

BEING A CITY TO WIN A CITY

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I have found the Book!

2 Kings 22:3 Now it came to pass, in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the scribe, the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, to the house of the LORD, saying:

4 “Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may count the money which has been brought into the house of the LORD, which the doorkeepers have gathered from the people.

5 “And let them deliver it into the hand of those doing the work, who are the overseers in the house of the LORD; let them give it to those who are in the house of the LORD doing the work, to repair the damages of the house –

6 “to carpenters and builders and masons – and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house.

7 “However there need be no accounting made with them of the money delivered into their hand, because they deal faithfully.”

8 Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, **“I have found the Book of the Law** in the house of the LORD.” And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

9 So Shaphan the scribe went to the king, bringing the king word, saying, “Your servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of those who do the work, who oversee the house of the LORD.”

10 Then Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.” And Shaphan read it before the king.

11 Now it happened, when the king heard **the words of the Book of the Law, that he tore his clothes.**

12 Then the king commanded Hilkiyah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor the son of Michaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying,

13 “Go, inquire of the LORD for me, for the people and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found; for great is the wrath of the LORD that is aroused against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us.”

14 So Hilkiyah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke with her.

15 Then she said to them, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘Tell the man who sent you to Me, 16 “Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I will bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants – all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read –

8 `because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands. Therefore My wrath shall be aroused against this place and shall not be quenched.’”””

18 “But as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, in this manner you shall speak to him, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: “Concerning the words which you have heard –

19 “**because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself** before the LORD when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they

would become a desolation and a curse, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard you,” says the LORD.

20 “Surely, therefore, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; and your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place.”” So they brought back word to the king.

1 Now the king sent them to gather all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to him.

2 The king went up to the house of the LORD with all the men of Judah, and with him all the inhabitants of Jerusalem – the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant which had been found in the house of the LORD.

3 Then the king stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, **with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words** of this covenant that were written in this book. **And all the people took a stand for the covenant.**

4 And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the priests of the second order, and the doorkeepers, to bring out of the temple of the LORD all the articles that were made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel.

5 Then he removed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense on the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places all around Jerusalem, and those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to the

constellations, and to all the host of heaven.

6 And he brought out the wooden image from the house of the LORD, to the Brook Kidron outside Jerusalem, burned it at the Brook Kidron and ground it to ashes, and threw its ashes on the graves of the common people.

7 Then he tore down the ritual booths of the perverted persons that were in the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings for the wooden image.

8 And he brought all the priests from the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba; also he broke down the high places at the gates which were at the entrance of the Gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were to the left of the city gate.

10 And he defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Molech.

11 Then he removed the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun, at the entrance to the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-Melech, the officer who was in the court; and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire.

12 The altars that were on the roof, the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, the king broke down and pulverized there, and threw their dust into the Brook Kidron.

13 Then the king defiled the high places that were east of Jerusalem, which were on the south of the Mount of Corruption, which Solomon king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites,

and for Milcom the abomination of the people of Ammon.

14 And he broke in pieces the sacred pillars and cut down the wooden images, and filled their places with the bones of men.

15 Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he broke down; and he burned the high place and crushed it to powder, and burned the wooden image.

16 As Josiah turned, he saw the tombs that were there on the mountain. And he sent and took the bones out of the tombs and burned them on the altar, and defiled it according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.

17 Then he said, "What gravestone is this that I see?" So the men of the city told him, "It is the tomb of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed these things which you have done against the altar of Bethel."

18 And he said, "Let him alone; let no one move his bones." So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria.

19 Now Josiah also took away all the shrines of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the LORD to anger; and he did to them according to all the deeds he had done in Bethel

20 He executed all the priests of the high places who were there, on the altars, and burned men's bones on them; and he returned to Jerusalem.

21 Then the king commanded all the people, saying, "Keep the

Passover to the LORD your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant.”

22 Such a Passover surely had never been held since the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah.

23 But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover was held before the LORD in Jerusalem.

24 Moreover Josiah put away those who consulted mediums and spiritists, the household gods and idols, all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD.

25 Now before him there was no king like him, **who turned to the LORD with all his heart**, with all his **soul**, and with all his **might**, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did any arise like him.

Contents

Foreword	1
Being A City! To Win A City!	4
Change To An Overall Biblical Basis, Rather Than A Cultural, Historical Or Denominational Persuasion!	17
Change Our Teaching!	35
Change The Gospel Emphases	48
Change In Our Training Model For Producing Leaders!	52
Change The Church Meeting!	59
Change Regarding The Poor!	63
Change Regarding Our Money And Possessions.	67
Change The Way Of Leading	71
A Change In Essence!	81
Practical Action Plan For Producing Biblical Change!	95
We Need To Repent & Change Back!	142
Some Nuts And Bolts!	148

FOREWORD

*From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth,
From the laziness that is content with half truths,
From the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth,
O God of truth, Deliver us.*

ANCIENT PRAYER

The radical reforms conducted by King Josiah were both complete and unwavering. For it was said of him that he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord and did not turn to the right or to the left.

Today's church is in urgent need of reform directed by some like Josiah; both in accurately teaching the whole council of God, and secondly, by the true practice of biblical corporate living through the church in order to *model this city*.

Radical change must take place for it to be said of the church that she does that which is right in the sight of the Lord and does not turn to the right or to the left.

For this change to take place, some who are more concerned for actual truth and reality, rather than custom, tradition, position, or personal Christian fame, will be required. This includes the current high places of religious idolatry and *fiction* taught as truth by the **syncretism of** *Christian practices and wishful thinking*, which

are currently enjoying popularity, rather than clear connected truth. ***I am speaking now to evangelicals of every stripe.***

Our Christian evangelical teachers for the most part have completely distorted critical portions of scripture which reveal God's eternal Purpose, and the ultimate goal of God; rather the preaching is mainly relegated to the unbiblical message of simply dying and going to heaven. This low, inaccurate presentation is promulgated, rather than the mystery which was hid from the ages but now has been revealed to the saints (Col 1:26).

Hence, for the few who would follow in the steps of King Josiah, radical change is the only prescription.

If you are one of these people, I invite you to step up to the greatest calling, requiring the greatest change in the history of man!

That being the actual teaching of what the bible really says, and living it unswervingly to *be the city to win a city!*

The reason I say few, is because history declares in concert with scripture, that the way is narrow which leads to life and few find it. Today few believers are on the narrow road of doing things as Josiah, but rather most, sadly, are on the broad road which leads to destruction. If we relegate this portion of scripture simply to the saved and lost, we have missed its point.

The apostle Paul made a striking comment in the following passage;

Phil 2:19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state.

20 For I have ***no one like-minded***, who will ***sincerely*** care for your state.

21 For ***all seek their own, not the things*** which are of Christ Jesus.

Will we change in order to *sincerely care for God's heart* and be the city to win a city?

Dave Loudon

BEING A CITY! TO WIN A CITY!



Paying the price of changing to win! Now and then!

1 Cor 3:9 “For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, *you are* God’s building.”

Matt 5:14 “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.”

We are God’s fellow workers – God’s field – God’s building – the light of the world – the body of Christ – a city set on a hill – the dwelling place of God – the branches in the vine – the temple of God – the bride, the Lamb’s wife – you are a city set on a hill –

Phil 2:15 "...that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world..."

Eph 2:22 "...in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."

1 Cor 3:17 "If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are."

Pressed in Spirit

With the passing of my 67th birthday, I sit down to prepare these notes issuing out of a pressing in my spirit which does not seem to go away.

With that said, I have to confess a pull to also take life easier and to leave things to the next generation of leaders.

However the pressing in my spirit over the condition of the Church constrains me to attempt to pass on what I believe the Lord has shown me, as well as that which I have experienced, guiding my labor for more than 40 years.

Martyrs!

The voices of Church history declare the story of those in every age who have been in opposition to the sounding of the trumpet; calling believers back to a pure walk in the Spirit, and holding to a biblical model for their lives, which includes the practice of a proper, and a biblically healthy church life based on the vision of the kingdom of God, and its claim on their lives.

I can testify that I have tasted the bitter herbs of those who reject truth and light, choosing rather to favor convention, position, family, fleshly ties, and the vain glory of the pride of life.

Matt 5:10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

1 Pet 3:14 “But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, *you are blessed.*” *“And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.”*

Even though scripture has warned us in advance, it is still difficult to endure the negative reaction of fellow believers who have not seen deeper matters in Scripture; and who also refuse to consider matters other than their present thoughts. Much has simply been accepted as true without examination; and has been handed down from others without personal investigation, by comparing scripture with scripture.

These therefore become people such as Stephen referred to on the day of his stoning.

Lack of sight is normal in the process of growth; however *observing* a lack of hunger and humility needed to continue learning is most disheartening!

Ever increasing numbers of professing believers today are simply abandoning the Scripture and the Church; perhaps because they see what is called ‘Church’ as a disaster beyond repair.

I would like to agree on many levels, but with one huge lingering problem: Scripture says “Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her,” and the church is that which He is building!

A Genuine Appeal

In part I am writing these notes as an appeal to all who teach others. One reason is that those who teach will be held to a stricter judgment.

Jas 3:1 “My brethren; let not many of you become teachers,

knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.”

It seems so very hard to convey burden and genuine heartfelt concern through the printed media of a book, but I will try.

For my entire life from my early twenties, I have been burdened regarding the Church. Now over forty years have passed and the burden is ever stronger.

*It is from this anguish of heart for His house that I make this
appeal for truth and reality.*

We must change.

Please consider the following pages in this light.

The fellowship brought forth in this book is by no means meant to be exhaustive; but rather simply to touch on some key points which I have observed and practiced over many years.

Furthermore, you will not discover herein a masterful writing style and captivating stories.

The truths however, if seen, and practiced, will bring wonderful results, and if ignored ... well! ... we will continue to produce results which will relegate the majority of the body to great lack ... *We need to find the book and have a tender heart!*

*Someone said: The definition of insanity is doing the same thing,
expecting a different result.*

Saul's Armor

1 Sam 17:28 “Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab’s anger was aroused against David, and he said, “Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the

insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.”

29 And David said, “What have I done now? **Is there not a cause?**”

30 Then he turned from him toward another and **said the same thing**; and these people answered him as the first ones did.

31 Now when the words which David spoke were heard, they reported them to Saul; and he sent for him.

32 Then David said to Saul, “Let no man’s heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.”

33 And Saul said to David, “**You are not able** to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.”

34 But David said to Saul, “Your servant used to keep his father’s sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock,

35 “I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it.

36 “Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God.”

37 Moreover David said, “**The LORD**, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, **He will deliver me** from the hand of this Philistine.” And Saul said to David, “Go, and the LORD be with you!”

38 So Saul clothed David with his armor, and he put a bronze helmet on his head; he also clothed him with a coat of mail.

39 David fastened his sword to his armor and **tried to walk**, for he had **not tested them**. And David said to Saul, “I cannot walk with these, for **I have not tested them**.” So David took them off.

Failed ways Passed on!

For many years I have observed young brothers who have deeply loved the Lord and desired to serve Him, who like David, said; “Is there not a cause?” Only to be directed to the failed armor of Saul to fight the battle.

King Saul is hiding up in the hills along with everyone else.

David offers to deal with the enemy and relates his previous experience with the bear and the lion; however it is as if Saul does not hear him at all.

When David prepares himself to battle, Saul begins to place on the young man all of his means of battle, armor which has obviously already failed him. Remember: He is hiding in the hills too!

I have observed with great pain the repeated process of taking young burning brothers, then shaping them to fight with Saul’s armor.

We seem compelled to take these young ones and mould them into the same unsuccessful and unbiblical model.

A profound statement with staggering consequences

Mark 4:24, 25 “Then He said to them, ‘Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given. For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.’”

People of God! When will we see that we have killed the prophets and quenched untold people by forcing Saul's armor on them; armor which has repeatedly failed to bring about God's desired goal?

The battle was won by someone who had a burden, and who cared for the testimony of Israel; someone who had actually experienced dealing with and defeating enemies.

But, oh No! We have to press them into the religious mold which smothers and kills the life and burden. As a result of this imposition they become spiritual eunuchs; religion having stripped them of their capacity to bring forth life.

Rocking the Boat!

David manages to speak up and say, "I have not proved these things." In other words, "I can only work in reality, not in outward form and show of strength."

Many young men in good faith assumed they were being taught the proper way. They have followed the set course, humbly walking after those who also have been led this way before them.

For the last nearly five hundred years great numbers of professing Christians have been forced into the same mold, one which has not traveled far from the Roman model instituted by and through the emperor, Constantine.

While visiting the ancient city of Philippi, we were taken to a meeting site which displayed by means of a physical layout, the evolving style of meeting based on the growing influence of Roman religion. This was very striking to me!

The physical arrangement of their meeting place went from vital and personal, to distant and formal, as the development of

religion came into existence through the reforms of Constantine's so-called liberation.

A change from intimacy of fellowship among genuine believers, to formal and even very restricted participation in the group, became the order of the day; to the extent that many church buildings and protocols have followed this pattern even to this time.

I can barely allow myself to think of the day we stand at the Bema and all of this is made manifest.

Now, as a result of this long history, many are stuck in deadening forms and a doctrinal small box; expecting to defeat the enemy and bring life and victory by these dead practices, much like Saul's failed armor.

So many follow in this unbiblical path; only later to discover they are trapped in a weak, shallow and mainly lifeless shell of the real thing!

They simply do not have the stories of the lion and the bear to draw from.

We need **CHANGE!**

I deeply sympathize with, and long to see these brothers, as well as the rest of the saints, rescued into God's way. However it seems that the guardians of Saul's armor are not ready to look at another way. *Saints how tragic! So Tragic!!!*

From Glory to Glory!

Rom 3:23 "For all have sinned **and fall short of the glory** of God..."

2 Cor 3:18 "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same

image **from glory to glory**, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

Rev 21:10.11 “And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, **having the glory of God**. Her light *was* like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.”

In the three previous verses we see the progression from:

1. Falling short of the Glory
2. Transforming from glory to glory
3. Having the Glory of God

This is the process we are in, as a person who is born again. The work of the Spirit puts His life in us; then begins the process of sanctification and transformation from glory to glory. This divine work in His true believers changes us into His likeness and consummates as the New Jerusalem, the Lamb’s wife having the Glory of God.

This is not a cube of gold, but the consummation of all the work of God throughout the ages to produce for Himself a bride, a dwelling place, a house, a city! This will be the true flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone!

The Progression

It is so great to see God’s goodness and mercy toward us as we begin our walk with Him. We start out with very little experience of Him and He blesses almost anything.

As a result, many young believers have wonderful experiences with Him and He honors their heart’s new desire for Him.

So lovingly He richly blesses us in many ways for our initial, rather feeble attempts for Him.

We should however not read into this that He is content for us to stay where we are. He wants us to go from glory to glory and become what He is building as His living body.

As we grow, the Lord (our Father) expects a bit more of us, and so it seems a little harder to see Him get excited about what we are up to.

It is almost as if He seems to say, “Alright”, this has been wonderful; but I would now like to transform you into a more useable vessel for me.”

If we do not live and walk in His ways, we will discover that we are missing some key factors needed for us to go as high as He would wish for us. This I have seen to a large degree among scores of believers over many decades.

First Things

Now, for anyone to truly embark on this journey of **change**, there must be a longing, and consuming desire for the Lord’s house.

Ps 132:1-5

1. “LORD, remember David and all his afflictions;
2. How he swore to the LORD, and vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob,
3. ‘Surely I will not go into the chamber of my house, or go up to the comfort of my bed;
4. ‘I will not give sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids,
5. ‘Until I find a place for the LORD, a dwelling place for the

Mighty One of Jacob.”

