers that the ‘Rapture’ of the Church—which will suddenly take place when we are snatched away to meet the Lord in the air—will take place before the Antichrist is revealed and the terrible seven years of Tribulation commences.

We are warned to, ***“Let no man deceive you, by any means.”*** However, *“that day shall not come, except there comes a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped”* as he ‘heads up a one-world government’ works miraculously, speaks ‘peace’ and *“will sit as God in the Temple ... showing himself that he is God”* 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4. **And, speaking of Israel in those days:** *“But who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a Refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap: And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness”* Malachi 3:2-3.

“Let no man deceive you, by any means: For that day shall not come, except there be ‘a falling away first’ [apostasy], and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition [the antichrist] who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, sheweth himself that he is God. Remember ... I told you these things?”

2 Thessalonians 2:3-5.

*“And now ye know what withholdeth that ‘he’ [“the son of perdition -The man of sin”] might be revealed in his time. For **the mystery of iniquity doth already work**; only He [“The Holy Spirit of God—“The Restrainer”] Who now letteth will let, until he [the Antichrist] be taken out of the way”* 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7. The ‘One’ holding back the ‘evil one,’ until [born again believers] are *“gathering together unto Him...in the air”* 2 Thessalonians 2:1. **Are you saved and do you, “occupy until He Comes”?**

With the removing of ‘the Holy Spirit’s restraining power,’ *“In that Day”*, God will pour out His wrath upon the deceived looking for “Peace and safety.”

In Daniel 9:24-27, we read of a coming *“prince”* who will emerge on a platform of ‘peace’ and safety, *“For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.”* On a platform of ‘control’ and ‘deception’ the Antichrist will emerge as global world leader. With the “Restrainer” ‘removed’ from ‘holding back Satan’s evil workings,’ ‘The Day of the Lord’ will be a time of God’s wrath upon this Christ-rejecting world.

'The Time of Jacob's trouble': God will use the preaching of His commissioned 144,000 Jewish evangelists during the terrible "great Tribulation." (Jeremiah 30:7). "And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel" Revelation 7:4.'!

Our Lord Yeshua HaMashiach—Jesus Christ, was born a Jew. He was crucified a Jew and rose again from the dead, still being a Jew! In fact, the 'Church' was 'birthed' with Jews, and we the Gentiles, were '**grafted in**'! *"For I would not, brethren that ye should be ignorant ... blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in and so all Israel, shall be saved"* Romans 11:25-26.

A night of 'wrestling with God': After that night Jacob's hip was dislocated, and as he pleaded for a blessing was told: *"As a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed ... Israel shall be thy name: and He called his name Israel"* Genesis 32:28, 35:10. In Joel 1:6-7, God refers to Israel as *"My land"* and *"My fig tree"* and *"My vine."*

"The Day of the LORD is at hand and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come" Joel 1:15. *"...which Thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years ... I am jealous for Jerusalem. And sore displeased with the heathen ...I am returning to Jerusalem with mercies; My house shall be built in it...the Lord shall yet comfort...and—choose Jerusalem"* Zechariah 1:12-17.

At His '**First Advent**' our Lord was rejected from setting up His Kingdom by the Jewish leaders: *"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not"* John 1:11. However, **God's promise to Israel was never canceled:** *"I will make **an everlasting covenant with them**, that **I will not turn away from them**, to do them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me"* Jeremiah 32:40.

Following our Lord's death, burial and resurrection, the 'Church' was 'born' among Jewish believers, to which Gentiles were added. After the seven years of Tribulation, we, His Bride the Church, will accompany our victorious Lord and His angels at His '**Second Advent**'! Israel will then be delivered as, *"Out of His mouth goeth 'a sharp sword,' that with it He should smite the nations"* Revelation 19:15.

God clearly stated: *"**I have chosen Jerusalem, that My Name might be there: and have chosen David to be over My people Israel**"* 2 Chronicles 6:6. And, in His tenderness and loving concern for His people, the Lord said:

*"**O Israel thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thine help ... I gave thee a king in My anger (Saul) and took him away in My wrath ... O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God: for thou hast fallen by thy iniquity, take with you words and ... I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for Mine anger is turned away from him**"* Hosea 13:9, 11; 14:1, 4.

‘The Mercy Seat’ was the only seat in the Tabernacle! It was behind a thick ‘Veil’ which separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. Every year, it was necessary for the High Priest to enter the Holy of Holies and on behalf of the sins of the people, to sprinkle ‘the Blood of the Atonement.’ *And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins:* [Because of reason of their deaths, there were many priests over the years.] ***But this Man, when He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God***” Hebrews 10:11-12.

The Lord Jesus is our High Priest. He alone paid the price for all our sin by His spotless shed Blood on the Cross. He victoriously laid down His life in our place. He dismissed His own Spirit as He cried: “It is Finished”! The Lord Jesus, conquered sin, death, and the grave! He arose the third day defying any corruption of His body! He was seen by His disciples and testified to many! He ascended to Heaven and sits enthroned at the right hand of the Father!

And, “*He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them*” Hebrews 7:25. Therefore, we have, “***boldness to enter into the holiest by the Blood of Jesus. By a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil that is to say, His flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience***” Hebrews 10:19-22.

The Lord Jesus taught: *“**Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth,** where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: **But lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven,** where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: **For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also**”* Matthew 6:19-21.

The believer is, *“to love the Lord thy God with all our heart ...”* Mark 12:30.
*“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. **Ye cannot serve God and mammon.** Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on ... shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?”* We are to, *“**Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you**”* Matthew 6:24-25, 30, 33.

Where are your ‘treasures’ laid up? *“As he came forth of his mother’s womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labor, which he may carry away in his hand. And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath labored for the wind?”* Ecclesiastes 5:15-16.

The question is not what I possess, but what possesses me! Possessions in this life are but temporary. But nothing can take away my ‘treasures’ in Christ, which are laid up in Heaven to bring glory to His Name!

“Am I a soldier of the Cross, a follower of the Lamb? ... Then should I fear to own His cause, or blush to speak His name?” - Isaac Watts (1674-1748).

I can deny the Lord Jesus Christ by my life, or I can deny Him by ‘my lip’! Sadly, I can also betray the Lord Jesus by my lifestyle, **or deny Him by my silence**—springing from the fear of being intimidated, rejected or persecuted.

In these days of political correctness—as our children are exposed to comparative religion classes which teach them to be tolerant to all religions—many a Christian is fearful to boldly identify with the cause of Christ or is intimidated into silence rather than to unashamedly mention the Name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God. Who has saved us” 2 Timothy 1:7-9.

Soul-winning is being the right person at the right time in the right place talking to the right person the Lord brought across my path! With a fresh commission from His Word, and a fresh infilling of His Holy Spirit, may we deliberately make ourselves totally available to the Lord, recognizing His eternal plan and purpose being outworked through us for His glory. **As ‘soldiers of the Cross,’** ours is to submit and instantly obey His leading, and unashamedly, **confess His Name**, giving praise to Him for those that He brings into our life to be saved!

Absolute submission to the will of God is the key to liberty for the believer: *“Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bond slaves of God”* 1 Peter 2:16. NASB. When we, under God, submit to His absolute authority, submission becomes a privilege—enabling us to serve others at whatever the personal cost. Understanding this principle, brings joy and a sense of His divine protection against the fiery attacks of the enemy.

“Conduct yourselves properly [honorably, righteously] *among the Gentiles ... Show respect for all men”* [treat them honorably]. **Submit** to those over you: For *“household servants ... be submissive to your masters with all* [proper respect], *not only those who are kind and considerate and reasonable, but also to those who are surly* [overbearing, unjust, and crooked] *... For Christ also suffered for you, leaving you* [His personal] *example, so that you should follow in His footsteps. He was guilty of no sin, neither was deceit* [guile] *ever found on His lips. When He was reviled and insulted, He did not revile or offer insult in return ... He made no threats* [of vengeance]; *but He trusted* [Himself and everything] *to Him Who judges fairly. He personally bore our sins in His* [own] *body on the tree* [as on an altar and offered Himself on it], *that we might die* [cease to exist] *to sin and live to righteousness”* 1 Peter 2:16-24 AMP.