We need this consuming passion because the battle will be so fierce that the casual weekend warrior reformers will soon find themselves facing an overwhelming swarm of reaction to any change.

The thought will quickly arise in your spinning mind and heart, “It is too hard!” and further, “Does it really matter anyway?”

The unrelenting answer must be, “It does matter, if to no one else other than to God Himself.”

When you have struggled and have been brought to the place where you must try; when you are ready to live or die seeking to participate in seeing God’s heart for the church realized; then you may be ready to seek desperately needed change.

Our goal: To hear “well done” from the Lord, as well as to win our cities for Christ, due to a true representation of the **City on a Hill**.

Colossians 1:24 “I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church ...”

CHANGES URGENTLY NEEDED
in the Church
TO BE A CITY TO WIN A CITY!

1.

CHANGE TO AN OVERALL BIBLICAL BASIS, RATHER THAN A CULTURAL, HISTORICAL OR DENOMINATIONAL PERSUASION!

Over these many years I have discovered that the only hope many Christian people seem to be able to cite is that they will eventually go to heaven, and get out of this awful world, and have no more sickness and sorrow living in their mansion!

While the world, as fallen man and Satan has made it to be, is truly sad, the thought of simply escaping it does not even begin to state what God has prepared for those who love Him.

1 Cor 2:9 “But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”

An Uncertain Sound!

1 Corinthians 14:8 For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself for battle?

As a rule, God’s people have not been given a true picture of what

He intends for the saints. Thus there is little mind to suffer, to see the need for growth, to do good works by personal sacrifice, or for pressing through in difficult times.

We are destined for much better than simply transferring from the wicked activities of earth, to a wonderful heaven, when we die.

The true hope of the believer, and the reward for faithful service promised by Christ, including the possibility of reigning with Him in His earthly millennial kingdom, needs to be clearly taught and presented. There are excellent reasons for paying the cost of truly following Jesus.

Peter asked Jesus what was in it for them.

Jesus did not rebuke him for being an ungrateful person but went on to say that they would sit on twelve thrones.

Luke 18:29, 30 “So He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life.””

**PRETTY MUCH ALL YOU HEAR ABOUT
TODAY IS *simply* GOING TO HEAVEN.**

We have all but abandoned the deep truths of Scripture, including the true ETERNAL purpose of God for creating man in the first place.

From the Beginning

Gen 1:26 “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our **image**, according to Our **likeness**; let them have **dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all

the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

What happened to all the Scriptures which reveal the full hope and future of the believer?

We have seriously dropped the ball here! People are simply told to be saved so that when they die they go to heaven, and not hell.

This is clearly not accurate at any level.

We are not teaching the whole counsel of God and consequently there is great weakness in the body with regard to standing and fighting and sacrificing.

Most believers today have no idea why they should fight for a **free gift**.

We need to give a vision of our calling which will raise the sleeping giant! Tell them why, and where and how to enter their calling; get off the bench and into the fight. Teach them:

- a) To pray for the **Kingdom to come on earth**.
- b) To know God’s plan for the restored earth, and for the new heaven and new earth, wherein dwells Righteousness.
- c) About reigning with Christ, and warnings concerning the seriousness of appearing at the Judgment seat of Christ.
- d) About the possibility of gaining or losing reward, based on our works after we are saved.

The focus of the apostles’ preaching was the hope of the **bodily resurrection** of the saints from the dead, and the coming kingdom on the earth. Their preaching never told people that they would go to heaven forever.

Prov 29:18 says, “Where there is no revelation (**vision**) the people cast off restraint ...”

In the church, for many years we have not spoken much concerning the true future of the believer. Some who have tried have been marginalized or even referred to as cults.

Paul preached the hope of the resurrection from the dead, and of the coming literal Kingdom of God on earth, as did Christ.

One Church in each city as God’s Kingdom Representation

In order to manifest the Biblical reality of a unified kingdom there was to be only one Church represented in any one city. We need a changed vision and revelation. In the Scripture, the word Church is *never* used in plural form when referring to one city. The plural usage refers to a region such as (the churches of Galatia).

1Cor 16:19 “**The churches of Asia** greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.”

2 Cor 8:1 “Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on **the churches of Macedonia**..”

1 Cor 16:1 “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to **the churches of Galatia**, so you must do also.”

God’s design was to have His unique, single testimony in every city as the beacon of light and the pillar of truth to guide a lost world to Himself.

This is surely a contrasting vision to the mess we have made of the body of Christ through our self -appointed freedom to do whatever we desire regarding His Church.

Much of the mess may be hard to change. In fact, “with men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

If there would be deep repentance in our hearts, like Josiah, for what we have done to His one body; there is a chance for the world to actually see the one testimony of the Kingdom of God in their midst!

It would require humility and an acknowledgment that there is actually only one Church represented in any one city; and that many high places and groves must be destroyed.

Some *giants* would need to fall, and a co-ordination among true believers would have to begin; the only qualifier being that we are His. From that basis then, through mutual love, we could grow toward the unity of the faith.

Eph 4:3 “...endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

We need to work at keeping the uniting bond of peace until we arrive at the unity of the faith. This implies progress and continual growth in the truth.

If we are to grow up into Him in all things we must not stop at minor theological boundaries or denominations, or conclude that so many items are **not for today**. Of the church in Sardis it was said “I have found **none** of your works **perfect**”.

Eph 4:

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

14 “that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men,

in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

15 “but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head –Christ –

16 “from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

Without the **full truth** applied we cannot grow up, but will remain tossed to and fro; carried about by every wind of doctrine, and the trickery of cunning men.

As for all of the divisions among genuine believers, even Jesus said, “...a kingdom divided against itself; cannot stand.”

What is the Church?

We need to see a clear revelation of what the Church truly is.

Most language coming from religious people is that “**the building**” is the church. “*I’ll meet you at the church.*”

We spend huge amounts of money, energy and importance on our buildings which in many cases are used a short time on Sunday morning, or at most just a short portion of each week.

Our further thinking is that the ‘goal’ is to get people brought into our programs and planned activities, ***rather than receiving the revelation that they actually are the Church and should be equipped to minister.***

In keeping with the deep realization that the “Church” actually refers to the “called out ones,” begin equipping all of them, not just the certain few who go to the Bible colleges and seminaries.

All need equipping and releasing, in order to manifest **His city** in their work place, their home, or wherever the Lord would raise them up to be a witness to His Kingdom come on earth ... “as it is in heaven.”

For this we should labor. More high places will need to fall. For the most part in North America men are trampling on us because we have become the salt which has lost its savor, and is good for nothing.

Arguments

In the minds of many people, believer and non believer alike, the church has lost its moorings and has become largely irrelevant.

However the Apostle Paul referred to the purpose of God as an “**eternal purpose,**” not a passing one in which we are free to disregard or lay aside for some new idea of our choice.

Our cutting up of the Scriptures, sighting which is for today and which is not, **has** also greatly affected the condition in our Church life.

There are some things of course which clearly are not for today, such as animal sacrifice, as we now have the One Who sacrificed once for all.

However, many groups relegate much of the Spirit and His work to the category of ‘no longer applicable for today’, and thus close themselves off from, and also lead those in their care away from, the provision of God for His Church.

These prohibitions include a deletion of true understanding regarding the provision for living and serving by the Spirit in their spirit, rather than merely by the outward letter and human wisdom issuing from the untransformed soul life.

Heb 10:25 “...not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Do the Plan!

When God gave Moses the details for the tabernacle He charged him as follows:

Exodus 25:40 “And see to it that you make them **according to the pattern** which was shown you on the mountain.”

We have not been given the liberty to do things as we please, but according to the pattern shown in God’s word.

If we long for the reality of the presence and power of God it then matters how we practice the Church life

A life of obedience to Him and His ways is still the path to His presence and blessing!

Eph 3:

3 “...how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already,

4 “by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),

5 “which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:

6 “that the **Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body**, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,

7 “of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the **effective working of His power**.

8 “To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles **the unsearchable riches of Christ**,

9 “and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;

10 “to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be **made known by the church** to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,

11 “according to **the eternal purpose** which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

What do *we* actually believe?

Change has many levels of implication. If it is to simply change the sports coach ... well! That change can happen on a dime it seems!

Removing pastors also seems to be right in there with the ease of change.

Due to this, many brothers are under great pressure to give in to the **‘big money people,’** or to those who have carnal (fleshly) influence, desiring to **trade him** for the latest and greatest idea, thus making them a winning team.

When the pastor brother needs the paycheque to live, the result is often that much compromise has come to Christ’s church over the threat of being fired.

A little incense on the **‘altar of compromise’** may buy false peace for the time being, only to result in the same, repeated blackmail of the truth.

A good example of this is related to King Hezekiah. As King he bowed to the pressure and promise of peace, and as a price for peace he tore the gold from the doors of the temple, only to be then threatened with further destruction.

I doubt if we can actually support from Scripture most of the model we have embraced.

Sadly, when it comes to changes that God would have us make it is another matter, especially if the **changes** involve that which we actually have believed and even argued for, things which have been weighed in the balance of truth are found wanting.

Lining up to the truth

2 Corinthians 10:5 "...casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself **against the knowledge of God**, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

What are some Arguments we defend?

The world, and to a great extent the professing church, has a philosophy which actually excludes God in most every way.

The result is that they both lack the very things they strive to attain. **Their argument is:** a life apart from acknowledging God or referencing Him in the context of their lives *is their right!*

Highly sought rights such as security, safety, love, peace, fulfillment, hope, pleasure, fullness of happiness, purpose, meaning, and significance, to name a few, are all sought basically apart from God.

These are they for which man seeks, and in doing so spends much money, energy, and compromise of character, and for which he makes great sacrifice to attain.

What many conclude (sadly sometimes after a very long time and

from reaping the consequences of their sowing) and eventually are forced to agree with, is Solomon's statement, "**All is vanity and vexation of spirit.**"

The arguments of the world REALLY stand against Biblical values ... values such as: "love your neighbor" and "keep the ten commandments." They reject the basic diagnosis of mankind's SIN problem, and have a proud mindset, of living independently from the source of true life, who is God Himself.

Much of what Scripture teaches is dismissed as being out of touch with our modern times, and is deemed to be no longer a timeless, absolute truth to be obeyed.

The Church, *being the present expression of the Kingdom of God*, is here to demonstrate the reality of God in the market place, the neighborhood, and in the home.

This modeling of the kingdom life is to directly influence people by presenting a different picture, based on believers living out Christ as their reality. Through the church, lost man should see who God is and realize His purpose for them, giving them a true basis for repentance.

However, the fact is many of the practices which are defended have no basis in Scripture and have in many cases become deeply rooted in so called church dogma or cultural practice ... completely separate from the claims of Scripture and are truly the present day high places needing some Josiahs to break them down.

The Lord rebuked some for laying aside the **command of God** in order to keep their **own tradition**.

What are we praying for?

Luke 11:2 "So He said to them, 'When you pray, say: Our

Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. **Your kingdom come.** Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Matt 6:33 “But **seek first the kingdom of God** and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

The key point: **“AS IT IS IN HEAVEN”**.

God’s Kingdom on earth is to be manifested through the reality of the Church life!

“As it is in heaven” means it should be manifested on earth just as it is in heaven, under the headship of God, according to His plan and in full submission to Him.

1 Timothy 3:15 “...but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

Quote from; Jamieson Fausset & Brown:

The Church is to be the stay of the truth and its conservator for the world, and God’s instrument for securing its continuance on earth, in opposition to those heresies (#Mt 16:18 28:20). The apostle does not recognize a Church which has not the truth, or has it only in part. Rome falsely claims the promise for herself. But it is not historical descent that constitutes a Church, but this only, to those heresies (#Mt 16:18 28:20). The apostle does not recognize a Church which has not the intermediate; the “ground,” or “basement” (similar to “foundation,” #2Ti 2:19), the final support of the building [ALFORD]. It is no objection that, having called the Church before “the house of God,” he now calls it the “pillar”; for the literal word “Church” immediately precedes the new metaphors: so the Church, or congregation of believers, which before was

regarded as the habitation of God, is now, from a different point of view, regarded as the pillar upholding the truth.

What is Christ building?

Matthew 16:18 “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will **build My church**, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”

Luke 11:2 “So He said to them, ‘When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. **Your kingdom come.** Your will be done **on earth** as it is in heaven.’”

The Church is to be the called out, corporate expression of His body by and through His divine life. His Kingdom today as the city on a hill manifesting His person and message to a blinded and lost world.

A. **Today** His Kingdom on earth is to be manifest through the church.

B. **In the future** His Kingdom will be manifest in the millennium through Christ’s direct headship on this earth.

C. **In eternity** His headship will be manifested through the New Heaven, the new earth, and the New Jerusalem with all His redeemed transformed and glorified saints.

Desperately needed Light to walk worthy.

We need to see by Revelation:

*The reality of the human spirit vs. the human soul,

*The pillar of truth,

*The body of Christ,

*The Spirit indwelling our spirit as the holy of holies where true fellowship and worship with God takes place,

*The assembly of the saints: what it is and what is its purpose!

*The authority in the body,

*The boundary of jurisdiction of the Church,

*The nature of the Church,

*The dwelling place of God is the Church.

*The believers are added to the Church when they repent.

*The Church is what the Lord is building.

*The built Church is what the gates of hades cannot prevail against.

*The Church consists of the called out ones, those who have been born again and set apart by the Holy Spirit unto God and for God.

*The gathering of the Church is for edification, fellowship, comfort, and teaching that the saints will be equipped for the work of the ministry.

*The work is then to be carried out by the body, and not just a few hired specialists.

Acts 20:28 “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to **shepherd the church** of God which He purchased with His own blood.”

Romans 16:1 “I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea ...”

1 Corinthians 6:4 “If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are **least**

esteemed by the church to judge?”

1 Corinthians 12:28 “And God has appointed these in the church: first **apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.**”

To affect a city we must see the Kingdom of God manifest in Reality through the living stones as the Church, which is His body!

John 3:3 “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see **the kingdom of God.**’”

Colossians 1:13 “He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into **the kingdom of the Son** of His love ...”

Matthew 12:26 “If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?”

Matthew 12:28 “But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely **the kingdom of God** has come upon you.”

Matthew 6:33 “But seek **first the kingdom of God** and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

1 Corinthians 3:10 “According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.”

1 Cor 3:

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

14 *“If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.*

15 *“If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

16 *“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”*

17 *“If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.”*

Isaiah 40:10 “Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong hand, And His arm shall rule for Him; Behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him.”

Revelation 22:12 “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to everyone according to his work.”

According to the Pattern

We do not have the liberty to do with the Church as we please, any more than the President of the United States, or the Prime Minister of Canada, has the liberty to rewrite the constitution. They simply swear to uphold all of it; that is their job.

God gave exact instructions to Moses regarding the building of the tabernacle, as the details were to manifest God in all He is. Thus it had to be done correctly to the detail given, in order to accurately demonstrate and communicate God in relation to His people, and to the nations around.

Hebrews 8:5 “...who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, ‘See that you make all things **according to the pattern** shown you on the mountain.’”

Deut 12:

1 “These are the statutes and judgments which you shall be **careful to observe** in the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth.

2 “You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree.

3 “And you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and burn their wooden images with fire; you shall cut down the carved images of their gods and destroy their names from that place.

4 “You shall not worship the LORD your God with such things.

5 “But you shall seek the place where the LORD your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place; and there you shall go.

6 “There you shall take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, your vowed offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks.

7 “And there you shall eat before the LORD your God, and you shall rejoice in all to which you have put your hand, you and your households, in which the LORD your God has blessed you.”

8 “You shall not at all do as we are doing here today – every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes –

9 “for as yet you have not come to the rest and the inheritance which the LORD your God is giving you.

10 “But when you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies round about, so that you dwell in safety,

11 “then there will be the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. There you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, and all your choice offerings which you vow to the LORD.”

2 Kings 22:

1 “Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath.

2 “And he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.”

2.

CHANGE OUR TEACHING!



Heb 5:12 “For though by this time you **ought to be teachers**, you need *someone* to teach you again **the first principles** of the oracles of God; and **you have come to need milk and not solid food.**”

Our teaching will always be limited to our vision. If our vision is very limited, then our teaching will rest within the boundaries of that limitation.

This second aspect should be our regular experience as we obey the leading and promptings of the Holy Spirit!

Mark 4:

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

25 ‘For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, **even what he has will be taken away from him.**’”

When we do hear from the Lord but remain unwilling to pay the price to obey, or speak the truth revealed to us, we put ourselves in grave danger. This passage goes on to say, “... even that which he has will be taken away.”

*Could it be this which is at the bottom of so much of the
church’s deadness?*

Does our teaching perhaps remain shallow and limited, without deep revelation, due to our lack of following through with genuine obedience and application?

Such a weak message is presented: simply telling people that they are sinners who need a Savior so they can go to heaven and not to hell when they die? How much potential light from the Lord has been forfeited due to our individual resistance?

If this be the case, what possible opportunity do we give the saints to think more deeply about the truths of Scripture and their claim on our lives?

***We are to teach them all things whatsoever
He has commanded!***

The further danger is that we may have that which we had ‘measured to us’ taken away. What is our current measure?

New Wine and a New Wine Skin

Matt 9:17 “Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”

If we want new wine in our lives and in the Church corporately, we need a new wine skin to hold the new wine. If we seek to teach the new in the context and stiffness of the old wine skin, there will be much damage. We will not only lose the wine, but the old wine skin will be ruptured as well.

Although our teaching must change to bring in the new wine, we need to care for the renewal and preservation of the wineskin. We will speak more of this later.

The Church in Sardis

Revelation 3:2 “Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are **READY TO DIE**, for I have not found your works perfect (complete) before God.”

These words come to mind when I consider the teaching which comes from the majority of the protestant evangelical churches today, on much beyond the need to be born again.

The state of the Church in Sardis was in deep trouble. Some teachers have likened the seven churches to various ages and conditions of the Church over the centuries. They would present the Protestant, evangelical Church as Sardis.

The Lord was calling for change as He spoke to this Church. There was not much good to say. He went on to call for overcomers, who would deal with the things He pointed out. He then went on to promise specific rewards to those who overcame.

Rev 3:

4 “You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.

5 “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

6 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Some Observations

1. *Sardis needs to strengthen what remains, as it is about ready to die.*

2. *God has not found her works perfect (or complete.)*

*I have personally experienced the temptation to simply overlook things in Scripture, as it would be much easier. When I have considered this temptation, the stories of the kings of Israel would often come to my mind. So many kings did not do that which was “**right in the sight of the Lord.**”*

I would then ponder the day I will see the Lord, and then possibly call to remembrance all the ways in which I was unwilling to do as He would wish! A great sense of disappointment would then envelope me regarding the possibility of choosing to shortchange the very One Who had loved me and called me for His eternal purpose.

*The following verse would often come to me as I considered a smoother path: Psalms 106:15 And he gave them their request; but sent **leanness** into their soul.*

Once again I would repent, and go down the narrow road which I knew in advance would be rough and fraught with danger and further suffering

Let's Look at Specifics

I would like to present a list of items which I strongly believe have been either poorly or inadequately taught, or are in many cases completely not true. This I believe has come about by the simplistic approach to scripture. This approach being simply a saved and lost model of seeking to fit all of God's purpose revealed in scripture into one of these slots.

My deep concern is not to have a debate of doctrine, but to address what wrong teaching has done in sending the body of Christ on a trajectory which is missing the mark in so many ways.

I encourage you to deeply study the following points, crying out to the Lord for light.

Vast amounts of Scripture are left in the dark by set doctrinal positions. One such area is the teaching of a 'pre-tribulation rapture', which has been based on a dispensational perspective.

At this point you may be tempted to close the book, which would put you squarely in the category of those who are closed to further light which might find you out as teaching and believing error! *Think about it!*

This pre-trib teaching for example, is the same position which a large portion of Seminaries, Bible schools, and evangelical churches (all of which claim to be teachers of the truth) present.

Being raised in Christianity and having studied in these schools of thought, I was left with many unanswerable questions, as this perspective has too many parts left over.

A profound "AMEN" rose up in my spirit when I later came to discover that these questions could be solidly answered from Scripture, and this same "AMEN" can be experienced by our

brothers and sisters if we will let the Word speak, and not simply the restricting limitation of a doctrinal or a denominational box.

I remind us again,” We will answer for how we have built!”

One more point here! If we are truly seeking first the Kingdom of God, our time allocations will need to change, both in our daily and in our meeting lives.

We cannot become His city if we are only prepared to be together for one hour per week! For example, **one hour is not too long to teach when an enlightened brother is actually trying to impart new wine and revelation he has received from the Lord.**

Secondly, if even twenty saints were to minister for two minutes each in the church meeting concerning the riches HE has revealed to them ... well! You can do the math.

The overly dominant worship team focus will need to be pruned back to allow for teaching and for the body to minister.

Due to the fact you have become a real Church body, you may not need to have a second service, as sadly, enough may leave that one meeting that it will be fine.

If people are open and do not leave, it may be helpful to divide the larger unmanageable group and appoint elders to care for more groups so that all can experience true Church life. These elders must have been properly trained to know by revelation key matters of truth and life.

We are not called to provide convenient ‘drive through religious fixes’ so people can get on with their otherwise full lives. Nor are any of our gatherings intended for our personal bragging rights.

Concerning the music; we must all agree that singing is not strongly highlighted in the New Testament.

It is there, but not to the extent it has taken over. We need to consider the songs which we sing. This includes many of the so called old hymns.

Many songs are very shallow in truth, or outright inaccurate in their teaching. We all need to become more sensitive to this. It is not about how great the beat or how 'catchy' the sweet tune, but about Spirit and truth.

You will discover that the appetite for shallow songs and singing them over and over will drop off, in comparison to the rich ministry from those who are living and speaking by the anointing of the Spirit in their spirit.

Can you see now how much dying it will take to actually stop being an entertainment director and become a disciple maker?

John 6:53 "Then Jesus said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

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

55 'For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.

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

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

58 'This is the bread which came down from heaven---not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread

will live forever.”

59 ‘These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.’

60 “Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, ‘This is a hard saying; who can understand it?’

61 “When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, ‘Does this offend you?’

62 ‘What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?’

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

Here is a list of topics which I would appeal to you to consider again or maybe for the first time!

- 1.** The Father’s House: what actually is it?
- 2.** The Church: What is it?
- 3.** The temple of God: What is it?
- 4.** The New Jerusalem: What is it?
- 5.** Overcomers: What is it to overcome? What are two aspects?
- 6.** The best resurrection: What is it?
- 7.** The righteousness of the saints: What is this?
- 8.** What is the manchild, the firstfruits?
- 9.** Who is the woman in Rev 12? (Remember this is prophecy! ... a future event after 95A.D.)

10. Who are the sheep in Matt 25? (If you say that the sheep are the saved out of the tribulation, how is it that they rebel, sin, die, and procreate during the millennium?)

11. Why does it say those who are alive and *remain*?

12. Will all believers hear “**Well Done**”?

13. If not, what might the loss of reward actually be for them? (Not their ‘salvation’, as we see they are saved yet as through fire.)

14. Who are the “Nations” in revelation which need the healing of the leaves of the tree?

15. Is it really a ‘mansion’ that Christ is building in John 14?

16. Where are the dead unbelievers and the dead saints right now?

Suppose you were **not** allowed to use C.I. Scofield’s interpretation on many of these matters. What would you conclude, simply from your own diligent study of the Scripture in all these areas?

By the way, dating back to 1912-1917, Mr. Scofield’s Bible study notes are the main influence on many of these subjects. The other man who was influential concerning the pre trib was John Nelson Darby, who was referred to as the father of the rapture. These teachings can be seen in *the Scofield reference Bible* footnotes.

Check it out and you will discover the source of this thinking by Schofield which influenced, for example, Lewis Sperry Shaffer, the man who founded Dallas theological seminary, as well as many Bible schools and other seminaries

Even the early Pentecostals received much of their teaching on these subjects through the Moody press material in the early 1900’s, and Mr. Moody was greatly influenced by C.I. Scofield.

The notes by C.I. Scofield have spread around the world and become mainstream thinking on several key topics. Many do not know of him as the source, but he is. (*Scofield reference Bible copyright (1909). Read notes in Luke ch.16 on pages 1098,1099 for example!*)

Scofield was the one who popularized the emptying of Paradise at the Lord's ascension. I beg you to actually look at the extremely thin argument he presented for this.

You may say, "So what!?" When asked by others where your deceased Christian loved one is now, what do you say? Wait, let me answer for you ... you say they are in heaven. Based on what would you say this? *However*, if it is not true, you would find yourself at best to be a spreader of misinformation! Be sure! We will all answer for false information!

Jesus makes the statement in John 3:13, that before His death **no one** but Him has ascended into heaven. (No, not one! Not even David!)

Then on the day of Pentecost which was ten full days after the ascension of Christ, Peter got up to prove that Christ was the one spoken of by the Psalmist.

In so doing, he states (now remember this is ten days after the ascension of Christ):

"David has not ascended into heaven." If Christ emptied Paradise in His ascension, how is it that David is said to not have ascended into heaven ten days later?

C.I. Scofield taught that when Christ ascended He emptied out the pleasant part of Hades and took them to heaven, so now when a believer dies they go straight to heaven. ***See Scofield's reference Bible, 1917.***

Our destiny as a believer is pretty important. We should see it correctly, and not on the basis of such weak exposition as he presents on the subject.

I encourage you to do some study on the whole issue of heaven, and see where this thinking has brought the Church in its more current form. You will need to go back to the fathers, including Augustine, who wrote the city of God. Discover what he fundamentally believed and why he promoted heaven!

Look at these scriptures

John 3:13 *“No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.”*

Acts 2:34,35 *“For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: ‘The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”’”*

Please take a look at the following Scriptures.

Heb 2:

5 For He has not **put the world to come**, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. *(check it out; it refers to the inhabited earth!)*

6 But one testified in a certain place, saying: “What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him?”

7 “You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands.”

The coming inhabited earth will not be ruled by angels but by man as part of our future in His eternal Kingdom.

Rev 5:10 *“And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign **on the earth.**”*

17. Can it be demonstrated from scripture that all believers will go to ‘heaven’ for Eternity? Do you not think we need to give a clearer answer?

18. What is the ‘everlasting Gospel’ preached in the book of Revelation? (Consider the content of this gospel, and the source of the preaching.)

19. Why is there no temple in the new city? Who is the temple now?

20. Can you ‘**Scripturally**’ support the single’ pastor model?

21. Do you truly know that your ministry flows from the Spirit, bringing life and light to the saints?

22. Do you truly know the reality of being broken before the Lord so that it is Him and not you?

What would you say you are truly building with?

*Budgets, buildings, and bigness, or with the Spirit, by the cross
putting self to death and under the anointing,*

Ministering His life?

Do you have the sense that you are under the “putting to death of the cross”, so that resurrection life can come forth from you?

Are your messages based on revelation from the Spirit with the Word which has changed you? Or are they merely doctrinal sermons from the internet, or other past preachers who were considered great?

23. What is God actually doing? Try to define it!

24. Who all will appear at the great white throne Judgment?

25. In the Biblical time table, when is the last trump when the dead rise? And the alive and remaining are caught up?

Our answers to the previous questions will impact the lives of those we influence. What if much of that which we preach to the saints ranges from inaccurate to downright false? Do you think we will hear ‘well done’?

3.

CHANGE THE GOSPEL EMPHASES



Matt 28:18 “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

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

20 “**teaching them to observe all things** that I have commanded you; and lo, **I am with you always**, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

Matt 24:14 “And this **gospel of the kingdom** will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

The gospel referred to in these verses is not simply that of going to heaven when you die.

Making disciples is completely different from simply having people make a ‘so-called’ decision for Christ about going to heaven.

The verses just covered describe the process of baptizing and teaching them **all** the things the Lord has commanded. He then promised He would be with them. *All of this is related to the Kingdom of God.*

Interestingly, for many years now I have observed the fact that the few people who are actually involved in preaching even a shallow Gospel of simply going to heaven, have a continued freshness in the Lord which others rarely have.

There are promises from the Lord to us concerning His relationship and commitment which are wonderful and comforting to our heart.

One such is the following verse:

Heb 13:5 “Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “**I will never leave you nor forsake you.**”

He stayed committed to the children of Israel in the wilderness even after He told them that they would not receive the good land, a consequence of failing ten times to obey what the Lord had said.

However, after all the parents had died in the wilderness, their children would go in. God was still committed to His people.

In Matt 28 our Lord tells His disciples to go and make disciples of nations. Of course, making a disciple is altogether different than only having someone pray a prayer and go on their way.

In this passage Jesus charges His followers to make disciples of all nations, to teach them to observe all things which He had commanded.

Then He said, “... and I will be with you always...” I think this is a greater measure of His Presence with His people than simply not letting their shoes wear out.

God’s faithful provision for His people does not automatically declare His favor for all our actions. He is committed to us forever, but is not thrilled when we disobey Him.

There is a portion of the Lord that seems only available to us if we obey the command to go and make disciples.

With that in mind consider this. It is said that about 96% of professing believers have never led a soul to Christ, and many nations have never yet heard the gospel of the kingdom.

I promise: if we see our people speaking Christ and His kingdom to this dark world, they will **not** remain dead or indifferent.

All of our labor and care and prodding cannot replace the Lord’s promise of, “I will be with you always,” as we make disciples of nations.

If we are to have His presence in this way, we need to die to self, to lose our face and to proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom.

We must teach the vision of the Kingdom Gospel. We were told by the Lord when He began His ministry; **“Repent for the Kingdom.”**

Jesus told Nicodemus that unless he was born again he could not see the **Kingdom** of God.

Christ taught His disciples to **pray for the Kingdom to come** on earth.

One of the key callings of the Church is to confess Him before men, and yet it is sparingly happening.

I personally saw things radically change in every way when, even to a small point, I began to take this command seriously.

Much freshness will come to the body if we are engaged in the proclamation of the **gospel of the Kingdom!**

4.

CHANGE IN OUR TRAINING MODEL FOR PRODUCING LEADERS!



We are given clear instruction in Scripture as to how, and by whom, the training is to take place in the Church.

Again this is not a one-man job. The list is as follows:

Eph 4:

11 “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

12 “for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the **edifying of the body of Christ**,

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

14 “that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

15 “but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head –Christ –

16 “from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

God’s way is for these gifted persons in the body, and in the context of the church life, to equip the saints to do the work of ministry.

We have replaced God’s way with the pastor and missionary factories, but Paul encouraged Timothy to go and appoint **elders** in every Church.

The Church was to be the place for equipping in the context of daily life. In the carrying out of the application of truth and not simply theory, this church life model tests and proves each believer.

It is not passing grades that approve us to lead and teach the saints, but true approval comes to ones who have been developed and tested in the heat of real Church life, under the watchful eye of the gifted ones who are perfecting the saints for the work of ministry.