Prayer: “Forgive me Lord. I have sought to choose my own way instead of being available to your total purposes being outworked through me!”

Among our radio listeners, some of which are believers who married an unsaved husband, ask the key to their loved one being reached for Christ. To which the answer: ***“In like manner, you married women, be submissive to your own husbands*** [subordinate yourselves as being secondary to and dependent on them and adapt yourselves to them] ***so that even if any do not obey the Word*** [of God] ***they may be won over not by discussion but by the*** [godly] ***lives of their wives”*** 1 Peter 3:1.

Likewise, in our Christian relationships, we must adapt and submit under the leadership God has given to us: ***“Finally, all*** [of you] ***should be of one and the same mind*** [united in spirit], ***sympathizing*** [with one another], ***loving*** [each other] ***as brethren*** [of one household], ***compassionate and courteous*** [tender-hearted and humble].” Submission unto the Lord brings liberty of conscience as we are protected under the covering of His line of authority. It can be compared to the soldier in battle, where prompt obedience to the line of command is vital, even if the soldier is running into a death trap.

“Now who is there to hurt you if you are zealous followers of that which is good? But in your hearts set Christ apart as holy [and acknowledge Him] ***as Lord ... For*** [it is] ***better to suffer*** [unjustly] ***for doing right, if that should be God’s will, than to suffer*** [justly] ***for doing wrong. For Christ died for sins once for all, the Righteous for the unrighteous that He might bring us to God”*** 1 Peter 3:8,13,15,17-18.

On ten different occasions, in James chapter 4, the believer is given commands from God of incisive actions to be taken in dealing with sin. In His deep and serious concern for our true repentance and total submission of unconditional surrender to Him, God declares:

“Know you not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But He giveth more grace. Wherefore He saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God” James 4:4-7.

It might mean the pain of breaking a detrimental friendship, or to stand alone in the crowd even if it means a change of career. But the Lord always has the best path for our lives if we follow Him at whatever the cost:

*“Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. **Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.** Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. **Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up**”* James 4:7-10.

Reflection: *“You know not what shall be on the morrow. **For what is your life?** It is even a vapor that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away”* James 4:14.

Because of Adam's disobedience to God in the Garden of Eden, sin entered the human heart—much to our detriment as man's intimate communion with God was lost: ***“For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God”*** Romans 3:23. ***“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us”*** 1 John 1:8.

As a ten-year-old, I loved God in my 'head' and faithfully attended church, yet I was only too aware of 'something' separating me from the reality of knowing Him closer than my breath. Therefore, under the title, “The Waterfall, as felt and heard by a blind man,” I wrote a poem in which I compared the feeling of the spray which I felt and the sound of the Waterfalls. However, my inability to actually 'see and understand,' was because I was separated by 'blindness.'

Accordingly, 'sin,' can be represented by spiritual blindness: ***“For the wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”*** Romans 6:23. ***“I AM the Way... no man cometh to the Father but by Me”*** John 14:6.

Being a religious person full of good works, it was hard for me to recognize myself as a 'sinner.' But, following a spiritual struggle under the conviction of the Holy Spirit, I conceded and humbly repented, receiving His forgiveness as the Lord became my very Life: ***“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved”*** Romans 10:9.

“O for a passion for souls; O for a pity that yearns; O for a love that loves unto death; O for a heart that burns!” - Amy Wilson Carmichael.

Praise God, that over the years, precious people have been ‘born again’ on our journeys! Having been in many meetings which involved much travel, **Richard would share how that the ‘fun’ begins after the formal gatherings were over and we met people in the various situations of an average day.**

One of those ‘divine appointments,’ was when we met an airlines assistant at a busy baggage claim area where our luggage was jammed in the carousel! This gave Dorothy an opportunity to compassionately listen as the young lady shared her complexities of life.

Of course, this then opened the door to share about **the Lord Jesus—He, who is the Christ—He who is the center of our lives!** As a result, this ‘new’ friend insisted on helping us, both with our luggage and accompanying us to a taxi queue, outside of the building.

As we waited for this further transportation, it gave us the opportunity to share the same Bible verse which Richard read when he had personally encountered the Lord Jesus so many years before: ***“But as many as received Him, to them He gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name”*** John 1:12. With people, both in front and behind, the three of us bowed our heads in prayer and our new friend joyfully received the Lord Jesus as her personal Savior and left with a copy of, ***“Your Quest for God”!***

When I first met Bob Flint, he was unable to even write his own name without blotting the paper! However, Bob was found of Christ and, under the lamp light outside of our home, he was gloriously “born-again.” At which time, Bob had already left school and was working as a laborer on a construction site. After Bob received a ‘new life’ in Christ, I invited him into our home where, evening by evening, we would drop on to our knees and read the Word of God together. Deliberately we would apply what we read to our heart and prayerfully reflect over each verse that we had read.

Bob’s thirst for the Bible rapidly increased his ability to read, and when enrolling in a Correspondence Course on the book of Daniel, Bob received top grade! At the age of seventeen Bob was drafted into the army where, for the next ten weeks, he was billeted with nine other men in the same barracks room and, to whom he not only witnessed to all his fellow soldiers, but personally knelt in prayer with each young man, leading them to accept the Lord Jesus Christ into their life! Later, when returning to England from Europe, sadly Bob’s plane went down. But, among the wreckage, ‘salvation’ tracks were scattered far and wide across the German countryside!

Bob’s life in Christ was short, but he was totally available to the indwelling Lord Jesus: “...*which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man ... striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily*” Colossians 1: 27-29.

‘**The Tabernacle**’ word, means ‘the dwelling place.’ It was the great Shadow of the way into the Sacred Presence of God! In all His Shekinah Glory, God ‘dwelt’ in ‘The Holies of Holies’ of the Tabernacle:

“And let them make Me a sanctuary: that I may dwell among them ... And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the Mercy Seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the Ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel” Exodus 25:8, 22.

‘**The Day of Atonement**’: Year after year, the High Priest first offered a sacrifice for his own sin, before entering the Holy of Holies to sprinkle a blood sacrifice on the Mercy Seat for the sins of the children of Israel: *“It is the Blood that makes atonement for the soul”* Leviticus 17:11. Since the disobedience of Adam in the Garden of Eden, we are all similarly separated from God because we were born in sin. And none can gain entrance into the Holy Presence of God, except by the sinless Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God loves us: When as a sinner we truly repent and are ‘born-again’ by His Holy Spirit, then we have a living fellowship with God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ: *“We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man”* Hebrews 8:1-2.

There were three pieces of furniture in 'The Holy Place' of the Tabernacle. Each item had a significant purpose: 'The Golden Lampstand,' 'The Table of Shewbread' and 'The Golden Altar of Incense.' Only the Priests were allowed to enter and serve in 'The Holy Place' which was separated from 'The Holy of Holies' by a very thick 'Veil,' embroidered with gold for **Deity**; blue for a Heavenly **character**; purple for **majesty** and scarlet for **sacrifice**.

As a shadow of Christ in His reality, the Golden Lamp spoke of the God-Man, Who declared, *"I am the Light of the world"* John 8:12. This Lamp was the only light in the 'Holy Place.' It cast a shadow over the many years to come, when our Lord Jesus Christ would leave the Ivory Palaces of Heaven and miraculously be born into this dark world of sin. By His spotless shed Blood upon the Cross, the Son of God willingly paid the price for all our sin. *"And He is the propitiation [expiation] for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world"* 1 John 2:2.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that was in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation [Mercy Seat for our sins] through faith in His Blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission [passing over] of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God...that He might be Just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" Romans 3:23-26. Do you have this intimate living fellowship with the Lord Jesus by His Holy Spirit?

“And thou shalt set upon the Table Shewbread before Me alway” Exodus 25:30. ‘Shewbread’ in Hebrew is often called —‘the Bread of the Face’ or ‘the Bread of the Presence’ and is sometimes called ‘the Presence Bread.’ The Father continually looked with satisfaction upon this bread because His Son, Yeshua HaMashiach—the Lord Jesus, always did those things which pleased Him. ***“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us,”*** for **by the atoning work of Christ on the Cross He also looks on us as, we are now, *“called the sons of God”*** 1 John 3:1.