This takes place by men who themselves have been approved by making disciples of other men, preparing them to serve the body

in life, by the Spirit, and by teaching the whole council of God in humility together with others.

2 Tim 2:2 “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

When we disciple brothers within the body we are doing our job, and the body can function as it should.

How to begin

To begin, seek out faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Develop them in the truth, as in the whole council of God, and help them to know the Lord in their spirit. Bring them to know the voice of the Lord.

Help the promising ones to speak, and raise them up in the faith.

Our current model is simply not Biblical, and we need to change.

We need to remember that we cannot bring people to a place in which we are not walking; so therefore we who lead also need to press into the Lord for more reality as well.

This is a labor of multiplication. The more brothers we disciple and train in the faith, the more there will be to serve in life. The more there will be to also take the ministry of life to other parts of the country and other nations of the world.

Consider for a moment the Lord's model.

When He began His earthly ministry He selected twelve men. He then poured Himself into them on a daily basis.

This training lasted about three and one half years. After His

crucifixion and resurrection, He gave them the commission we find at the end of the gospels.

He called out certain ones and trained them to be equipped for the Kingdom work.

He then empowered them with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and they went everywhere preaching the Kingdom of God.

The result was the establishing of the Church in each city where they went, and Paul wrote his letters to those Churches.

This was not the denominational church plant, but God adding to His Church through the fruit of the gospel.

Timothy was then sent back to appoint elders in every city: every Church.

How did he make his choice? I have a feeling that Timothy observed the body and identified those who were functioning in life, those who were gifted, those of reputation who were already bearing the responsibility of gifting and genuine burden.

This is somewhat like Pharaoh appointing Joseph over the process of storing up for the coming famine. He was engaged and had a plan ready to go. He had demonstrated his capacity for some time and thus was selected for the task.

This was not the fruit of seminary, but of the Lord appointing people whom He had prepared and placed for the ministry in the body.

If we didn't have so much division in the Church today, there would not be the perceived need for so many pastors.

2 Cor 10:18 "For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends."

2 Cor 8:18 “And we have sent with him the brother whose **praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches ...**”

2 Cor 8:22 “And we have sent with them our brother whom we have **often proved diligent in many things**, but now much more diligent, because of the great confidence which we have in you.”

When we have frequent changes of pastors for example, there is a great disconnect that takes place. For example the new pastor does not know the people and the people do not know him.

Through the process of developing brothers from within the body, none of this is a problem. Not only do the saints know the leaders, but they have observed them for some time in real life action, and not just in a setting where the man comes to candidate, looking all shiny and good.

Further, the probability is very high that the saints have already been ministered to many times in different circumstances by the brothers who are raised up from within the body.

No such opportunity exists in the ‘one pastor’ model.

So many heart breaking stories would simply not have to be told if we would do it God’s way.

Consider this!

In my most recent church I selected a group of about twenty-four brothers and divided them into four groups.

My wife (*bless her heart*) cooked a beautiful supper every Thursday night. This went on for several years.

Each week one of the groups of six would come for supper about 5:30 and would leave our house around midnight. (*Or even later on*

many occasions.)

Each week there was a different group. We came to know each other, and discovered the hurts and wounds of life as well as the aspirations which stirred in us.

We spoke much of God's heart for the Church, and the means He has chosen for building her.

This became a deeply intimate fellowship and formed the basis for ministry on the Lord's Day and throughout the week. We covered many deeply spiritual issues and went to places in our lives which brought great help to the brothers.

The men that were developed in these times together eventually became small group leaders and those with whom I fellowshiped about many Church matters; several were eventually selected as elders to replace me in the shift from a 'pastor mindset' to a Church functioning with a 'true eldership' fully in place.

This change has not been without its struggles and setbacks. The fruit of the Spirit, including much long suffering, will be the only way through: that along with the items we covered at the beginning of this writing, plus a deep burden to see the Church as the "House of God" restored.

The other key matters are: to seek to empower the saints in the deeper truths of the Word, to develop also the heart for the poor, and to follow through with presenting of the gospel of the Kingdom.

I encourage you to intentionally seek to build a relationship of fellowship and brotherhood with the brothers in the Church. Love them; speak the truth to them; and be willing to die to yourself in order to do this.

They may not like it at the time, but will respect you when the truth is lived out in your life, and when they see that what you are teaching them is actually true, even though they have never previously considered many of these matters.

And that's the way it is!

You will lose some people through this. Just try to be sure you are in line with the Lord! And cry out to Him to open eyes, humble hearts, and grant a thirst for God in His people.

Also live in such a way that makes them thirsty.

5.

CHANGE THE CHURCH MEETING!



Overall church attendance is hitting new lows on a continuing basis. Consider for a moment. If a restaurant was losing more and more regular customers, it would be wise to consider what the problem is.

When a business like this droops, research is done and changes are made to correct the problem.

In a sense the Church has done a similar thing. However the changes in many ways have not been for the better.

One change for the better that I can think of, is the discontinued

practice of praying only in the King James English in the prayer meetings. *Some will remember!*

However, on many other points, we have exchanged the spiritual realities for that which resembles the Philistines moving the ark on an ox cart. God's actions at that time even made King David angry, until he bothered to check the details of how God had instructed the ark to be moved.

The true content of the Church meeting should be from the inclusion of the whole gathered body. Each one is to be a participating, living member ministering Christ to the other saints.

This ministry is to issue from the storehouse of riches they have gained through their fellowship with the Lord and by their experiences of Christ week by week.

By each believer ministering their life experience in the meeting, the body of Christ is refreshed, built up and equipped for ministry. This is far beyond singing and tithing. Every member is vital and should have a portion to bring.

1 Cor 14:

24 *“But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all.*

25 *“And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you. (A city on a Hill)*

26 *“How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, **each of you has** a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.”*

I Cor 14:31 “For you can **all** prophesy one by one, that **all** may learn and **all** may be encouraged.”

This is in stark contrast to the one-man supply which is the dominant model!

No matter how excellent the pastor, he is only one member, with only one aspect of the body.

When the whole body is taught and released to function, the Church meeting can be a veritable feast of the riches of Christ through many different saints.

In Ephesians 4 Paul lists apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds/teachers **for the equipping, not just for the doing** of the ministry.

When we lead with simply one source of supply we cheat the saints out of the riches God has intended for His church. And the manifold wisdom of God is not manifest. Ephesians 3:10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.

Much of the change needed is covered in the change in teaching, leading, and training sections.

We do experience some wonderful times with the Lord and some wonderful ministry of the Word. Many saints have been comforted and blessed in a general way.

However, if we see someone who demonstrates gifting and burden for the gospel or for other areas of ministry, our pattern then is to direct him to one of the ‘factories’ where he can be trained to do the job.

This is where it breaks down. We should observe these that the Lord has gifted, and begin to disciple them toward more exercise of their gift in the context of the Church life, where they can be

cared for and brought to maturity in life and service.

Now if you have only one special person always at the pulpit doing the preaching, there will never be a venue for this, and others are also hindered from maturing in their gifting.

Just this one detail has produced frustration in many, who only have an option to get a church of their own. This issue alone has fostered so many so-called Church plants. If we didn't have so much division and practiced the body life we would not need the arrangement we have today. With 4 to 6 brothers bearing the load together there could be strength and richness for the building up and equipping of all the members, thus enabling them to do the work of the ministry.

To equip is the main calling of these five gifts to the body. This is totally different from one man doing everything. You can make your own list of what this 'everything' includes. It is impossible to do and it has never been God's plan!

Will we change? Or will we remain in the weak and shallow model with which we have been placed? Will we, like David, reject the operating platform of Saul's armor?

Can we say, "We have not proved this," and change? Or will we continue to stagger out toward the enemy with something that has not worked in the past?

Decision time...what will we say and do?

6.

CHANGE REGARDING THE POOR!



We have been called to care for the poor, and by that to demonstrate the love of Christ dwelling in us. Sadly, our love for self has won the day in most cases.

Many of our brothers and sisters and the stranger around us go without because we do not obey God to give to them in their need.

The Lord works through the body to meet needs; and if we stiffen ourselves against obeying the Lord to give, the person in need continues to go without.

This is to our shame. What happened to the model of “no abundance and no lack,” as described in the following verses?”

2 Cor 8:14 “...but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack – that there may be equality.”

1 John 3:17 “But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?”

1 Cor 11:

17 “Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse.

18 “For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.

19 “For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you.

20 “Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord’s Supper.

21 “For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk.

22 “What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you.”

There are many things to see in these verses; one thing for sure is that some have abundance, and others have lack.

2 Cor 8:

8 “I speak not by commandment, **but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others.**

9 “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

10 “And in this **I give advice:** It is to your advantage not only to be doing what you began and were desiring to do a year ago;

11 “but now you also must complete the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to desire it, so there also may be a completion out of what you have.”

12 “For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have.”

2 Cor 8:

13 “For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened;

14 “but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack – that there may be equality.

15 “As it is written, ‘He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack.’”

The collection for the Church in Jerusalem

1 Cor 16:

1 “*Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also:*

2 “*On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.*

3 *“And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem.”*

Prov 19:17 “He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD,
And He will pay back what he has given.”

7.

CHANGE REGARDING OUR MONEY AND POSSESSIONS.



2 Cor 9:6 “But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.”

2 Cor 8:

12 “For if there is first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to what one has, *and* not according to what he does not have.

13 “For *I do not mean* that others should be eased and you burdened;

14 “but by an equality, *that* now at this time your abundance *may*

supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack – that there may be equality.

15 “As it is written, “*He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack.*”

Nothing in these verses indicates “**10%,**” but rather, the measure with which you give will be given to you.

No, I am not promoting the prosperity model, simply the facts of Scripture. In the Old Testament there were a number of tithes, not only a singular tithe.

Our giving must be more under the authority of the Holy Spirit who will direct us when, how much, and to whom we should give. True stewardship is in this fashion.

A practical suggestion: Stop taking offerings and continually talking about money!

Put a box at the back of your meeting area, secured to the wall, and inform the saints of the change. People are sick of the constant begging for money and the spin that so often goes with it.

This will also facilitate the continuity of the meeting: not interrupting the flow of the Spirit with what seems to some to be another money hunting commercial.

Oh brothers ... die on this! And Oh! By the way, it works! I have seen this practiced for more than thirty years, and the Lord has always been so faithful to supply the needs.

In fact, after installing this method, our offerings more than doubled, even though we lost some of the congregation! Which, by the way was not due to this change! With a couple of exceptions for an individual, urgent need, we have not taken any further

offerings by passing the plate.

Therefore, money is never mentioned on a weekly basis, and we are able to save the time for life imparting ministry. Don't worry, God will supply for what He is burdened for.

In the Christian Church overall, we have handled the money issue very poorly, and we need to change!

A striking example of money 'mismanagement!'

Acts 5:

3 “But Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back *part* of the price of the land for yourself?

4 ‘While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.’”

5 Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So, great fear came upon all those who heard these things.

6 And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him.

7 Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.

8 And Peter answered her, “Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?” She said, “Yes, for so much.”

9 Then Peter said to her, “How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband *are* at the door, and they will carry you out.”

10 Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed

her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying *her* out, buried *her* by her husband.

11 So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

12 And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch.

13 Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly.

8.

CHANGE THE WAY OF LEADING



Biblical history and teaching supports the office of ‘Elders: plural!’

Not a single paid Pastor!

How many people have suffered at the hands of one man who is proud, wanting recognition, who by his own pride and spiritual immaturity, coupled with his personal fears, blocks much of the freedom and function in Christ.

Further, under this kind of leadership, enjoyment of the riches of Christ and the fullness of the Spirit’s work in and through the saints is also hindered ... or even prevented.

The Pope was said to have pointed out to Martin Luther something like the following, “If you leave the Church your movement will produce many little popes.”

Sadly this, too often, is true and has been observed by many.

Some independent groups are stunningly harsh and cultic in their control over the lives of people who meet with them.

There is a big difference between shepherding in the “narrow way”, and being oppressive in your personal ownership, as the following verses indicate.

1 Peter 5:

1 “The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory **that will be revealed:**

2 “Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as **overseers**, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

3 “nor as **being lords over** those entrusted to you, but being **examples** to the flock;

4 “and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.”

Acts 4:8 “Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, ‘Rulers of the people and elders of Israel...’

Acts 5:21 “And when they heard that, they entered the temple early in the morning and taught. But the high priest and those with him came and called the council together, with all the elders of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

Acts 6:12 “And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; and they came upon him, seized him, and brought him to the council.

Acts 11:30 “This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Acts 14:23 “So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Acts 15:2 “Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the **apostles and elders**, about this question.

Acts 15:4 “And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them.”

What about the apostles?

Eph 4:11 “And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers...”

2 Cor 8:23 “If *anyone inquires* about **Titus**, *he is* my partner and fellow worker concerning you. Or if our brethren *are inquired about*, *they are* **messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ.**”

We seem to cover off the matter of apostles in most cases by placing this group from Ephesians chapter four in the ‘**no longer happening category!**’ as regards **Apostles and Prophets**. We have shortchanged the Church in this area AS WELL.

What does Paul mean when he says, “the messengers of the Churches are the **glory of Christ?**”

Today the common thought among most evangelicals seems to be that anyone can start a so-called church anywhere, without any basis other than having our own denomination or emphases in that town; kind of like a restaurant franchise.

This demonstrates how far we have deviated from God's model and function. Can we change this? Probably not! God's way seems to be let it go, but then hold us each accountable, at least at the Judgment seat, for how we have built on the one foundation. This is very sobering, both for myself, and for all of my brothers and sisters in Christ.

Again it may be likened to the master who distributed the talents and went away, having charged all of them to gain more. When he returned there was an accounting, which ended in reward and loss. Our loss will not be that of salvation if we have been genuinely born of the Spirit; however we may lose any reward and find ourselves weeping and gnashing our teeth at the Bema.

Acts 8:1 "Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, **except the apostles.**"

Acts 11:1 "Now the **apostles and brethren who were in Judea** heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God."

Acts 14:14 "But when **the apostles Barnabas and Paul** heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out ..."

In this verse we can see that both Paul and Barnabas were **not** among the original twelve which Christ chose as apostles.

Who then were the apostles in Judea? Since we read, that the apostles did not disperse with the scattered saints! We see clearly

that the apostles did not leave Jerusalem.

Finally, we can see definitely the relationship between the apostles and the elders. There is a fellowship here and a function ordered by God.

2 Cor 11:28 “... besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: **my deep concern** for all the churches.”

Was this Paul’s own concern, or was it the concern placed on him by the Lord as an overseer regarding the truth and the proper practice of the churches?

We do see here that he had concern for all the churches. This does not resemble how it is today; with so many so-called ‘churches’ unrelated to one another in the same city. However Paul was connected to each one Church represented in each city.

Where are the biblical guardians of the whole council of God? Where are those who are able to guard the truth with some authority? Where are the ones who support and strengthen the elders in their plural leadership of the Church in each city? We have basically lost all of this.

Acts 15:6 “Now the **apostles and elders** came together to consider this matter.”

Acts 15:

22 “Then it pleased the **apostles and elders**, with the whole Church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren.

23 “They wrote this letter by them: **The apostles, the elders**, and the brethren, To the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings.”

1 Tim 5:17 “Let the **elders** who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.”

Titus 1:5 “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and **appoint elders in every city** as I commanded you ...”

Heb 11:2 “For by it the **elders** obtained a good testimony.”

James 5:14 “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the **elders of the church**, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

The clear order for overseeing leadership in the Church is a plurality of elders. This is to include the **Apostles** when the issues which are being contended relate to doctrine or practice of the truth.

The elders did not determine doctrine, but were required to faithfully and accurately carry out the truth as it was received from the apostles.

We can see one example in Acts 15 where Paul wrote to the churches as an **apostle** (not an elder) to correct doctrine and Church practice.

Indeed, much of Paul’s writing to all the churches was to correct a wrong understanding, to point out a practice that needed changing, or to adjust the church in a certain way. **All of this Paul did as an apostle, and not as an elder.**

Acts 2:

42 “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 “Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and

signs were done through the apostles.”

Acts 4:33 “And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.”

Acts 4:35 “...and laid them at the apostles’ feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.”

Acts 4:37 “... having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles’ feet.”

Acts 16:4 “And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined **by the apostles and elders** at Jerusalem.”

1 Cor 12:28 “And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.”

Eph 2:20 “... having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone ...”

Eph 3:5 “... which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets ...”

Eph 4:11 “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers ...”

2 Pet 3:2 “... that you 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 Savior ...”

Rev 18:20 “Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!”

Rev 2:2 “I know your works, your labor, your patience, and

that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have **found them liars ...**”

Rev 21:14 “Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

Regarding our embracing the practice of plurality of elders versus just one pastor for true Church leadership, we need a revelation. This writing is not meant to be just an intellectual exercise, but to be a strong encouragement to begin a search which may produce repenting and the institution of a more Biblical leadership. *Idols will have to fall here!*

The practice of plurality of elders, and apostles who proclaim the Kingdom of God and declare the whole council of God, are included in the vital changes which need to be made in order to be a city to win a city!

Acts 20:

17 “From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and **called for the elders of the church.**

18 “And **when they** had come to him, he **said to them:** ‘You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you,

19 ‘serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews;

20 ‘how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house,

21 ‘testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

22 ‘And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there,

23 ‘except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me.

24 ‘But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

25 ‘And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone **preaching the kingdom of God**, will see my face no more.

26 ‘Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men.

27 ‘For I have not shunned to declare to you **the whole counsel of God**.

28 ‘Therefore take heed to **yourselves** and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers**, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”

NOTE:

1. The word ‘Kingdom’ of God is **singular**!

2. The ‘elders’ are **plural** and they represent the entire Church at Ephesus, not a particular division of the Church in Ephesus. The Kingdom is not to be divided.

3. The **whole counsel** of God is one to be declared, not little slivers!

4. Elders: ‘they, them, yourselves, overseers’ all in the plural, and refer to the leadership of the church.

Titus 1:5 “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you ...”

Acts 14:23 “So when they had appointed **elders in every church**, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.”

The Biblical jurisdiction for the church is to be the boundary of the city ... one solid representation of the Kingdom of God in each city, led by the elders of the Church in that city. This is the Biblical design and model.

Question! How does this line up with today?

Due to massive division, and lack of teaching the whole counsel of God, the city does not see a unified testimony of the Kingdom of God revealed through the Church!

If in any city there was more than one city hall for example, it would clearly reveal the obvious fact that the city is divided. As His Church, how many ‘city halls’ do we present in any one city?

Matt 18:17 “And if he refuses to hear them, tell it **to the church**. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.”

Which church would they tell this problem to? How is the discipline in the Church to be carried out today? When those needing discipline simply go to another of the divisions of the Church, His body, and embed themselves there to produce grief, or worse, to perhaps win a place of leadership.

Without repentance, they would only continue to function in the flesh and sow discord by their carnal ways and views as they had done in the previous place.

Do you think that any who practice this kind of living will hear ‘well done?’

9.

A CHANGE IN ESSENCE!



God's people are in the process of being changed from the dust of the earth into precious living stones that are being built up into a spiritual dwelling place as the house of God, a mutual habitation of God with His people. This is the reality of the New Jerusalem.

Through the process which scripture calls “partaking of His divine nature” and transformation, this city is manifested as conforming to the very image of Christ. This change is produced by His very divine life, rather than simply by embracing a collection of information regarding doctrine, manmade forms, and traditions.

2 Cor 3:18 “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a

mirror the glory of the Lord, **are being transformed into the same image** from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

This transformation by His life then becomes the composition of a city on a Hill; the city which will ultimately consummate in the New Jerusalem as His spotless Bride.

God’s Word must become more than a moral code or doctrine with a list of dos and don’ts. His Word must be our living bread and our actual inner life supply. He said that **if we would eat Him we would live because of Him.**

His Word must be the source of Revelation which imparts the truth to us ...T he Spirit of the Word must breath into us; we must not simply trust in intellectual information or objective facts. This living Word is the only Word which will actually change us.

This transformation is real and produces needed change in the way we think, feel, and choose. It is not simply a matter of changing outward behaviors only, but of having a deep and profound change by the Spirit of the Lord by and through Him as He breathes life into our spirit by His word.

In the beginning God created by His speaking. He breathed into man, and man became a living soul. Today we still need the breath of the Lord to bring life to us from the Word or we will simply stay the same.

Teaching doctrine in a cold, hard, factual way, apart from revelation by the Holy Spirit, is actually killing to the saints, leaving them disinterested, disconnected, and often with a sense of condemnation. Those who speak, need to purpose to receive the very breath of God so they can then bring life to those who hear. Not simply words of doctrine or soulish comfort, drawn from *the high places* of Christian fiction.

We must help the dear saints to feed on the living, breathed Word of God.

Heb 4:12 “For the word of God is **living** and **powerful**, and **sharper** than any two-edged sword, **piercing** even to the **division of soul and spirit**, and of joints and marrow, and is a **discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**”

None of us can compete with the ability of the living Word of God! Feeding on this Word and co-operating with Him will change us into the very image of Christ.

We are to be His habitation, His temple, His bride, His house, His living stones, a holy nation and eventually His city, the New Jerusalem.

The goal in the redeemed saints is not to have them ‘go’ someplace when they die, but rather to have them ‘**become**’ exactly what God expressed in Genesis and consummates in the book of Revelation as His corporate expression for all eternity.

Jew and Gentile become the one new man in the body of Christ. This is **organic in nature and not simply organizational** with an outward structure.

However it is not merely mystical, but rather very practical, as visibly seen in the seven churches (Revelation chapters 2 and 3), as well as in the churches Paul addressed in his letters.

If we do not care for and live by the Divine life which has come to dwell in every genuinely born again believer, thus seeking to manifest His kingdom on earth in obedience to Him, we are totally missing the point of God’s redeeming love and **eternal purpose**.

Eph 2:

20 “...having been built on the foundation of the apostles and

prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*,

21 “in whom the **whole building**, being fitted together, grows into a **holy temple** in the Lord,

22 “in whom you also are being built together for a **dwelling place** of God in the Spirit.”

1Peter 2:

4 “Coming to Him *as to* a **living stone**, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God *and* precious,

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

2 Peter 1:4 “... by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

It's time to change!

1 Peter 4:3 “For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentile –when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.”

1 John 2:

15 “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 “For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world.”

We are to be a kingdom of priests and kings, not just in our

doctrinal statement, but in reality. The priest or pastor model nullifies this in so many ways.

Remember! This comes into reality by the living Word, not dead letter!

2 Tim 3:

16 “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

17 “that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

Eph 2:10 “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

1 Cor 3:13 “... each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is.”

If our **works** do not issue out of the **strength** and **truth** of His **living Word**, the likelihood of hearing ‘well done’ is very slim.

Sadly, today regular meditating on the Words of the Bible is far removed from the lives of many professing believers.

Our Sunday meetings typically have very short time allotments for the preaching of the Word. Do we really think something will be transformed within us when we give so little time to the true source for change?

Rather it seems there is a contest to see how far away from Scripture we can move and still call ourselves a Christian or a Church gathering.

We must discover our spirit!

When Jesus met the woman at the well He told her that those who were truly worshipping did so in spirit and truth.

John 4:

23 “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will **worship the Father in spirit and truth**; for **the Father is seeking such** to worship Him.

24 “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him **must worship in spirit** and truth.”

Jesus told the ruler of the Jews that he must be born again; He then went on to say that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Paul states in the following verse that he serves with his spirit in the gospel. This distinction could not be more important, and yet it is so unclear with so many leaders, as well as believers.

Acts 18:5 And when Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.

Romans 1:9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers,

Let's be completely frank here! There have been many debates regarding the distinction between 'soul and spirit', intellectually struggling to discern if there is indeed any difference.

In seeking to clarify this: first of all, what does the scripture point out?

Heb 4: 12 “For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, **piercing even to the division of soul and spirit**, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. “

1 Thess 5:23 “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may **your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved** blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Luke 1:

46 “And Mary said: ‘My **soul magnifies** the Lord,

47 ‘And my **spirit has rejoiced** in God my Savior.’”

Let me be clear! When you discover the reality of the Lord speaking and moving in your spirit by His Spirit, you will no longer spend your time on blind, empty doctrinal arguments regarding a two or three part man no matter what famous preachers say about man not being tripartite. We are spirit, soul and body.

Without discovering the reality of God as the Spirit being joined to our spirit, we will struggle having discernment, as well as knowing the leading of the Spirit. The reason is that we have no way to be sure our thoughts or impressions are not simply ours.

1 Cor 6:

16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For “the two,” He says, “shall become one flesh.”

17 But he who is **joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.**

In order to bring the riches of a life in Christ to a daily life experience in the saints, much fellowship and understanding concerning the subject of our spirit is required.

If we never discover the anointing of the Holy Spirit teaching and imparting the essence of Christ into our spirit, we will by default be relegated simply to mainly outward knowledge. At the very least we will not know how the walk with the Lord actually works.

This awareness of the spirit by itself however, does not bring the breath of life from the Spirit to enliven and empower us. To **apply these truths** is to allow the life giving Spirit to live out the Christian life through us and thus do service acceptable to Him.

To be honest, it takes practice. We are so accustomed to let our brain do the leading. To begin to look to our spirit first to discern what the Holy Spirit is saying about every detail of life, we need a real shift of focus!

1 Sam 3:

1 Now the boy Samuel ministered to the LORD before Eli. And the **word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation.**

2. And it came to pass at that time, while Eli *was* lying down in his place, and when his eyes had begun to grow so dim that he could not see,

3 and before the lamp of God went out in the tabernacle of the LORD where the ark of God *was*, and while Samuel was lying down,

4 that **the LORD called** Samuel. And he answered, “Here I am!”

5 So he ran to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.”

And he said, “I did not call; lie down again.” And he went and lay down.

6 Then the LORD called yet again, “Samuel!”

So Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” He answered, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.”

7 (Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, nor was the word of the LORD yet revealed to him.)

8 And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. So he arose and went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you did call me.”

Then Eli perceived that the LORD had called the boy.

9 Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down; and it shall be, if He calls you, that **you must say, ‘Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears.’**” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10 Now the LORD came and stood and called as at other times, “Samuel! Samuel!”

And Samuel answered, “**Speak, for Your servant hears.**”

Without discerning the Lord’s Word speaking into us, we will not experience the built up, living Church life; rather we will remain an organizational hierarchy directing the actions by a few with the remainder looking on.

1 John 2:20 “But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.”

Falling into the ground

Our co-crucifixion with Christ has at its base the release from the **power of sin**. The blood sets us free from the **penalty of sin**. If at the cross we were only freed from the penalty of sin, we would still have no freedom from sin’s power.

We have all but abandoned this reality in the church. We have replaced it with psychology, and tons of self-help materials, which

only tend to draw us farther away from the powerful good news of the gospel: that we as **born again believers are free from the penalty and the power of sin. Our struggle for identity could be solved here.**

This is our identity to declare and walk in because we have died with Christ and have risen in newness of life with Him. This is what is pictured by the Biblical model of water baptism. We are buried and Risen with Christ! The old has died and the new is risen.

For sin to reign in our lives after truly being born again is due to our own choices, as well as a **lack of seeing that we are truly free**, and no longer slaves of sin to obey the demands or desires of the flesh.

The practical application of this reality is to realize we are not debtors to the flesh and owe it nothing. This is the word of our testimony, which is part of the overcoming of the evil one. We declare our place in Christ and remind him of his defeat and praise the Lord for His victory.

We are told to resist the devil and he will flee. His only weapon is fear and lies. Choose God and His ways just in those moments when Satan comes seeking to deceive us into thinking we are still in bondage. If we see, stand, and declare who we are in Christ, the enemy has no further place to deceive us with his lies.

So many have lost or never really gained this understanding; thus Church has been overrun with mere human plans and counsel, with an over-focus on self; thus countless believers are defeated and disengaged from a vital walk and from being in the liberty which is theirs; through not having the armor on!

A further issue which flows from lack of seeing is the constant acceptance of the enemy's accusations in our minds as to our

failure and inability. From that point it is an easy matter for him to cause us to doubt the powerful work of the cross in our lives.

As a result we have no boldness, and cannot believe God would care to use us. The tactic of lies is very powerful and is mainly how he (Satan) comes ... as the roaring Lion seeking to devour us. In the Scripture we are told to resist, and we do this if need be by verbally declaring the victory revealed in God's Word and rejoicing in it.

“Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

If we do not **choose** to deny ourselves and resist the devil, our hopes for a genuine and living Christian life will continue to remain only a **wish**.

We are forgiven and free but we need to stand fast in the liberty.

Gal 5:1 “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.”

No dying! No living!

John 12:24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, **unless a grain of wheat falls** into the ground **and dies**, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.”

Gal 2:20 “I have been **crucified with Christ**; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

Phil 2:17 “Yes, and if I am being **poured out as a drink offering** on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.”

One of the foundational truths of scripture is that life comes out of death. However *‘our rights and our entitlements’* are the main theme of our society today.

The Biblical model is to *die to self* and experience the continual infilling of divine life in resurrection, flowing into and out of our spirit, enlivening us and bringing life to others.

2 Cor 4:

5 “For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves **your bondservants** for Jesus’ sake.

6 “For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

7 “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

8 “We are **hard pressed** on every side, yet not crushed; we are **perplexed**, but not in despair;

9 “**persecuted**, but not forsaken; **struck down**, but not destroyed----

10 “**always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus**, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

11 “For we who live are **always delivered to death for Jesus’** sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

12“ So then **death** is working in us, but **life** in you.”

Instead of embracing the model of dying to self, so often the Church today entertains and looks like the world. Often replacing

the work of the Spirit with dry ice and electronic soul manipulation, or contrastingly; simply allowing a very dead yet orderly service where after enduring awhile, people can't wait to get out.

People flocked around Christ but it seems they can't wait to leave the Church meetings today.

2 Cor 3:

3 "... clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

4 "And we have such trust through Christ toward God.

5 "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God,

6 "who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."

2 Cor 3:18 "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord."

2 Cor 4:

1 "Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.

2 "But we have **renounced** the **hidden things of shame**, not walking in craftiness nor **handling the word of God deceitfully**, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

Spiritual light and transformation are the result of having our

mind renewed by the Word which comes alive to us in our spirit.

If we spend little or no time in God's Word, then it is unreasonable to expect spiritual reality and true change in our lives.

Proclaim God's Word richly, and encourage the saints to read large portions. Spend time!

Put down the distracting toys and pick up God's Word to behold Him. We can be changed from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord!

PRACTICAL ACTION PLAN FOR PRODUCING BIBLICAL CHANGE!



Being a city to win a city

1. Acknowledge the true state of the Church, and our contribution to it. Cry out to the Lord for light to see and hear!
2. Be prepared to make any change which Scripture reveals, regardless of the cost.

3. Deal with any points of idolatry in you, in worship, in position, or in practice.

4. True change will require teaching the actual and complete truth from Scripture on a host of subjects, along with much dying to self in order to do it!