The Table of Shewbread stood on the north side of the Holy Place opposite to the Golden Lamp and was made of incorruptible shittim wood—speaking of **the sinless humanity of our precious Lord Jesus!** The Table was three and one third feet wide, two feet and three inches in height and covered with gold—speaking of **His eternal deity and glory!** *“A border of a hand breadth round about”* Exodus 25:25-30. It also had four gold covered rings with staves, ready for the Israelites to carry in their desert pilgrimage. All dishes, spoons and bowls were of pure gold. In God’s eyes, the Shewbread and the Table were as one. ***“And thou shalt set the Shewbread before Me alway.”***

“You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar [God’s own] people; that you should shew forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” 1 Peter 2:9. **Come dine!**

On the north side of the Holy Place in the Tabernacle stood, ‘The Table of Shewbread.’ ‘Shewbread’ speaks of **‘the Presence bread’**: *“And thou shalt set upon the table shewbread before Me always”* Exodus 25:30.

Each Sabbath, ‘twelve fresh loaves’ of fine flour were set in two rows of six on the table. Only the priests were allowed to eat the previous week’s bread, accompanied by wine. Frankincense was sprinkled on each loaf and placed in an encircled crown of gold—symbolic of security in Him—as the shewbread was secured on the table for their journeying.

“The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread” 1 Corinthians 10:16-17.

In the Holy eyes of God, ‘the Table’ and ‘Shewbread’ were as one. He looked with satisfaction upon the bread, knowing that His Son, the Lord Jesus, always did those things which pleased Him. For the believer today, we have direct access for communion with Him:

“The Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, ‘Take, eat: this is My body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me’... But let a man examine himself ... he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body”
1 Corinthians 11:23-24, 28-29.

The life-sustaining ‘Shewbread’ which only the believer may eat, speaks of a living fellowship between the Lord Jesus and His Church. At the Shewbread table, we are to contemplate upon our Lord Yeshua—Jesus Christ, and His redemptive work for us His believer-priests. He is the only ‘Food’ that can satisfy our soul—“*The Bread of God!*”

On the Shewbread Table, twelve loaves were set in two rows of six. Each represented one of the twelve tribes of Israel. They were set in a crown of gold and sprinkled with frankincense—representing the sweet-smelling offering of Yeshua, our Lord, when He died on the Cross in our place.

The omnipotent Father’s heart looked upon the loaves and the accomplished perfections of His “*only begotten Son.*” The loaves were made of well-beaten flour—beaten until very fine and represented the horrific suffering visage of our Lord as He was, “*so marred more than any man and His form more than the sons of men*” Isaiah 52:14.

May every believer-priest never take lightly our privilege to feed upon Him:

“Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith: Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God.” Hebrews 12:2.

“For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds” Hebrews 12:3

The Golden Altar of Incense.

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A perfect object-lesson of our way into the sacred presence of the Lord God Almighty, is shown in the 'Tabernacle' of which God declared, "***And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them***" Exodus 25:8. But, because of sin, a thick embroidered 'Veil' separated the Holy of Holies from the 'Golden Altar of Incense' in the Holy Place. Both evening and morning, prayers were offered for the priests, and for the camp, by a Levitical priest who would burn sweet incense before God with live coals taken from off the brazen altar of sacrifice in the Outer Court.

When the Lord Jesus Christ—the Lamb of God—came to die, He shed His spotless Blood at the Cross and paid for our sin. Thus, fulfilling the Dispensation of the Law and opening a direct way of access to our Holy God: "***...behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom: and the earth did quake. And the rocks rent***" Matthew 27:51.

Now, each true believer can: "***Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise***" Psalm 100:4. Our Lord Jesus alone made a way of access as He claimed: "***I am the Way... no man cometh to the Father but by Me***" John 14:6. And now, He "... ever lives to make intercession for us" Hebrews 7:25.

May we keep 'short accounts' with God of any sin which hinders the joy of knowing the sweet aroma of His precious fellowship and the incense of praise of our lips bringing all Glory to His Name!

“And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made...and six branches shall come out of the sides of it...their knobs and their branches shall be of the same ... all it shall be of one beaten work of pure gold” Exodus 25:31-32, 36.

As beaten gold, formed from His wounded side, we are branches of His Church—showing forth His Resurrection!

“... yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him.” Because of His great love towards us, our Heavenly Father—co-eternal and co-equal with His beloved Son—sent Jesus Christ to be miraculously born as the God-Man and—*“was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities”* Isaiah 53:5. *“As many were astonished at Thee; His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men”* Isaiah 52:14.

“According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the Tabernacle” Exodus 25:9. Only the priests enjoyed the privilege of entering the beautiful ‘Holy Place’ where, **the ‘Golden Candlestick,’ brought light** upon the Tables of Shewbread and Incense—all symbolic, in one form or another, of God’s plan of redemption for mankind.

As His ‘believer-priests,’ we now serve the Lord as **‘His reflectors’** of the only ONE, who is **the Light** of the world.’ As His ambassadors, we live in a sin-darkened environ and, as the simple chorus helps us to express our heart’s prayer! **‘This little light of mine, I’m going to let it shine’!**

Behind the thick Veil of the Tabernacle, the Shekinah Glory of God hovered over the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies. Man's intimate communion with God was broken by Adam's disobedience in the Garden of Eden. This disobedience resulted to our detriment that, "***All have sinned and come short of the glory of God***" Romans 3:23. **For God to restore His fellowship with man, a Savior was needed!**

In great details about His Tabernacle—through no fewer than fifty chapters including the whole book of Leviticus—God gave us **a picture** of the Savior of the world, Yeshua, our Lord Jesus Christ "***according to the pattern shewed on the Mount.***" The Lord Jesus obediently came to earth and lived a sinless life and set His face to willingly die on the Cross for those who turn to Him.

Through His spotless Blood, He paid the ransom for our sin, then triumphantly cried: "***It is Finished***" John 19:30. Immediately, the earth shook; a restored way was opened between God and man, and the thick 'Veil' was torn from top to bottom! "***Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need***" Hebrews 4:16.

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit: Which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" Titus 3:5-7.

Adam and Eve were created as perfect human beings and, accordingly, were commissioned by God to have dominion over the world which God created in seven days. However, Satan subtly tempted Adam and Eve to disobey God. Their disobedience to God's clear command broke their fellowship with Him, as sin entered, and Satan stole **'the world dominion.'**

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin" Romans 6:16-18.

Let us not blame God for the terrible disasters, bloodshed, and violence in the world today. Satan is the mastermind, seeking to dominate world affairs for his own evil intent. His agenda, with his one third of fallen angels, is to become the head of 'a one world government' and annihilate Israel to prevent the Lord Jesus returning to earth to rule 1,000 years.

The chaotic mess, in which the world is commonly experiencing, can be attributed to Satan's evil intent for mankind: *"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them"* 2 Corinthians 4:4. As 'Light bearers': ***"Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil"*** Ephesians 6:11.

Responding to Temptation.

223.

Adam and Eve yielded to Satan's temptations and became spiritually separated from a living fellowship with God when they succumbed to; **the lust of the eyes**: "*Your eyes will be opened.*" And, **the lust of the flesh**: "*You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*" Also, **the pride of life**: "*You shall be as gods, knowing good and evil*" Genesis 3:1-5.

"And you hath He quickened [gave life], who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" Ephesians 2:1-2.

*"Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling **the desires of the flesh and of the mind**; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others"* Ephesians 2:3.

For us to respond to temptation: "***Love not the world**, neither the things that are 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.

And, "***be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith**, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. **But the God of all grace, who hath called us ... after that you have suffered a while, make you complete, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever***" 1 Peter 5:8-11.

Satan, realizing that his dominion was threatened, attempted to prevent the Lord Jesus from going to the Cross. Satan's methods of temptation were the same as that employed against Adam and Eve in the Garden.