5. Being a city will require a change in how the Church is directed. *Begin to remove the high places and replace them with the Biblical model. It means action, not simply talk!*

6. It will require a change in how the church meets.

Consider **1 Cor 14:26** “How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.”

7. It will require a change in what leadership does. Begin equipping the saints to be living, participating members.

8. Understand! We will answer for what we have done to His church. Stop building on the foundation with wood, hay and stubble.

If we would be willing to activate these points, the Church would change.

Your numbers will probably drop, but you could have genuine Church life, and a greater practice of the true Christian expression of the Kingdom of God. A “city set on a hill” will rise out of the ashes of religion and dead form to impact a world which is hopelessly cast adrift.

If we all would take God’s way, we could close the gap on the revolving door of Church hopping, with people bringing their unsolved problems from one group to another.

If you have been in leadership for any length of time you know exactly what I am saying.

We are self-destructing over so many things which result from us being so divided. **Are we willing to change? This is what we ask the unbeliever.** Are we willing to repent, turn and go another direction? Or are we blinded with pride; settled in religious, denominational, or personal darkness; leadership; and a comfortable Christian life and do not want to change?

Remember! we will all be judged as to how we build. This should strike holy fear of the Lord in our hearts; a fear which should subdue the pride of personal position or ministry.

Acknowledge the true state of the Church. If we are willing, **it can change.**

We, as a person standing in the place of leadership, can be used of God, or we can be a person like Christ described in **Matt 23:15** “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.”

We are in a desperate hour and need to take action which has the hope of turning things around for the sake of the lost, for the sake of the Kingdom of God, and for the sake of His glory.

TAKE HEED HOW YOU BUILD – EACH ONE’S WORK WILL BE TESTED OF WHAT SORT IT IS.

Change is Possible! Are we willing?

If we are willing to actually humble ourselves and take practical steps to change, not hiding behind the revival slogans, hoping for a so called miracle: God is able to restore.

He has given us His word and His ways to carry out the Christian life and the Church life, and has laid out some ground rules in the following verses.

1 Cor 3:

1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ.

2 I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able;

3 for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?

9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building.

10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.

11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,

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

14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."

In Scripture God has given us the basis for our work, and He has

given us the indwelling Holy Spirit to guide, strengthen, and teach us.

On that day we will be evaluated as to how we have built. Any pride, ego, love of personal ministry will be tested by the holy, just, and righteous fire of the Lord.

As previously mentioned, this is much like the account of the man who distributed the talents, went to a far country, and then came back and required a reckoning. Commendation or rebuke was based on what they had done with what they had been given. Not all heard 'well done'.

The Divine Farmer

Consider with me! You have selected a package containing a particular seed. After reading the instructions you set out to plant the seed according to the instructions on the package.

After planting the seed you proceed to give it some food and water. According to the instructions, you are to plant it where there is regular light, and are to provide regular food and water.

The instructions include the description of what the seed will look like at its maturity. With the instructions come further explanations. Be sure to keep it in the light with regular feeding and watering and you will have the glorious end result described on the package.

*The operation of the supplying Spirit, joined to our spirit AS
THE LIVING SEED growing, as the seed kind at its maturity
yields the corporate bride, the New Jerusalem and the tabernacle
of God as the mature expression of the seed!*

1 John 2:27 "But the anointing which you have received **from Him** abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things,

and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.”

In these passages we can see firstly that John speaks of the anointing, or unction of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is active in our spirit guiding, teaching, cautioning, speaking, pressing, warning, and anointing with power for direction and wisdom in service.

If we can see that everything for our growth, gifting, overcoming, living out Christ and all other spiritual destiny is based on the incorruptible seed which was sown into our spirit at the time of our being born again, we can take a giant step in grasping the basis of the Christian life. The basis is Christ's life actually in us producing everything scripture reveals, which religion and the natural flesh attempts to mimic in the power of self, but are completely unable to produce life!

This counterfeit model is not simply missing the mark, but is the designed plan of God's enemy Satan to deceive and retain men's hearts.

In the Book of Revelation we see the climax of the two sources. The first source is God and the issue of all His work as His living Bride, the New Jerusalem. The second is revealed as the great harlot, the woman riding on the beast. This is the fullness of Satan's work to deceive man through evil religion and lies.

Therefore we need to focus on the growth of this divine nature which is indwelling us in our spirit. The Life of God in us will spontaneously fulfill the righteousness of the life of God as He is lived out through us.

He is in us to empower us to both know and obey the smallest of desires the Lord indicates.

The written word describes the will and purpose of God that

we may understand. However it is the divine life which has the capacity to produce that which is the will and purpose of God.

Man's flesh through self effort can never justify himself or carry out God's will and purpose. God's will is simply fulfilled in Christ alone, as God demonstrated when He took a rib from Adam and built a woman and called her Eve. Whatever God accepts must come out of Christ alone.

Observe the unique impartation of the very life of God which is able to fulfill God's will and eternal purpose in us as we grow up into him in all things. **Eph 4:15** "but, speaking the truth in love, may **grow up in all things into Him** who is the head – Christ."

Acts 17:29 "Therefore, since we are the **offspring of God**, we ought not to think that the **Divine Nature** is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising."

2 Peter 1:4 "by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the **divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

Romans 8:15 "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father'."

1 John 5:1 "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is **born of God**, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is **begotten of Him**."

1 John 3:9 "Whoever has been **born of God** does not sin, for **His seed** remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God."

John 17:20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who

will believe in Me through their word;

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

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

23 “**I in them, and You in Me**; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

24 “Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.”

Romans 8:14 “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are **sons of God.**”

Romans 8:19 “For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the **sons of God.**”

Galatians 3:26 “For you are all **sons of God** through faith in Christ Jesus.”

John 5:18 “Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that **God was His Father**, making Himself **equal with God.**”

John 11:27 “She said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, **the Son of God**, who is to come into the world.’”

Romans 8:29 “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among **many brethren.**”

1 John 3:2 “Beloved, now we are **children of God**; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we **shall be like Him**, for we shall see Him as He is.”

Rev 21:10 “And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the **holy Jerusalem**, descending out of heaven from God,

11 “**having the glory of God**. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.”

Genesis 1:26 “Then God said, “Let Us make man in **Our image**, according to **Our likeness**; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

1 John 3:1 “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called **children of God**! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.”

Romans 8:17 “and if **children**, then **heirs**----heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”

Divine supply required

John 6:57 “As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who **feeds on Me** will live because of Me.”

John 6:51 “I am the **living bread** which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.”

1 Corinthians 15:45 “And so it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.”

James 1:21 “Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the **implanted word**, which is able to save your souls.”

1 Peter 2:2 “as newborn babes, desire the **pure milk of the word**, that you may grow thereby”

1 Timothy 4:7 “But reject profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness.”

Psalms 9:1 <<To the Chief Musician. To the tune of “Death of the Son.” A Psalm of David.>> “I will praise You, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works.”

Psalms 111:1 “Praise the LORD! I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, In the assembly of the upright and in the congregation.”

Psalms 119:10 “With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!”

Psalms 119:34 “Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; Indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart.”

Psalms 119:58 “I entreated Your favor with my whole heart; Be merciful to me according to Your word.”

Psalms 119:69 “The proud have forged a lie against me, But I will keep Your precepts with my whole heart.”

Psalms 119:145 QOPH. “I cry out with my whole heart; Hear me, O LORD! I will keep Your statutes.”

Psalms 138:1 <<A Psalm of David.>> “I will praise You with my whole heart; Before the gods I will sing praises to You.”

Eph 3:14 “For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15 “from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

16 “that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,

17 “that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 “may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height –

19 “to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

Jude 1:20 “But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit”

Divine activity and expression produced out of this living supply: issuing in *good* works which will be approved and rewarded!

Acts 3:8 “So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them – walking, leaping, and praising God.”

Acts 14:10 “... said with a loud voice, ‘Stand up straight on your feet!’ And he leaped and walked.”

Acts 2:14 “But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, ‘Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.’”

Acts 26:25 “But he said, ‘I am not mad, most noble Festus, but

speak the words of truth and reason.”

Acts 2:14 “But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, ‘Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.

15 ‘For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.’

16 “But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17 ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.

18 ‘And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.”

Luke 1:15 “For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.”

Luke 1:41 “And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Luke 1:67 “Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying”

Luke 4:1 “Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness”

Acts 2:4 “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

Acts 4:8 “Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them,

‘Rulers of the people and elders of Israel’”

Acts 4:31 “And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.”

Acts 9:17 “And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.’”

Acts 13:9 “Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him”

Acts 16:5 “So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

6 “Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia.

7 “After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them.

8 “So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

9 “And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us.’

10 “Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.

11 “Therefore, sailing from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and the next day came to Neapolis,

12 “and from there to Philippi, which is the foremost city of that part of Macedonia, a colony. And we were staying in that city for some days.

13 “And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there.

14 “Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.”

2 Corinthians 2:13 “I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I departed for Macedonia.”

Acts 18:5 “And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.”

Acts 17:16 “Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols.”

Acts 4:20 “For we **cannot but speak** the things which we have seen and heard.”

OT examples of the Spirit working in His prophets

Micah 3:8 “But truly I am **full of power by the Spirit of the LORD**, And of justice and might, To declare to Jacob his transgression And to Israel his sin”.

Jeremiah 20:9 “Then I said, ‘I will not make mention of Him, Nor speak anymore in His name.’ **But His word was in my**

heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, And I could not.”

Ezekiel 3:14 “So the Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness, **in the heat of my spirit**; but the hand of the LORD was **strong upon** me.”

I will put my laws within you!

James 1:21 “Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness **the implanted** word, (*inborn*) which is able to save your souls.”

*The implanted word

*The divine nature

*Born of God

*Sons of God

*Image and likeness

*His seed

*Joined to the Lord one spirit

All of these points indicate the interaction between God as life to man, as the one whom He has come to indwell.

His plan from the very beginning is pictured by the tree of life in Genesis. He was to have man eat of the tree of life, picturing the receiving of Him as their life to bear His image and likeness and to exercise dominion.

*The seed of the divine life is implanted in the spirit of man when he is born of the Spirit, and grows and matures according to the **seed kind** which is God's divine life. When this seed kind*

*matures in all of God's implanted ones you have the corporate bride,
the body and the New Jerusalem as God's corporate expression
of His matured life to express Him, and reign with Him for
all eternity.*

Therefore the requirement is light, food, and water to grow this divine seed to its maturity according to the **seed kind** which is the life of the eternal Triune God.

This then is what God actually is doing! The truths of scripture explain His process and plan, and the accountability of man. For those who reject His plan stand guilty and must face the consequences of their rejection. For those who receive eternal life, a bright and glorious future awaits them which they cannot even imagine.

Our understanding of God's plan is helpful; however the more important matter is to understand the matter of life. Where there is a living thing growing, there is the need to care for it *according to the properties of life*.

Light, food, and water are the key factors for growth and maturity. Knowledge does not in itself produce growth. We can have much knowledge but be greatly lacking light, water, and food; and thus bear little evidence that we are alive and expressing the life of the eternal God in and through us.

According to the principle of life, a living seed produces the fruit according to its kind, quite apart from great outside effort. Rather it is the expected and definite result of the life of the **seed kind** developing to maturity.

We are all to be transformed to become the mature sons of God according to the **life seed** which was sown into us. This will produce the end result of the completed kingdom of God as the

New Jerusalem for God's expression through all eternity.

It is not about knowledge in itself; but about growth of the implanted life to maturity.

Focus on light, nourishment, and water. We will then grow according to the seed kind and *become all that is in the seed.*

* Christ is the light

* Christ is the living water

* Christ is the living bread

John 6:57 "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who **feeds on** Me will **live** because of Me."

Revelation 22:17 "And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely."

*For ever; (as) the New Jerusalem (we) will be in the **light** of the lamb, **eating** the tree of life, and **drinking** from the river enjoying the living God who is our very life.*

Galatians 3:16 "Now to Abraham and **his Seed** were the promises made. He does not say, 'And to seeds,' as of many, but as of one, '**And to your Seed,**' who is Christ."

1 John 3:9 "Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for **His seed** remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God."

John 12:24 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

1 cor 10:17 "For we, though many, are one bread and one body;

for we all partake of that one bread.”

Leviticus 23:17 “Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the first fruits unto the LORD.”

The Divine life issuing in manifest sons of God

1 John 2:27 “But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.”

Acts 17:29 “Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising.”

2 Peter 1:4 “by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

Romans 8:15 “For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father.’”

1 John 5:1 “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.”

1 John 3:9 “Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.”

John 17:20 “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who

will believe in Me through their word;

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

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

23 “I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

24 “Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.”

Romans 8:14 “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”

Romans 8:19 “For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.”

Galatians 3:26 “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”

John 5:18 “Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.”

John 11:27 “She said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.’”

Romans 8:29 “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

1 John 3:2 “Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

Rev 21:10 “And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

11 “**having the glory of God.** Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.”

Genesis 1:26 “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our **image**, according to Our **likeness**; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’”

1 John 3:1 “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called **children of God!** Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.”

Romans 8:17 “and if children, then heirs – heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be **glorified together.**”

Two important aspects

There are two aspects of the Spirit for the carrying out of Gods purpose!

The First aspect

1. John 20:22 “And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

This breathing in of the Spirit takes place when we are born again, and is once for all. The wind blows where it will so is everyone

who is born of the Spirit.

The Second aspect

Acts 1:8 “But you shall **receive power** when the Holy Spirit has **come upon you**; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Acts 2:4 “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

Some examples of how this second aspect works

Acts 4:8 “Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, ‘Rulers of the people and elders of Israel’”

Now observe a situation requiring divine power!

Acts 4:1 “Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them,

2 “being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 “And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.

4 “However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

5 “And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes,

6 “as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

7 “And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, “By

what power or by what name have you done this?”

At this point the Holy Spirit filled him for the task

8 “Then Peter, **filled with the Holy Spirit**, said to them, ‘Rulers of the people and elders of Israel

9 ‘If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well,

10 ‘let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole.

11 ‘This is the `stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.”

12 ‘Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

13 ‘Now when **they saw the boldness of Peter** and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

14 ‘And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, **they could say nothing against it.’”** (*Their mouths were stopped*)

EXAMPLE

Acts 13:9 “Then Saul, who also is called Paul, **filled** with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him”

PAUL

Acts 13:1 “Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called

Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 “As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’

3 “Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.

4 “So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

5 “And when they arrived in Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John as their assistant.

6 “Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus,

7 “who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. This man called for Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God.

8 “But Elymas the sorcerer (for so his name is translated) withstood them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.”

This is where the Holy Spirit empowered Paul

9 “Then Saul, who also is called Paul, **filled** with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him

10 “and said, ‘O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord?’

11 ‘And now, indeed, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time.’ And immediately a dark mist fell on him, and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand.

12 “Then the **proconsul believed**, when he saw what had been done, being **astonished at the teaching** of the Lord.”

*In the following verse it states that Paul was pressed in the spirit
(small (s) meaning his spirit)*

Acts 18:5 “And when Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was **pressed in the spirit**, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.”

Stephen

Acts 7:55 “But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God”

Acts 7:47 “But Solomon built Him a house.⁴⁸ ‘However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says:

49 ‘Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me?’ says the LORD, Or what is the place of My rest?

50 ‘Has My hand not made all these things?’”

*Probably just prior to the following verse he received the download
of the power! Empowering him to speak with boldness which the
situation required!*

51 ‘You stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you.

52 ‘Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers,

53 ‘who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it.’

54 “When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth.

55 “But he, being **full of the Holy Spirit**, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God,

56 “and said, ‘Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!’

57 “Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord;

58 “and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

59 “And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’

60 “Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not charge them with this sin. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.”