After not having eaten for 40 days and 40 nights, Satan taunted and tempted the Lord Jesus by **the lust of the flesh**. *"If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread"* Matthew 4:3. **"The Word of God"** is our Lord Jesus and He is our Sword. (John 1:14). **The Lord, rebuked** Satan by quoting: ***"It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God"*** Matthew 4:4.

Appealing to **the lust of the eyes**, Satan then took the Lord Jesus to a high mountain and offered: *"All the kingdoms of the world ... will I give you if you bow down and worship me."* To Which the Lord Jesus **again rebuking replied** from His Word, ***"It is written, Thou shall worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shall thou serve"*** Matthew 4:8-10. To which comment, the Lord Jesus never questioned that 'the kingdoms of this world' belonged to Satan, because **Adam and Eve had forfeited their God-given dominion of this world to the, "god of this world."** This gave Satan the opportunity to bring about what he had failed to do in Heaven, which was to be 'God.'

By His shed Blood on the Cross, **the Lord Jesus has gotten us the Victory!** God will pour out His wrath on this earth during the 7-year Tribulation period and will then reign 1,000 years in Jerusalem—**having bound Satan in Hell!**

God has an infinite, unlimited capacity to think, to choose, and to love. God created man in His own image, giving him also the capacity **to think, to choose and to love**. We are created in the image of God to have fellowship with Him!

The Lord Jesus came into the world as the God-Man: ***“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him, all things consist”*** Colossians 1:15-17.

Because of His ‘Finished Work’ on the Cross, the Lord Jesus in His incorruptible body, rose from the dead. And ***“He is the head of the body, the church: Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence, for it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell; And, having made peace through the Blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself”*** Colossians 1:18-20.

As the Father communicated His Life to His Son, the God-Man—the Lord Jesus, derived His Life from His Father and renounced His own right to independent action. Similarly, when we renounce our right of independent action, the Lord Jesus will communicate His Life in and through us: ***“For in Him we live and move and have our being”*** Acts 17:28. And, all the glory is then given to the Lord Jesus Christ!

After the Lord Jesus, in the wilderness, had not eaten for 40 days and nights, Satan tempted Him with how to take care of His immediate hunger: *“If Thou be the Son of God, command that these **stones be made bread.**”* But the Lord Jesus answered: *“**It is written**, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God”* Matthew 4:3-4.

So, Satan took the Lord Jesus to a high mountain, and offered Him: *“All the kingdoms of the world will I give You if You **bow down and worship me.**”* To which, the Lord Jesus retorted: *“**It is written**, thou shall worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve”* Matthew 4:8-10. The Lord, having usurped the ‘God-given dominion’ from Adam, did not question that ‘the kingdoms’ now belonged to Satan: Having witnessed Satan, being as lightening-thrown down to earth with his fallen angels, the Lord knew that, *‘the god of this world’* was seeking to do what he failed to accomplish in Heaven, and to be worshipped as God!

Satan then brought the Lord Jesus, *“and set Him on a pinnacle of the Temple, and said, ‘If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down from hence: **For it is written**, He shall give His angels charge over Thee to keep Thee. And in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone.’”* The Lord Jesus replied, *“**For it is written**, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God”* Luke 4:9-12. In the hand-to-hand combat with the enemy, we must use **“The sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God”** Ephesians 6:17.

We Shall Not be Ashamed.

227.

As perfect Man, the Lord Jesus was: *“the image of God”* and the only One able to redeem us. **On the Cross, the Lord Jesus also redeemed ‘back the dominion of the world’** which Adam and Eve had allowed Satan to usurp!

Realizing that we are living in a spiritual battlefield, and *“**knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed ... But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof**”* Romans 13:11, 14.

Therefore, we must heed the exhortation: *by the mercies of God, that you present (yield) **your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove [demonstrate] what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God**”* Romans 12:1-2. *“**For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him**”* Colossians 2:9-10.

And in obedience to Christ, we are to: *“**Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness**”* Ephesians 4:24. *“**If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed**”* Romans 10:9-11. Amen!

Adam, by his disobedience, sinned and went out of a **one-way door** of intimate fellowship with God. The ‘Good News’ of the Gospel is, that the Lord Jesus came to our rescue as **‘The Door,’ to bring us back to Him: “I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they may have life, and that they might have it more abundantly ... This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou has sent”** John 10:9-10, 17:3.

Our citizenship is now in Heaven and not ‘of this world’—but we are ‘pilgrims’ just passing through! Our Lord Jesus said: *“These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. **In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world**”* John 16:33. *“I have manifested Thy name unto **the men which Thou gave Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gave them Me; and they have kept Thy Word ... I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine ... And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own Name those whom Thou has given Me, that they may be one, as We are ... I have given them Thy Word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the World. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou should keep them from the evil one**”* John 17:6, 9, 11, 14-15.

A Holy God cannot look upon sin. Therefore, He must judge sin! But out of His great Love for fallen mankind, He sent His beloved Son—the Lord Jesus—to be our Mediator ***“For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus: Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time”*** 1 Timothy 2:5-6.

This Christ-rejecting world is fast-headed to what our Lord sadly predicted: ***“... for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be”*** Matthew 24:21. Violence toward men will continue to increase in our time, heading to the deception of the nations as the Antichrist will rise on a platform of a one-world government, offering ‘peace and safety.’ Following which, Satan will then possess the Antichrist and demand that he be worshiped in Jerusalem as ‘God’!

But, for those who have been ‘born-again’ and love the Lord, whatever we might face in our day, we can rejoice that we will not be here during the great ‘tribulation’ of God’s wrath being poured out in His judgement of this world. Before believers are, ‘Raptured’ to meet the Lord in the air, we are to witness of our risen Lord Jesus Christ: ***“For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel”*** 1 Corinthians 9:16. ***“Now thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ, and makes manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place”*** 2 Corinthians 2:14.

As we face national and world-wide happenings in today’s situation ***“My brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might”*** Let us prayerfully meditate on some of these verses from chapter six of Ephesians:

“Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand” Ephesians 6:10-13.

‘A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing; Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing: For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe; his craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate, on earth is not his equal. Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing, were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God’s own choosing: Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He; Lord Sabaoth, His Name, from age to age the same, and He has won the battle ... willed His truth to triumph through us.’ Martin Luther.

“Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing [at all times] instant in prayer” Romans 12:12. ***“Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God”*** Philippians 4:6.

*“These things write we unto you, that our joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that **God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.** If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin”* 1 John 1:4-7.

Are your prayers just ‘mechanical’ and no longer God-conscious? Do you carry unforgiveness towards any who offended or physically hurt you?” ***“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us.”*** 1 John 1:8-10.

We are to relate every detail of our life in an open fellowship with God. David said: ***“I will bless the Lord, Who has given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons. I have set the LORD always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved”*** Psalm 16:7-8.

“Little children, it is the last time” 1 John 2:18. ***“The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light”*** Romans 13:12. ***“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints”*** Ephesians 6:18.

To purchase-back fallen man, it was essential that God send forth a ‘Life-giving stream of Blood.’ It was an incredible miracle of God when, the seed of a young chaste virgin was fertilized by **the ‘Seed’ of the Holy Spirit, and the Life of God was introduced in the form of the God-Man—the Lord Jesus!**

The angel Gabriel explained to Mary—who was an unmarried virgin—details of how this miraculous conception would occur: *“And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus ... The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also ‘that Holy Thing’ which shall be born of thee shall be called—the Son of God”* Luke 1:31, 35.

As the Holy ‘Babe’ began to grow in the womb of Mary, and the precious Blood of the Lord Jesus circulated in the embryo, at all times the Babe was Holy, uncontaminated and **very Life itself!** For your sin and mine His spotless Blood was necessary to pay the terrible redemption price. **Do you know Him?**

“He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” 2 Corinthians 5:21. *“And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the son of God hath not life ... believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God”* 1 John 5:11-13.

For the ‘spiritually dead,’ His precious Blood transfuses **life with a capital ‘L.’** Human blood is an incredibly complex substance. Some of the functions of blood in the human body can be described as: body cleansing, life–supplying and disease-repelling.

God has made available to you and to me a Bloodstream that has similar, yet far more miraculous purposes. And that Blood is there for all those who seek ‘real Life.’ For the sinner, the Blood of the Lord Jesus is God’s cleansing agent from sin: *“...without the shedding of Blood there is no forgiveness” Hebrews 9:22.* For the spiritually alive, **the Blood of Jesus is God’s protecting agent from the attacks of Satan.**

Amazingly, no cell in the human body is more than a hair’s breadth from a blood capillary. If poisonous products were not eliminated from these cells, the inevitable result would be disease and death. God has said that there is no other way for our sins to be forgiven. **“Are you washed in the Blood of the Lamb, in the soul cleansing Blood of the Lamb? Are your garments spotless, are they white as snow, are you washed in the Blood of the Lamb?”** Hoffman.

“For as much as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation [empty manner of life] received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot” 1 Peter 1:18-20. “God is Light ...in Him...the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” 1 John 1:5,7.

The Psalmist is driven to his knees in a holy desire for fellowship and communion with the Lord as expressed in his prayer: *“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting”* Psalm 139:23-24.

The word ‘search’ represents the Prospector who goes through the soil to find some precious substance. **He does this with diligence because he has the understanding that, mixed with that which is worthless, is something of great value!**

The word ‘search’ is also used in connection with the heart. According to the Bible, it is **the center of affection**: ‘O God, You alone know the desires and motivation of my life; my ambitions and my purposes for living. **Please show me, in the midst of all of my deep desires, what is truly valuable.**’

As Paul wrote: *“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ ...and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him ...through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith”* Philippians 3:7-9. **‘In Christ alone my hope is found ... Til’ on that Cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied ... Up from the grave He rose that day, and as He stands in victory, sins curse has lost its grip on me, for I am His and He is mine, bought with the precious Blood of Christ’.** Stuart Townend & Keith Getty.

“Search me O God, and know my heart” Psalm 139:23. May the Lord sift our heart’s deep desires and prove what is truly valuable in our life: *“That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death”* Philippians 3:10. May our goal be to: *“press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 3:14) that, through His enabling, we may say with the Lord: *“I have finished the work which Thou gave Me to do”* John 17:4.

Whereas the word ‘**search**’ has to do with a Prospector, the word ‘**try**’ has to do with a Metallurgist testing a piece of metal under pressure. The Lord also ‘tests’ our thoughts and lives to discover our depth of trust in Him:

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not permit you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it” 1 Corinthians 10:13.

Are you willing to bring your life to the Lord and to ask Him to show you what is true and valuable in your life? We live in a world of sin and satanic deception. As ‘light,’ we are His ‘vessels’ to do His bidding. Willingly discarding the ‘good thing’ to concentrate upon that which is ‘His best’!

Let the Lord Jesus, ‘**Search**’ our heart; ‘**Know**’ our thoughts; and ‘**Try**’ us—whatever pressure He permits—may the explanation of our life be HIM!

“Lead Me in The Everlasting Way.”

236.

*“Search me, **O God**, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and **lead me in the way everlasting**”*

Psalm 139:23-24. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Psalmist penetrates the innermost recesses of every human heart, and the searchlight of God’s Word reveals those areas in our life which are displeasing to a Holy God. Only through Christ can our deepest needs be met, and all available power to ‘live the Christian life’ be found in Him. The Lord Jesus is the believer’s ‘Christian Life,’ having been born again of the Holy Spirit!

For us to be led, *“**in the way everlasting**, ”* implies that there is a way which is not everlasting: The sad way, which absolutely holds a future in which there is no ‘hope’! For the Bible warns that, *“**When they shall say, Peace and Safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them**”* 1 Thessalonians 5:3.

Living with the shaking uncertainties of the nations about us, let us pray: **“O God, show me if I have desires that do not have any value. Show me if I have a future that does not have any hope.”** Realistically speaking, **outside of Jesus Christ, there is no ‘hope’ for, “Where shall I go from Thy Spirit? or where shall I flee from Thy Presence”** Psalm 139:7.

The Lord Jesus Christ declared: *“**I am the way, the truth, and the life ... I am the door, by Me if any man enter, he shall be saved ...I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life**”* John 14:6; 10:9; 8:12.

In adoration and praise to Almighty God, let us gratefully worship Him: “*Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom His dear Son*” Colossians 1:13. This can be further amplified: “[**The Father**] *has delivered and drawn us to Himself out of the control and dominion of darkness and has transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love. In Whom we have our redemption through His Blood [which means] the forgiveness of our sins*” Colossians 1:13-14.

All inhabitants of Heaven and of earth owe their life to the Lord Jesus Christ. The word 'creation' means 'created things.' “*Without Him was not anything made that was made.*” **All things were created “by Him” and “for Him.”** He is “**the First and the Last.**” And He is in control of everything! “*For by Him [the Lord Jesus Christ] were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions or principalities or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist*” Colossians 1:16-17 (Amplified).

The word “**consists**” means ‘**to hold together,**’ ‘**to cohere,**’ and ‘**to bind together.**’ Years ago, in Devon, England, Richard reminded a group of atomic scientists that, ‘the Lord Jesus held the world together by one twelve trillion of an inch’!

So, stop worrying and worship the One Who is in absolute control!

Whatever color, race or position we may hold, from God's perspective, we are all born on the same common ground: ***"For all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God"*** Romans 3:23. God provided an amazing answer for the problem of our being, ***"short of the Glory of God"***!

"For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the 'Glory' of God in the face of Jesus Christ" 2 Corinthians 4:6. God, in His amazing Love, made a way to reconcile all things back to Him:

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By Whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" Romans 5:1-2.

"The life of the flesh is in the blood" Leviticus: 17:11. Eternal life and peace with God can only be imparted by the Blood of our sinless Savior which was poured out on the Cross. ***"The Life"*** brought reconciliation with a Holy God. ***"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him"*** Isaiah 53:10.

"And God purposed that, through [by the service, the intervention of] Him [the Son] all things should be completely reconciled back to Himself, whether on earth or in Heaven, as through Him, [the Father] made peace by means of the Blood of His Cross" Colossians 1:20.

All glory and praise to our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom alone, we have Peace with God!

The Sacred Mystery!

239.

The secret is out! The union with God in Christ of redeemed men, women, boys, and girls, **now form the true Church— which is Christ's Body**—of which He is the Head!

“And although you at one time were estranged and alienated from Him and were of hostile attitude of mind in your wicked activities, Yet now has [Christ the Messiah] reconciled [you to God] in the body of His flesh through death, in order to present you holy and faultless and irreproachable in His [the Father's] presence” Colossians 1:21-22 (Amplified).

When by faith we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and receive Him into our heart, at that very moment **we pass from spiritual death into spiritual Life. Amen!** In Christ—because of His shed Blood on the Cross—we are brought back to God; clothed in His righteousness and presented ‘faultless’ and ‘irreproachable’ before His Holy Presence: **‘Faultless’**—such as the requirement of a sacrificial animal— **‘without blemish.’**

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin, and death” Romans 8:1-2. **‘Irreproachable’** means, **‘without the possibility of a charge being made and is unimpeachable.’** Colossians 1:22.

So, let us humbly ‘bow’ down in our hearts and worship, praise and adore **our beloved Lord Jesus Christ who made it all possible for such as us!**

When as ‘sinners’ we repent and by faith receive the Lord Jesus into our lives, we pass from ‘spiritual death’ into ‘spiritual life’ and **new life begins!** Because of His victorious Resurrection, we are to ‘**walk by faith**’ with total dependence upon His indwelling Holy Spirit outworking His Life through us. No longer is life about ‘me,’ working for God, but life is now my being available for ‘His Life’ working through me.’ **Salvation is free! The believer is no longer in charge!**

*“For in Him dwells **all the fullness of the Godhead bodily**. And you are **complete in Him**, who is the Head of all principality and power”* Colossians 2:9-10. Christ alone is that “*fullness.*” *“And **of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace**”* John 1:16. The believer is not filled with the fullness of the Godhead, but now experiences that “*fullness,*” which comes **from His infinite fullness** required for Him to accomplish His purposes through us.