*When Stephen was stoned he called upon God, and said Lord
Jesus receive my spirit!*

Acts 7:59 “And they stoned Stephen as he called upon God and said, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!’”

No rest

2 Corinthians 2:13 “I had no rest in my spirit because I found not Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.”

In this verse Paul expresses disturbance in him and he describes it as *no rest in my spirit*. This is another aspect of the empowering Spirit directing, teaching and leading.

More on this second aspect

Mark 13:11 “But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.”

This second aspect requires several fulfilled conditions!

1. First, we need to see this aspect of the Spirits operation in us.
2. Secondly, we need to live a submitted life wherein we are desirous to hear and do His bidding.
3. We must then learn to restrict ourselves to speaking only what the Holy Spirit prompts, and not our opinion, or natural thought.

Acts 5:32 “**And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.**”

These are a few examples of receiving power for witnessing, as well as any other ‘good work’ which the Lord would direct us to.

He empowers us with burden, boldness and the understanding of what to say or do. This empowering is not constant but is given to

us in that moment to fulfill what the Lord is asking of us.

When this ministry time has passed we again experience the normal abiding peace and Joy of His breathed-in life.

Unfortunately the vast majority of so-called Christian work is based on very outward planning, with locked-in boundaries which we determine based much on the influence of culture, tradition, personal preference, and our limited understanding of God's actual purpose.

As a direct result: we are very short of this type of empowered ministry in the church! This is a large reason we are in the condition we are in as the church. We are too frequently missing the breath of God to give life.

Checks and Balances

If we speak apart from the Spirit's anointing and life impartation, we will afterward in all probability feel dead and grieved in our spirit. This is the inner realization of the Holy Spirit teaching us that of which He approves and that which is not of Him.

Accusations

There is another matter to understand in this context. Often when the Lord has genuinely used us by empowering us for a task, the enemy will come to either puff you up, or accuse you of some unclear thought regarding your service.

We need to recognize these tactics and stand against them. This will all become clearer as we learn to hear the Lord and obey Him. This work of the enemy is said to be going on day and night.

If he cannot keep us from doing the good works which God has planned, he will then seek to destroy us by overwhelming

condemnation or false encouragement designed to puff us up.

This is an important reason why leaders must be properly prepared for serving. Paul writes to Timothy and cites this danger of being puffed up.

1 Timothy 3:6 “not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.”

Just a further word here! The Holy Spirit will never lead you to do something which contradicts the basic teaching of scripture. Having said that: we must make a distinction between what we think scripture says, and what it really says. Our erroneous theology is a big block to this process as well. Nevertheless: beware of people who say the Lord led them to do something which clearly is not in line with basic Biblical teaching.

God’s overall provision in The seed

1 John 3:9 “Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for **His seed** remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.”

1 Peter 1:23 “having been born again, not of corruptible **seed** but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever”

The implanted word

James 1:21 “Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the **implanted word**, which is able to save your souls.”

John 1:1 “In the beginning was the **Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

The new birth

1 John 5:1 “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is **born of God**, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.”

John 3:3 “Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is **born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

John 3:7 “Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’”

1 Peter 1:23 “having been **born again**, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever”

The divine nature

2 Peter 1:4 “by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

Who is in you? And where are you?

CHRIST IS IN YOU!

Colossians 1:27 “To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS IN YOU!

John 20:22 “And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

THE FATHER IS IN YOU!

John 14:23 “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and **We will come** to him and **make Our home with him.**’” (*this is not a mansion*)

John 17:21 ‘that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

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

23 ‘**I in them,** and **You in Me;** that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.’”

I go to prepare a place for you!

Now we come to one of the most confused and misdirected passages in all of scripture. Both the translation, and interpretation are completely natural as presented by the majority of Christianity.

The result being, we have not spoken the truth to God’s people as to His actual purpose for them.

The Fathers House is the abode (**in the Father and in the Son**) which He went to prepare spoken of in John 14:2,3. Christ went on in the chapter to clarify this abode. In **John 14:23** “He said; Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and **We will come to him** and make **Our home with him.**’”

The word translated (home) is the greek word 3438 monh mone mon-ay’ This is exactly the same greek word translated by the King James translators’ as mansions. This translation and

subsequent interpretation of this passage has to be one of the greatest areas of blindness which exists in the church today.

God is not building a mansion for you in a heaven which will burn up. This understanding fosters the false idea of going somewhere, when scripture teaches us to pray for His kingdom to come on earth, and the New Jerusalem is seen coming down out of heaven, not going up!

It cannot be overstated how much blindness this interpretation has brought to the saints, and the teachers of this will answer to the Lord at the Bema.

He went, and came on the same day!

He went to the Father and then *came again* on the same day, as revealed in John Ch. 20. *Please see this;* on the same day of His resurrection, after going to the Father, He returned **that same day** and appeared to the disciples and **breathed** on them and said receive the Holy Spirit.

He told His disciples that He was going to prepare a place for them, and that if He went, He would come again and receive them unto Himself, that where He was, they would be also. This was all fulfilled in Him going to the cross to provide a way through redemption **into the Father** as stated in John 14:23, we will come and make our home with you! Then upon His return which He had promised, He said receive the Holy Spirit. This produced the means for (I in them, and you in me; that the Father may be glorified).

Quite frankly, if we do not get this clear, and our focus is the mansion He is supposedly building for me, we have set a trajectory in looking at scripture which will make it *completely impossible* to see what God is actually doing.

Remember; the old heaven will burn up! Simple Logic reveals to us that it will no longer exist nor anything that was there.

Consider all of scripture regarding the church as God's temple, His body, dwelling place, house, bride, habitation, tabernacle, etc. to gain the revelation of Him preparing a place in the Father and in the Son as a corporate dwelling place of God with His many sons, to express and glorify Him in all eternity as the New Jerusalem: THIS is what He is building.

The same God who breathed into the first man Adam to give him life, also breathed into the disciples placing the divine life as a seed in them, thus bringing them into the Father and the Son by the Spirit.

This was for the producing of God's dwelling place which will consummate in the New Jerusalem as the maturity and completion of the divine seed which had been sown into those who have become the many sons. As the many ***monh mone mon-ay'***, *we are His dwelling places! Abide in me and I in you!*

The development of the New Jerusalem according to the seed kind

Genesis 1:24 "Then God said, 'Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind'; and it was so."

Genesis 1:26 "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.'" *(according to our kind!)*

The full development of the seed kind

Genesis 2:23 “And Adam said: ‘This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.’”

Revelation 21:2 “Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”

Revelation 21:9 “Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, ‘Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.’”

Ephesians 2:22 “in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit”

1 Corinthians 3:9 “For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, you are God’s building.”

1 Peter 2:5 “you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

1 Corinthians 3:16 “Do you not know that you are the **temple of God** and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”

2 Corinthians 6:16 “ And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you **are the temple** of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.’”

The many sons

Hebrews 2:10 “For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory,

to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”

Romans 8:19 “For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.”

Galatians 3:26 “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”

Many brothers

Hebrews 2:11 “For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren”

Romans 8:29 “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren”

The Bride

The new Jerusalem as the full grown expression and life of the seed sown in us.

The grain- The many grains- The one loaf

John 12:24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.”

1 Cor 10:16 “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?”

17 “For we, **though many**, are **one bread** and one body; for we all partake of that one bread. “

Leviticus 2:1 “When anyone offers a **grain offering** to the LORD, his offering shall be of **fine flour**. And he shall **pour oil**

on it, and put frankincense on it.”

Leviticus 2:4 “And if you bring as an offering a grain offering baked in the oven, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.”

Eating and drinking the lord with our mouth for our Joy, growth, and satisfaction in life.

Gen 2:9 “And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden”

Genesis 2:10 “Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads”

Psalms 46:4 “There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, The holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High.”

Psalms 105:41 “He opened the rock, and water gushed out; It ran in the dry places like a river.”

1 Cor 10:1 “Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea,

2 “all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,

3 “all ate the same spiritual food

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

The woman at the well; called to drink of Him

John 4:6 “ Now Jacob’s well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 “A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, ‘Give Me a drink.’

8 “For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

9 “Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, ‘How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?’ For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

10 “Jesus answered and said to her, ‘**If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.**’

11 “The woman said to Him, ‘Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?’

12 ‘Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?’

13 “Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,

14 ‘but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.’”

Is anyone thirsty?

John 7:37 “ On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying,

1. **‘If anyone thirsts,**

2. **‘let him come to Me**

3. **‘and drink.**

38 ‘He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his

heart will flow rivers of living water.’

39 “But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Made to drink

1 Corinthians 12:13 “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free – and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”

For Salvation

1. Rom 10:8 “But what does it say? ‘The **word is near you, in your mouth** and in your heart (that is, the word of faith which we preach):

9 ‘that if you **confess with your mouth** the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 ‘For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with **the mouth confession** is made unto salvation.

11 ‘For the Scripture says, ‘Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.’

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

13 ‘For ‘whoever **calls on the name** of the LORD shall be saved.’”

Being filled with the Spirit!

Is 12:2 “Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; ‘For YAH, the LORD, is my strength and song; He also has become my salvation.’

3 “Therefore with joy you will draw water From the wells of salvation.

4 “And in that day you will say:

A. ‘Praise the LORD,

B. ‘call upon His name;

C. ‘Declare His deeds among the peoples,

D. ‘Make mention that His name is exalted.’

5 ‘Sing to the LORD, For He has done excellent things; This is known in all the earth.

6 ‘Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, For great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst!’”

Psalms 71:8 “Let my mouth be filled with Your praise And with Your glory all the day.”

Eph 5:18 “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

19 “speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

20 “giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”

The Holy Spirit speaks to us! Empowering us to speak out of the abundance of our heart, with our mouth from the very Breath of God!

1 Cor 12:1 “Now concerning spiritual (*the word gifts is inserted*) brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:

2 “You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these

dumb idols, however you were led.”

Habakkuk 2:18 “What profit is the image, that its maker should carve it, The molded image, a teacher of lies, That the maker of its mold should trust in it, To make mute idols?”

Habakkuk 2:19 “Woe to him who says to wood, ‘Awake!’ To silent stone, ‘Arise! It shall teach!’ Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, Yet in it there is no **breath** at all.”

1 Corinthians 14:32 “**And the spirits of the prophets are subject to** the prophets. *(if we will not speak the spirit is quenched)*

3 “*Therefore I make known to you that no one* speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

8 “for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,

10 “to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.”

Psalms 81:10 “I am the LORD your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt; **Open your mouth wide**, and I will fill it.”

Proverbs 18:21 “Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.”

The cup of blessing

1 Corinthians 10:16 “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?”

Cup 4221 pothrion poterion pot-ay'-ree-on

of a derivative of the alternate of 4095; TDNT-6:148,841; n n

AV-cup 33; 33

1) a cup, a drinking vessel

2) metaph. **one's lot or experience**, whether joyous or adverse, divine appointments, whether favourable or unfavourable, are likened to a cup which God presents one to drink: so of prosperity and adversity

Blessing

2129 eulogia eulogia yoo-log-ee'-ah

AV-blessing 11, bounty 2, bountifully+1909 2, fair speech 1; 16

1) **praise, laudation**, (*panegyric: in a public assembly*) of Christ or God

2) fine discourse, polished language

2a) in a bad sense, language artfully adapted to captivate the hearer: fair speaking, fine speeches

3) an invocation of blessing, benediction

Bless

2127 eulogew eulogeo yoo-log-eh'-o

AV-bless 43, praise 1; 44

1) **to praise, celebrate with praises**

2) to invoke blessings

3) to consecrate a thing with solemn prayers

3a) to ask God's blessing on a thing

3b) pray God to bless it to one's use

3c) pronounce a consecratory blessing on

4) of God

4a) to cause to prosper, to make happy, to bestow blessings on

4b) favoured of God, blessed

Eating and drinking of Him to supply us with the life of the living God

Isaiah 55:1 "Ho! Everyone **who thirsts**, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price."

Ez 47:1 "Then he brought me back to the **door of the temple; and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east**, for the front of the temple faced east; the water was flowing from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar.

9 "And it shall be that every living thing that moves, wherever the rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed, and everything will live wherever the river goes.

10 "It shall be that fishermen will stand by it from En Gedi to En Eglaim; they will be places for spreading their nets. Their fish will be of the same kinds as the fish of the Great Sea, exceedingly many.

11 "But its **swamps and marshes will not be healed**; they will be given over to salt.

12 *"Along the bank of the river, on this side and that, will grow all kinds*

*of trees used for food; their leaves will not wither, and their fruit will not fail. They will bear fruit every month, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and **their leaves for medicine.***

Revelation 22:2 *“In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”*

Revelation 22:17 *“And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him **who thirsts** come. **Whoever desires**, let him take the **water of life freely.**”*

Man’s thirst must be quenched! We will seek to have it quenched at many promising fountains.

The church needs to have the fountain of living water flowing to quench man’s thirst: the Gihon spring out of our innermost being.

Religion makes people dumb spectators! **Do not** say you are silent if you are a believer.

We were made in the image of a speaking living God, not a dumb idol.

Religion seeks to control and nullify God’s worship, and expression from His living body. We need to overcome by our testimony in declaring who He is, and His greatness by the use of our open mouth. This will quench the deep thirst in us, and bring glory to God and drive away the enemy – Amen!

Grant us eyes to see, Lord!

The divine seed is the implanted living word in our spirit as redeemed people. This seed of life grows and develops according to the seed kind. As with any seed, this seed of the divine life has everything in it to bring about its maturity and consummation.

When we plant a corn seed, we can anticipate what the seed will look like in its maturity as we have seen it before. The same will be true of the divine seed, which is the divine nature, growing into a holy temple in the Lord.

This Holy temple is not separate from, or in addition to God's consummation, but rather is the very consummation of that which He is growing into, based on the seed kind.

Ephesians 2:22 “in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”

Colossians 2:19 “and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.”

Ephesians 4:13 “till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

This then expresses the full measure of the divine seed as the incorruptible seed which lives and abides forever.

The New Jerusalem is the corporate maturity of the divine seed sown, and brought to its final and consummate maturity, **having the glory of God! The tabernacle of God.**

Now: consider for a moment what is ‘the tabernacle of God’? And who are the men?

Revelation 21:3 “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.”

Who are the nations? And why do they need healing in eternity?

Revelation 22:2 “In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”

What do you see?

Rev 1:1 “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants – things which must **shortly take place**. And He sent and **signified** it by His angel to His servant John.”

Signify/Signs

Rev.1:1 “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants – things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John.”

We see that this book is the revelation of Jesus Christ, and this revelation is by the use of many signs. The use of signs is to present a spiritual reality which is conveyed by the imagery of the sign.

Revelation 15:1 “And I saw another **sign** in Heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels holding the seven last plagues, for in them is filled up the wrath of God.”

Signify 4591 shmainw semaino say-mah'-ee-no

from sema (a mark, of uncertain derivation); TDNT-7:262,1015; AV-signify 6; 1) to give a sign, to **signify**, indicate 2) to make known

This verse in Revelation says that this letter is to show things which *must shortly come to pass*. Not things which have happened in the past! Thus it makes it very difficult, for example, to see the man child as Jesus: given the fact that He had already been born, lived, crucified, resurrected, and ascended to Heaven after His resurrection some 65 years earlier. This book of Revelation is to

point out things which must *shortly come to pass*.

Signs were used throughout scripture to speak of many matters. The Jews seek a sign, Jesus was asked: what sign will you show, and he referred them to the sign of Jonah. The announcement of the birth of Christ included this statement: **Luke 2:12** “And this shall be a **sign** unto you: Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”

Some other signs then which we will list for consideration. The lampstands; the woman clothed with the sun, moon, and stars; the woman who gave birth to the manchild; the manchild; the great dragon; the sheep; the goats, the city of pure gold; note that there are *not streets of gold*, but *the street* of it. There is the beast out of the sea, the great harlot, and the daughters, to name a few.