In the Lord Jesus, dwells all the Pleroma [Fullness] of Deity! Therefore, with total dependence upon Him, we are to live in a continuous dependent faith upon Him. We are ‘made full’ for whatever He would plan to do through us—His way and for His praise and Glory alone! “[**Since**] *you then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*” Colossians 3:1. As we ‘reign’ in Christ, and all things are beneath His feet, therefore, ‘in Him,’ they are beneath our feet also! “**Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth**” Colossians 3:2.

God has a unique plan for the life of every born-again believer: “***For*** [as far as this world is concerned] ***you have died, and your*** [new, real] ***life is hidden with Christ in God***” Colossians 3:3. We are “***complete in Him.***” His Life dwells within us by the Holy Spirit. **The Lord Jesus is our life.** We have been crucified, buried, risen, ascended **and now reign in Him—the Head of the true Church!**

Because our life is ‘hidden in God,’ we are eternally one with Him! Nothing can ever separate the ‘born-again’ believer from the risen LORD. Therefore, it is essential to live by faith, feeding upon His Word and trusting Him in every circumstance. **When our life is totally centered in Him, only One can reign, and that person is not meant to be us!**

Whatever scenario we might face, we are to live totally dependent upon Him for, “***He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think***” Ephesians 3:20. Then He will work His unique plan in and through us and the explanation of His Spirit’s working is all of Him!

We have been reconciled back to God through the precious Blood of the Lamb. Whatever may happen, the Lord is our peace, and the power of His resurrection Life will manifest all Glory through us to Christ Himself. Let us remember that in everything **‘I can’t but He can!’** “***When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then ye also will appear with Him in glory***” Colossians 3:4. And **that, dear fellow-believer, is what we can prove in our life as, real Living!**

How Christ rose from the dead is a mystery. How Christ can make us into new creatures in Him is likewise a mystery! But this I know, He did this for me, a ‘born-again’ repentant sinner! No amount of penance or good works could redeem my soul. Only the spotless Blood of the Lamb of God—the Lord Jesus Christ, could pay the price for all my sin. He bore my condemnation before a Holy God and was indeed the God-Man, to redeem me to Him. No effort of mine, or family or church can do this for me!

Every sinner who humbly repents and receives the Lord Jesus into their life, immediately becomes a partaker of a NEW eternal life, in Him! Through His Word and by His Spirit, the believer is to, ***“reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord”*** Romans 6:11.

It is no longer by my efforts, but now through His exchanged Life, ***“I have strength for all things in Christ who empowers me [to fulfill His purpose—I am self-sufficient in Christ’s sufficiency; I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him who infuses me with inner strength and confident peace]”*** Philippians 4:13.

Let us prayerfully reflect: When the Lord Jesus Christ died upon the Cross to sever me from the bondage of this world and set me free from being a subject to sin, **‘Death’ and ‘Judgement’ was poured on my Lord and Savior and He exhausted all their power.** We were ‘bought’ with so great a price; therefore, **all Praise and Glory must be given only to our LORD JESUS!**

Whereas, we belonged to Adam’s race, now the believer is translated into the Kingdom of His dear Son. When the Lord Jesus died, we died with Him.

When He was buried, we too were buried with Him, and now His indwelling Spirit is the “Soul-winner” reaching others by His love through us, His purchased, available vessel! Oh, the grace of God, that now the believer is freed and can: *“Reign with Him by One, Jesus Christ”* Romans 5:17.

The Lord Jesus ascended on high and sits at God’s right hand. He is the Head of the Church, and as LORD, He has the right to be the ‘head’ of every ‘born-again’ believer! **My ‘holiness’** is dependent upon **His indwelling ‘Holy’ Spirit!** The Lord Jesus Christ triumphantly rose from the grave. He is our ‘Christian Life,’ accomplishing His work through our availability to Him. For our life is, *“hid with Christ in God”* Colossians 3:2.

“Mortify [render inoperative] *therefore your members which are upon the earth”* Colossians 3:5. This includes such sins as: **“Fornication”** [illicit sexual intercourse]; **“Uncleanness”** [moral impurity]; **“Inordinate affection”** [unrestrained affection]; **“Evil concupiscence”** [sensual, wrongly desirous], and **“Covetousness”** [which is idolatry]. ***“For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In which you also walked some time, when you lived in them”*** Colossians 3:6-7.

Praise God that: ***“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”*** 1 John 1:9. Amen!

PUT OFF: *“Lie not one to another, seeing that ye **have put off the old man with his deeds**”* (Colossians 3:9) of fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness. *“But now you also **put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth**”* Colossians 3:8. Instead of gossip and, lying to one another by slander and shameful language, we are to:

PUT ON *“And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him... **but Christ is all in all, and in all** ... therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel [complaint] against any: **even as Christ forgave you, so also do you**”* Colossians 3:10-13. Does His indwelling Life reflect through me, ‘His tenderness of heart’; ‘His kindness’; ‘His humble-mindedness’; ‘His gentleness’ and ‘His patient-endurance’?

*“And above all these things put on love, unity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule [umpire] in your hearts, to which also you are called in one body; and be you, thankful. **Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord**”* Colossians 3:14-16. ‘Jesus, Lamb of God, worthy is Your Name. Taking my sin, my cross, my shame: Rising again I bless Your Name, You are my All in All.’ Jernigan

‘**The Lord’s Prayer**’ of God the Son speaking to God the Father is really in John 17, as He did not need to include what He taught His disciples to pray, *“Forgive us our trespasses”* Matthew 6:12, as this is ‘**The Family Prayer**’!

The Lord Jesus ‘**disclosed His Deity**,’ before going to the Cross, *“Philip saith unto Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it suffices us. To which the Lord Jesus asked, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?”* John 14:8-9.

The Lord Jesus ‘**disclosed His destination**’ as to where He was going: *“In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you.”* And to why He was going: *“I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again**, and receive you unto Myself: that where I am, there you may be also.”* John 14:2-3.

The Lord Jesus ‘**disclosed His determination**’ of what He would do to:

‘Grant their requests;’ ‘Gladden their sorrow;’ ‘Give the Spirit of Comfort.’

“And whatsoever you shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask anything in My Name, I will do it. Peace I leave with you ... not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” John 14:13-14, 27.

“Shut the door” Matthew 6:6: The Lord’s Prayer, as recorded in John 17, enables us to hear the heartbeat and feel the prayerful concern between God the Son and God the Father. Our Great High Priest is also praying for you!

Following the ministries of the Old Testament Prophets who shared with man what God told them, our Great High Priest—the Lord Jesus—now speaks directly to us by His Holy Spirit through His Word: *“It is written, **Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God**”* Matthew 4:4. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit—the Triune God—are One and equal with each other.

*“For I have given unto them the words which Thou gave Me and they have received them; and have known surely that **I came out from Thee** and they have believed that Thou hast sent Me. **I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine. And all Mine are Thine; and I am glorified in them**”* John 17:8-9.

Disclosure of His Destination: *“In My Father’s house are many mansions.”* “Many resting places’ gives us the idea of great progression, even in Heaven” J. Campbell Morgan.

Disclosure of His Determination: *“Whatever ye shall ask”* [our will to be broken] *“Whatever you shall ask **in My name**”* [submission to His authority] *“**That will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son**”* John 14:2, 13. Is He daily being glorified through my life!

Both the 'Lord's Prayer,' as in John 17, and the 'Family Prayer,' as in Matthew 6:9, give equal glory to the Father as to the Son. This also includes, the Holy Spirit, in their 'Triune Godhead': "***All things that the Father hath are Mine***" John 16:15. "***And now, O Father, Glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the Glory which I had with Thee before the world was***" John 17:5.

In Christ, we are now a part of the family of God! "Abba-Father" was used by the Son in addressing His Father. Born-again believers, now 'saints,' are also privileged to use the same expression as our Lord Jesus. As believers, we have a personal relationship with the Father and, in Christ, our every need is met: "***For your Heavenly Father shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus***" Philippians 4:19.

In Christ, He cares for my every need and concern, both raiment and food. **The difference between our 'needs' and our 'wants' is that 'greed' leads to worry.** Always remember that our confidence is built upon: "***Our Father***" [**my Father**] ...*which art in Heaven.*" How greatly blessed we are in receiving such personal, loving care! Prior to facing the Cross, the authority of the Son speaking to God the Father, revealed the peace we also can have in Him whatever situation we may face: "***Father, I will that they also, Whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou has given me: for Thou lovest Me before the creation of the world***" John 17:24. His purposes for every believer are that we: "***to be about our Father's business***" Luke 2:49.

The Lord's Prayer for Us.

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Following the Olivet Discourse with His disciples, because the Lord Jesus, held undisputed claims as to His Father's Deity, prayed: ***“Father... glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee”*** John 17:1. **And, prior to the height of His intended mission to shortly follow, the Lord Jesus then prayed for the Glory of the Cross, which would precede the Glory of the Crown!**

Note: Only five of the verses were prayers around Him, in contrast to the twenty verses covering **prayers for the Church** (John 17:6-26). His Priestly ministry for His Church is also further prefigured in Revelation chapters 1-3.

The Lord prayed that, in the context of time, the Church would be kept by the Power of God from the pressures of this ‘world,’ the ‘flesh’ and the constant wiles of the Devil! **In John 17, the Lord's deliberate prayer was not for the world but for His own—His Body—the inclusive Church:** ***“I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gave me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gave them Me; and they have kept Thy Word”*** John 17:6. Praise God that He is interceding for you and me even now!

It is a God-given commission for us to witness to, and pray for, the unconverted. We are also privileged to pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ. **The Church is built upon the foundation of His Deity. The Lord Jesus desires that His love, victory, and unity be expressed through us among our fellow-believers** and all the verses in John 17 will help us by our further prayerful reading and applying to our life: **“The Lord's Prayer”!**

The difference between a Prophet and a Priest, is in that of direction! The Prophet **directs his words to man on behalf of God**, whereas the Priest directs his words **to God on behalf of man**. In the Old Testament, **Aaron as the High Priest**, was privileged, to enter the Presence of God in the Holy of Holies once a year. And **Aaron's sons were also called to be priests unto God**.

The Lord Jesus, by His spotless shed Blood at Calvary, fulfilled the Law: *"Seeing then that **we have a great high priest**, that is passed into the Heavens, **Jesus the Son of God**, let us hold fast our profession"* Hebrews 4:14. As Aaron's sons were called to be priests unto God, so now in Christ, we are called to be 'the Priesthood of Believers.' *"For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God."* *"And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron"* Hebrews 5:1, 4.

As part of the highly privileged, 'Priesthood of Believers': *"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need"* Hebrews 4:16. Because of the humanity of our Lord Jesus: *"We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin"* Hebrews 4:15. By the Blood of Christ Jesus, let us now come boldly to His Mercy Seat!

Many momentous hours have dawned on the dial of time, but none is more significant than **the hour** to which our Lord referred when He said: ***“Father, the hour is come”*** John 17:1. There have been significant historic ‘Hours’ in Scripture: The Creation; The Fall; The Glory of God filling the Temple of Solomon; The Incarnation and the miraculous Birth of the Lord Jesus Christ; The Devil’s temptation of Christ in the wilderness; The Lord’s Baptism by John and His awesome Transfiguration before His disciples.

But this Holy Hour, referred to our Lord’s recognized destiny as He prayed: ***“Father, the hour is come”*** John 17:1. The hour when, ***“He made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him”*** 2 Corinthians 5:21.

An ‘hour’ of dreadful darkness on the Cross, when the Holy Lord Jesus faced the unspeakable separation from His Holy Father, as in His Holy spotless body He cried: ***“My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?”*** Matthew: 27:46.

The awesome time, ***“While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His Blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him”*** Romans 5:8-9. Let us humbly thank our triumphant Lord Jesus Christ for what He did for us individually and for His ‘Finished Work’ on the Cross, as He triumphantly declared: ***“I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gave Me to do”*** John 17:4. Praise God!

Our Lord Jesus expressed the importance of the Glory of God: “***Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee. I have glorified Thee on the earth.***” Man’s concept of external ‘greatness,’ contradicts the moral and spiritual conception when the Lord Jesus said: “***And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the Glory which I had with Thee before the world was***” John 17:1, 4-5.

Although the Glory of our Lord Jesus was eclipsed during His earthly ministry, His disciples did have a brief preview of the manifestation of His Glory at the time of His Transfiguration. And, following our Lord’s Ascension into Heaven, and when the Church will have been Raptured, we will: “***Behold, a throne was set in Heaven, and One sat on the throne ... Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created***” Revelation 4:2, 11.

Our God reigns! “***In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth***” Genesis 1:1. The Lord told us: “***Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me ... Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you... neither let it be afraid***” John 14:1, 27.

Years ago, Richard paraphrased John 15:8 to read: “**I will graft My nature and My life into yours. I will make the infusion of My divine Life flow through you, as a vine and a branch, and produce ... eternal fruit, to the glory of the Father**” John 15:8.

The Determination of Destiny.

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The Determination of Destiny. The verification of the pivotal, “This Hour,” totally impacted the entire world throughout history when our Lord Jesus reconciled the world to Himself at the Cross: *“Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: **but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy Name.** Then came a voice from Heaven, saying, **I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again**”* John 12:27-28.

The Glorification of God was re-established in the Triune Godhead at His triumphant Resurrection: *“Now, **O Father, glorify thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was**”* John 17:5.

The Exemplification of Power: *“As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh”* John 17:2. **‘Flesh,’** as speaking of the collective humanity such as is used in reference to the great Tribulation: *“And except those days should be shortened, there should **no ‘flesh’ be saved**”* Matt 24:22.

And, as in reference to Salvation: *“As thou hast given Him power over **all ‘flesh,’** that He should give eternal Life to as many as Thou hast given Him. And this is Eternal Life, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent”* John 17:2-3.

Also, as in reference to the shedding of the precious spotless Blood of the Lord Jesus at the Cross: *“No man taketh it [**My ‘Flesh’**] from Me. I have power to lay it down of Myself, and I have power to take it again”* John 10:18.

In the sovereign plan of the Triune Godhead—the perfect God-Man, the Lord Jesus, submitted Himself to sinners, to be led as the spotless Lamb of God to die in my place on the Cross. Although He had, “*Power over all flesh*” (John 17:2), **He willingly relinquished His sovereign Power over collective humanity** to become ‘Man’ and to live a sinless life among men.

It was also necessary for the God-Man to **relinquish His sovereign power over biological humanity** that He might show man how man should live and to exchange what man lost when Adam fell! “*For the flesh lusts against the Spirit*” Galatians 5:17. The Lord Jesus regained ‘purity,’ because His will was always broken to the will of the Father. He had total control of His Human desires: ‘His admiration of beauty’ was never of the lust of the flesh. He ‘rested,’ but was never lazy and He ate ‘food,’ but was never gluttonous.

As Romans chapter 6-8 expounds by the ‘condemnation’ of the Cross, ‘**in His Flesh,**’ He cleansed me from ‘sin’ and immersed me into His death! Amen! **So, when I allow the condemnation of the Cross to cut right across my self-life, then, at that moment, the redemption of the Lord Jesus is operative.** And, when by faith I let the Cross of Calvary stamp ‘death’ over my self-life then, by a fresh infilling of His Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus—having been ‘**qualified to redeem my life**’—will receive all the Glory for what He accomplishes by Grace in and through my redeemed sinner’s life!

I only have Eternal Life when I am redeemed by the Blood of Christ. This Life is only made possible by God the Son as, in His love, He sought me: ***“For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost”*** Luke 19:10. This necessitates my response to His amazing offer of such a salvation! And, the only way that the darkness of my understanding can be dispelled, is by knowing God, in the face of Jesus Christ: ***“The light of the knowledge of the glory of God [shines] in the face of Jesus Christ”*** 2 Corinthians 4:6. When I gaze upon Him, I gaze upon the manifestation of God Himself: ***“He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father”*** John 14:9

“As Thou hast given Him [the Son] power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou has sent” John 17:2-3.