Can you explain why we see the woman on the beast as a picture, and then call the consummation of all of God’s work a square cube of gold 1500 miles high and wide?

These are all signs which point to a profound spiritual reality. The chances are that if we do not have the reality of a living hearing from the Lord, we will probably not receive revelation on these profound truths; as we will be too busy trying to defend the small pile of chaff in our hand to let an emptied and open hand receive light and the riches of truth. (*I have seen this to be the case in many believers for decades.*)

Example

Revelation 17:7 “But the angel said to me, ‘Why did you marvel? I will tell you **the mystery** of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.’”

When we read this verse we immediately set out to explain what this sign represents, and in no way do we interpret it in a

literal fashion.

The book of revelation contains many signs pointing to spiritual realities.

First the Natural and then the Spiritual

1 Corinthians 15:46 “However that which is spiritual was not first, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual.”

As was pointed out in the last page, when we read about the woman on a beast we clearly do not take that to be literal. It is representative of something profound in the Bible.

In the Old Testament there were all manner of types, and signs. The tabernacle, the offerings, the Sabbath rest, and so on.

In Paul’s explanation we see that the natural body is first and then the spiritual.

The principle of the natural followed by the spiritual is seen throughout the pages of the Bible. To miss the signs and thus interpret them as a natural item is to clearly miss what God has said.

I believe we will answer to the Lord in much the same way as Israel did for their high places. We must change and be like Josiah by tearing down all of the high places of false teaching, and idolatry which are destroying the temple.

1 Corinthians 3:16 “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”

1 Corinthians 3:17 “If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.”

2 Corinthians 6:16 “And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God.”

10.

WE NEED TO REPENT & CHANGE BACK!



The biggest motivation for anyone to actually change is to come to the realization that they have a huge problem that needs to be resolved. They are then in a position to reach out for help.

The large number of discouraged pastors, many of whom are leaving the Church ministry, should be a clue that something is drastically wrong.

The Church needs to be properly shepherded by us, rather than being held in bondage and death through tradition, religious practices which are not biblical, or by our mishandling of the

truth of Scripture. We will answer to the Lord on that day.

There is a lost world, and a floundering Church which is waiting for courage, truth, humility, and the word of truth rightly divided, empowering it to rise out of the heap of disaster.

By changing we will be able to blow the clear trumpet sound of Spirit and truth, to see God's Kingdom come in reality and as its true demonstration to our city, wherever we are.

I am burdened to offer my heart and time to anyone who is serious and would be willing to pay the price to change.

I have practiced these matters in different degrees for over forty years and can testify to the fact that, though there will be some great pain, there will however be a great experience of Christ building His Church, and we will be caring for His interests properly as good stewards.

Let's rule like Josiah

2 Kings 22:

1 "Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath.

2 "And he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the ways of his father David; **he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.**"

If your heart is broken for the Church and God's Kingdom, I believe what I have written here will echo in your spirit as true.

If we are building a kingdom other than His, we pray for mercy and light to reveal our course and grant us much grace to **change**

to become ‘His city to win a city.’

Putting it all together

When we observe God’s creation it is quite breathtaking!

If we were to practice the model which God has given us for the church and the kingdom, we should, and could, also experience breathtaking and heart capturing life, light, and thus shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

Seeing the ‘new creation in Christ’ flowing in the Spirit and ministering life in the Church meeting and in the market place would manifest to the world the reason for the hope that is within us.

Ministering to the needs of people in our city would produce a display of wow proportions! A city on a hill!

Now: we do understand that none of this will be the full manifestation in this age, but it could produce a major *wow* factor if we would teach truth and practice His ways in the true demonstration of the Spirit and truth.

Rom 8:19 “For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.”

*Please don’t miss the point. I am not presenting these changes so we now focus on simply “**doing it right!**” No! A thousand times no!*

If we are in awe of the creation, what could it be like to see the Creator manifesting His very life through His children? God wants to be expressed through us; to bear His image, His likeness, and to exercise dominion.

There are some groups who have started out practicing in much

the same way as I have outlined here.

History reveals that it is not simply doing it ‘right’ as some who do it ‘right’ are also quite dead.

So what is the point?

So what is the point? It is like this. In Genesis, God formed man from the dust of the ground, to have a particular shape, size, and description.

The right parts were there, and it looked right; however one very crucial element was still missing. That missing part was ‘life’. God **breathed** into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul!

We need the breath of God to be born of Him, and then we need the constant supply of the Spirit to bring life to God’s outward order, such as the church meeting, or it too will be just a dead form.

All of the changes listed here will be only a form if the Holy Spirit is not the breath to make it living.

We must practice the Christian life by maintaining the breath of life from God empowering us to manifest Him.

Jesus said to the woman at the well that the Father was looking for worshipers who would **worship in Spirit and truth**. Both are needed to have God’s ways lived out in order to produce the *city to win the city*.

Vision Gives proper Perspective!

Heb 12:2 “... 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 has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

By practicing the truth and teaching the believers regarding the coming of the kingdom age and the reward of the Lord for faithful service, we give them a solid reason to put aside the current pleasures of this age.

Heb 11:

24 “By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter,

25 “choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

26 “esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; **for he looked to the reward.”**

We need to seek to greatly deepen the believers’ grasp regarding the great vision and purpose which God had in mind for creating us in the first place.

God’s eternal purpose was not simply to save us and take us back to heaven. *This is certainly not a great mystery.* From Genesis we were informed that He wanted man to bear His image and likeness and to exercise dominion.

The world to come

Heb 2:

5 “For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.

6 “But one testified in a certain place, saying: ‘What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him?’

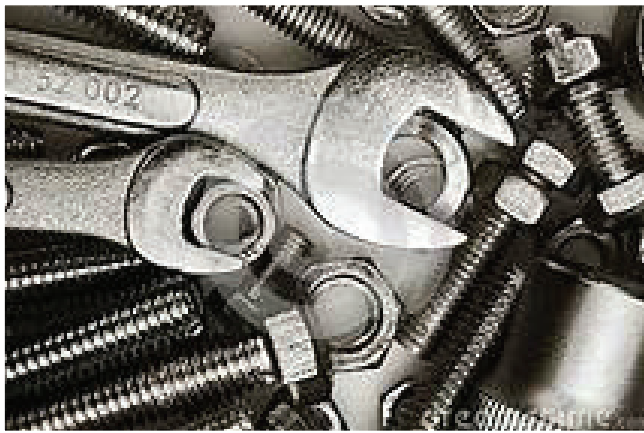
7 ‘You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have

crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands.

8 ‘You have 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 do not yet see all things put under him.”

The world to come has its part on the new earth wherein dwells righteousness. In all of eternity these redeemed and glorified saints will reign as co-kings and joint heirs with Christ. The ruling of the world to come will not be by angels, rather redeemed man will rule and judge angels. This activity will transpire on the new earth.

SOME NUTS AND BOLTS!



I would like to share some practical nuts and bolts suggestions about putting into practice these points of change.

Here are some topics which you can bring into your teaching and fellowship with the people. Make sure you have true revelation and not old wine!

This can be taught to everyone, but more intently to a select group of men which you will consider and then bring into your discipleship: with the intention to raise up leaders and future elders, and functioning members of His living body.

Subjects and 'life' skills of the Spirit to minister

1. How to walk by the Spirit.
2. Recognizing the speaking of the Lord in your spirit.
3. Recognizing when you grieve or quench the Spirit in your spirit.
4. How to minister in the meeting of the saints.
5. The importance of forgiveness and a good conscience for ministry.
6. The importance of submissiveness to the Spirit, to the Word, and to those in authority in order to be useful to the Lord.
7. The key factors of the gospel of the kingdom.
8. We need to know **how to come to the Word**; not first for knowledge but for fellowship with the Lord where He will speak, give light and change us; filling us with His heart and will.

*Scripture must become alive and powerful to empower us with
His life and burden for the matters of the Kingdom. Instill this in
the people.*

9. Speak on the Church, as to what she truly is.
10. Speak on the reality of the body as it relates to the meeting time of the Church.
11. Discover what God is actually doing as His eternal purpose, and give the saints vision to live by so they have a reason to forsake the pleasures of Egypt.
12. They need to discover the matters of **life** and the **Spirit** and their **spirit**, in order to minister life and light, rather than dead doctrine, or content issuing from their natural mind or empty teachings.

13. Speak on the Judgment seat of Christ and the events which will occur there and how it will impact on them.

14. Help them to realize it does make a difference how we serve and build. We will all be evaluated at the Bema for how we did things, and what material we used.

15. Possibly begin by having these brothers testify after your message as to what the Lord gave them light on. This will help you to see who has some gifting from the Lord to minister the Word.

Some will emerge (*in the sense of encouraging the saints to love and serve the Lord*) as teachers, exhorters, and prophets. You will need to recognize which is which. ***Remember now, the one pastor model will only bring out one of these aspects.***

By ‘making disciples’ of a number of brothers you will discover five areas of ministry from Ephesians 4. As these brothers grow and are broken before the Lord, their gifting will become more clearly seen by you and by the body.

16. After the brothers catch on to the ministry to the body by supporting the message, begin to open it to the whole body.

Don’t rush into this. Give the saints time to get used to multiple people ministering life. They will begin to thirst for this and desire to be included.

Before you implement body ministry, you need to teach on the matters which we have covered in the book, so the saints can begin to hear the Lord in their spirit, and become clearer concerning the truth.

This is very crucial; otherwise you will predominantly get opinion, dead doctrine, and lifeless stories which do not build up.

What you want to see is the Spirit “confirming” the truth of the

message by two or three witnesses.

When the body is released to function, there can be great strengthening of the preaching of the Word. Having said this, there are two crucial things that need to happen for this to work.

A. The first is that the speaker must have heard from the Lord, and rightly divided the Word, so that the Holy Spirit can righteously witness to the truth in the spirit of the saints.

B. Secondly, each believer will need to make a choice to respond to the word, and by the two or three witness not be so quick to write it off as “that is his opinion”.

2 Corinthians 13:1 “This is the third time I am coming to you. ‘In the mouth of **two or three witnesses** shall every word be established.’”

After witnessing to the truth, through two or three, the saints will now need to choose to submit to the speaking of the Lord through the body.

*This is where the work of the cross comes in, as standing with the truth will bring us to death. If we shrink back here, the life we have received from the body will be quenched through our disobedience and we will then learn in our experience what that is like. We are **all** responsible for what the Lord speaks to us!*

We must encourage any who speak in the meeting to speak from the Spirit in their spirit under the anointing, restricting their words to that which the Lord clearly gives them. This then will be weighed in the spirits of some as a confirmation of truth and life, which if it is as described, will most definitely build up the body of Christ.

In supporting the word spoken, each one’s ministering should

always focus on bringing life and revelation which he/she personally received from the message, perhaps sharing how it relates to the Lord's working in their life. Only minister to build up, not debating, but sharing how the Lord spoke to you.

This confirmation will strengthen the truth to the body regarding what was shared from Scripture. They will become the two or three witnesses who will establish every word.

17. As you practice this, you will discover some saints will speak apart from the spirit. This is where the shepherding comes in. Do not correct publicly or no one will try again. Remember, *'every chicken has feathers'*, and no one's ministry is perfect, including ours.

18. Give time for the saints to pick this up as some will be totally against it; some will be for it; and some will be the muddle in the middle.

19. Don't try to control this too tightly or the saints will pull back. Relax and trust the Lord as the One Who is the head over all things to the Church.

20. Give yourself time to do this training and changing.

As God empowers you and burns more deeply in your heart you will be strengthened to go further.

21. Often people will open up on matters of their life struggles, and break down in tears. Many times the Lord will prompt some to go and comfort and pray for them.

As a protection, it is wise to have brothers pray for brothers, and sisters to the sisters. The exception would be a husband praying for his wife or the other way around. *(A protection and care for the testimony of His Church in this time of moral decay.)*

2 Cor 3:

16 “Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.”

17 “Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty.”

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

2 Cor 4:

1 “Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.

2 “But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.

3 “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,

4 “whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

5 “For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake.

6 “For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

7 “But we have this treasure in **earthen vessels**, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

8 “We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; *we are*

perplexed, but not in despair;

9 “persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed –

10 “always carrying about **in the body** the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

11 “For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

12 “So then death is working in us, but life in you.

13 “And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, *‘I believed and therefore I spoke’*, we also believe and therefore speak,

14 “knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present *us* with you.

15 “For all things *are* for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

16 “Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day.

17 “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory,

18 “while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.”

2 Cor 5:

1 “For we know that if our earthly **house**, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a **building** from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 “For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be **clothed with our habitation** which is from heaven,

3 “if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be **found naked**.

4 “For we who are in *this* **tent groan**, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but **further clothed**, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.

5 “Now He who has prepared us for this very thing *is* God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

6 “So *we are* always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord.

7 “For we walk by faith, not by sight.

8 “We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

9 “Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.

10 “**For we must all appear** before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

11 “Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.”

It is high time to awake

Rom 13:11 “And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high **time to awake** out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.”

1 Cor 15:34 “**Awake to righteousness**, and do not sin;

for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.”

Eph 5:14 “Therefore He says: ‘**Awake, you who sleep**, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light.”

Jude 3 “Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.”

We need to turn away from the *self absorbed* focus on our personal spiritual likes and dislikes, and away from obsessing about physical wellbeing and comfort, but rather seek first the kingdom of God.

Far too much emphasis is placed on us; it is still so much about “me”, forgetting that we are bought with a price therefore glorify God in our body, and our spirit which are His. This change in focus in connection with His eternal purpose for which He made man in the first place must become our *self-subduing* vision.

Our reward will not be based on our personal spiritual pursuits, but rather on how we built on the one foundation. The good works which He planned are **directly** connected to the fulfilling of His eternal purpose by means of the Spirit, the word, and the mutual abode.

Anything else such as our good ideas, fleshly zeal, exultation of our name and ministry, and failure to teach *and* practice truth, will join the ranks of the *wood, hay and stubble* and will burn *up* at the Bema. We will suffer loss; but we ourselves will be saved by, or through fire. *It matters what we do, and how we do it!!!*

There is great confusion regarding the balance of grace and good works.

Clearly we are born again of incorruptible seed which we cannot replicate by any self effort, similar to Cain bringing the fruit of his labor which God rejected.

The role of grace and works

Saved by Grace

Eph 2:8 “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

9 “not of works, lest anyone should boast.

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

Living a life of good works is our call after salvation.

This salvation should issue in good works as the result of true salvation. The divine seed sown in us has in its DNA that which wants to engage in the kingdom life and its work, as directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit

To claim salvation and yet do nothing, brings up the argument of James when he says;

James 2:14 “What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?

15 “If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food,

16 “and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?

17 “Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”

It will be our works and not our growth, or individual spirituality, which will be tested by fire as to how we built on the purpose which God has; then to prove whether or not they were done in God. **John 3:21** “But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”

When so much of the church is distracted, doing very little, or nothing, but rather simply preoccupied with their individual house, and not caring for God’s house, we then must **consider**: What will happen when this model of living meets the righteous and holy judgment of God who is a consuming fire? Will it remain or be burned up?

Change now while there is still time!

For our God is a consuming fire.

Heb 12:26 “whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, ‘Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.’”

Now this, ‘Yet once more,’ indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.

Therefore, since we are receiving **a kingdom** which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

For our God is a consuming fire.

Your brother for His Kingdom!

Dave Loudon