To be received by the Father, I must be received by the Son and, amazingly, I am a gift from the Father to Christ as He bestows eternal life upon me! ***“And everyone that hath forsaken ... for my name's sake... shall inherit everlasting life”*** Matthew 19:29. ***“There is no one that has left...for My sake and the gospel's [but] shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time, houses and brethren...with persecutions; and in the world to come, eternal life”*** Mark 10:29-30. ***“Ye did it not to one of the least of these ... shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal”*** Matthew 25:46.

The keeping power and the **continuing purpose** of God, are given in Christ Jesus, who is the only source of information for any knowledge we may receive from God: “*And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God*” John 17:3. “*I have manifested Thy name*” or, “*I have revealed Your very self*” John 17:6.

And, when God the Son revealed Himself and came into this world, He did not come as, ‘man trying to reach up—to discover God.’ But instead, He came ‘down and was willing to become Man’ with the purpose that, in His spotless body, He would become ‘sin’ for me in my place at the Cross!

Through the **inspiration** and **infallibility** of God’s Word, ‘Christianity’ begins with God, and when through the **illumination** of His Holy Spirit, we are willing to accept God on His terms, **then the Holy Spirit makes His Word alive and always points to the Person of Jesus Christ!**

As being given by the Father, when in the Lord’s physical presence, the disciples were always preserved and guarded: “While I was with them in the world, I preserved and guarded them in Thy name; those that Thou gavest Me ... none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled” John 17:12 (Berkeley version). However, Judas Iscariot was 'not guarded or given absolution' because of his lack of acknowledgement of the Lord Jesus Christ as: ‘**the Manifestation of God Himself.**’

In our Lord's Prayer to His Father, He expressed His deep concern for each of His children. ***"Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those Whom Thou hast given Me"*** John 17:11. 'Holy' Father speaks of His 'holiness' or 'wholeness' as we are miraculously, **'Kept' through His own Name!**

Our Lord also prayed: ***"I have manifested Your Name unto the men whom Thou gave Me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy Word. Now they know that all things that Thou hast given Me are of Thee."*** John 17:6-7.

In Christ, you are very special and loved by God: ***"And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou has sent"*** John 17:3. All praise to God when we can really say that I 'know' Him! To those who lack assurance of this fact, He has promised that: ***"If ... thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find Him, if thou seek Him with all thy heart and with all thy soul"*** Jeremiah 29:13.

When the Lord Jesus revealed Himself as God to Saul on the Damascus road, : ***"fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?"*** To which Saul questioned, ***"Who art Thou, Lord?"*** Which being interpreted meant: ***"Who art Thou, Curios?"*** or, ***"Who art Thou, Jehovah?"*** Acts 9:4-5. ***"And the Lord said, I AM Jesus, whom thou persecutes: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks"*** (ox goads). **Are you also still resisting His call to turn to Him and to be saved even today?**

Gladness in Sadness: The Lord Jesus prayed to His Father: “*And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thy own name, those that Thou hast given Me. That they may be one, as We are one*” John 17:11. The joy of fellowship together!

Gladness in Circumstances: “*...that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves*” John 17:13. “*When Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end*” John 13:1. ‘Joy,’ **not in our circumstances, but ‘joy’ as is only found in Christ Jesus!**

Gladness in His Word: “*I have given them Thy Word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world...they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world ... and the world hath hated them*” John 17:14-16. The believer’s position in Christ is that: As the ‘vehicle’ of invasion of His Holy Spirit in this evil kingdom of darkness, we are called to live in Satan’s territory: “***For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come***” Hebrews 13:14.

Gladness in our Separation unto Him: This is not an addition to the Gospel for we choose either ‘to be separated unto sin and forever from God,’ or, ‘to be separated from sin and to be forever with God.’ God’s plan for you and me is: **‘to be separated unto Him’! Which way will you choose today?**

D. G. Barnhouse said: “It is the dust of this earth which shall season Satan’s diet forever!” In His High Priestly prayer to His Father, our Lord spoke of His victorious penetration behind Enemy Lines: ***“I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gave Me to do”*** John 17:4.

The Lord also prayed for the believer’s protection against the pernicious personality of Satan: ***“I pray not that Thou should take them out of the world, but that Thou should keep them from the evil one”*** John 17:15. This is not a protection from an evil ‘influence’ but of a ‘deliverance’ from ‘the evil one’—***“the prince of the power of the air”*** Ephesians 2:2. ***“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil ... that you may be able to stand in the evil day ... stand therefore, having your loins girded with Truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness”*** Ephesians 6:10-11, 13-14.

It is essential that we ‘put on’ our armor and daily face every situation in the victory of our risen Lord Jesus! As we affirm our absolute dependence upon the Lord to be our indwelling ‘Christian Life,’ we can truly believe that: ***“For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power and the Glory”*** Matthew 6:13. May the explanation of our life as a believer, bring all praise and adoration unto Him who sits upon the Throne, **knowing that all things are under His feet—and that means for the believer, that in Him, they are under our feet also!**

After the victory of the Cross, when the Lord ascended to Heaven, every believer is called to use their time in this evil world to rescue Satan's captives. As the Lord prayed in John 17:15: ***"I pray not that Thou should take them out of the world, but that Thou should keep them from the evil one."*** "The evil one" speaks of Lucifer, 'Light Bearer'—now called Satan—the Adversary: *"Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou was created, till iniquity was found in thee"* Ezekiel 28:14-15.

'The origin of sin,' involved Lucifer 'merchandising' as, instead of all praise and worship returning to the Creator, he wanted to be as God and took the worship to himself: *"By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned"* Ezekiel 28:16.

When **"iniquity"** was discovered in Lucifer, because he took the authority of God to himself, he was cast out of Heaven to earth where he is: ***"the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience"*** Ephesians 2:2. It is a solemn warning to us, and essential that all praise and glory **must pass through our hands** to our beloved Lord Jesus: *"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is"* 1 Corinthians 3:13.

So, Send I You.

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“As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world” John 17:18. The Lord Jesus was never less than God! His humanity and divinity were perfectly blended into one Personality and, in His flesh, the Son gladly renounced His right of any independent action as He totally depended upon His Father: *“I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgement is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me”* John 5:30.

The same principle applies to us as believers: *“I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do ... Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own Self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.”*

“I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me, and they have kept Thy Word ...the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world ... that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them” John 17:4,6,8,14,17-18, 26.

Through His indwelling Life within, we are to **glorify the Lord in our life** and to **fulfill His mighty purposes** of His sending us into this hostile world, so that we might be His living ‘vessels’ **bringing all glory to His Name alone**. Amen!

“O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee, but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have made known unto them Thy Name and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them and I in them” John 17:25-26. The world will never believe in the supernatural power of God through the Church until it sees a unity that is explained in terms of the power of God’s Love in believers!

The Lord prayed for such ‘unity’ among true believers so that He might show the evidence of His redemptive power! “That they may be one, even as We are One.” “I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me” John 17:11, 23.

‘Organic unity’ must be based upon His Word, cemented by His Holy Spirit and, exemplified through His Love. Even if separated by incarceration, language or even personal knowledge of each other, such love will bring individuals together ‘in His unity’ with the common desire that the Lord Jesus be glorified through **His Body, -the Church.**

God sent His Son into the world, the only Savior and Redeemer of mankind. As His, ‘sent ones,’ we are commissioned—through the fellowship of believers—to spread His Word and seek to bring sinners to Christ; building them up in His Word, and, as His Bride, to anticipate the ‘Rapture’ of His Church, by our **Lord Jesus Christ Himself!**

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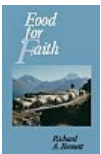
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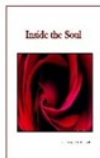
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“Revival Now?” We encourage you to join us in prayer for a visitation of God resulting in genuine revival at this climactic time.



“Nuggets & Pearls” are daily being used over social media as a means of spiritual encouragement through these short, but succinct messages which are then widely shared by many!

The declared objective of CCIM is: ***“To preach the Word of God the world around, particularly where there is persecution and lack of Christian privilege.”*** All of the above are available free at: www.ccim-media.com.