

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God..."

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Book One

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

By J. Preston Eby

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The Revelation of Jesus Christ by J. Preston Eby

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Chapter 1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The mark of the beast. Armageddon. The Four Horsemen. The false prophet. Babylon the great. Falling stars, stinging locusts, and giant hailstones. The seven last plagues. The bottomless pit. The lake of fire. These images of terror and catastrophe from the book of Revelation have greatly influenced the thinking of millions of Christians through the ages. Even the secular press uses images such as "Armageddon" and "four horsemen of the Apocalypse" to describe calamities in our world. Despite 1900 years of fascination with the book of Revelation, John's letter to the seven Churches of Asia continues to be misunderstood. And badly misinterpreted!

One misconception shared by some is that the Revelation has nothing of importance to say to us. It's considered to be merely a bizarre piece of first-century writing with no relevance for today. Another wrong idea is that the Revelation is a code book describing a specific outline of history written in advance. Countless interpreters have tried to "decode" the book from a historical perspective to find all the major world events of the past 1900 years. Others interpret it more literally as a handbook for predicting the cataclysmic events that will bring the final wrath of God and the end of the world. The claims of Christian groups from the early church to the present — that the Revelation pinpoints the events, personalities, and time periods of "the end" — **have all failed**. This should be a caution to believers for using the book of Revelation as a *predictive handbook*. Other people's interpretation of the book of Revelation is based on the "Pan Theory" — it's all going to *pan out* in the end! Beloved brethren, the fact is, *it's not panning out* the way the end-time prognosticators are projecting!

Through the years I have ministered the Word in Bible studies, seminars, and church services of various types. When there has been a question and answer session, or when opportunity was granted for people to request teaching along a particular line, the most often requested subject has been — THE BOOK OF REVELATION! I have met people who were babes in Christ, carnal Christians whose lives were a mess, they had incredible problems and needs, including deliverance, and instead of prayer or counsel or messages that would help them overcome and grow up in Christ, they wanted me to teach them the book of Revelation! "Yeah, brother, that's for me, lay it on me, I want the book of Revelation!"

In retrospect, in the early days of my walk in God, my desire was no different. I was young, both naturally and spiritually. I knew little about the word of God or the purposes of God, but a call was in my heart. Being unlearned and immature, my very first dream was that I wanted to be a "prophecy" teacher. I imagined that I would be able to so eloquently expound the mysteries of the book of Revelation that great crowds would flock to hear me teach. After all, where do you start when you're brilliant and young in the Lord! Thank God, very few of those who read these lines had to suffer through some of the things I taught out of the book of Revelation! The old adage was surely fulfilled, "Fools rush in where wise men fear to tread." Today it seems to me that the dumber a person is spiritually, the more determined they are to teach the book of Revelation! Those who know nothing are convinced that they know

everything, and the first place they head is for deep water. There are depths in God, and heights of revelation and reality far beyond anything that the carnal mind can conceive. The reason people who are spiritually illiterate jump into it with such gusto, and people who have some idea of the majesty and meaning of its message are more hesitant, is because the book of Revelation is the most dynamic, powerful, awesome, devastating book of the Bible! Those who have caught glimpses into the transcendent glories of its deepest mysteries often shy away from it in the light of its loftiness and eminence. What Christians are normally exposed to are the radio and television preachers, the "good ol' boys of religion" who think they know all about it and parrot and elaborate on all the absurdities they have been taught by their teachers.

Today, many Christians are confused. They are tossed too and fro with every new book that hits the market or every new fad end-time scheme introduced by some celebrity preacher. The popularity of the Revelation today is due to man's insatiable curiosity regarding the future, the interest in the unknown tomorrow, which characterizes the restless human soul. To claim that in the pages of the Revelation we can see the signs of the present times and thus predict the tomorrows; to pull back the veil and claim to lay bare the future is to attract an audience, for that is the nature of man — fascination with the future! And that is the thrust of the scores of books always appearing, almost all of them claiming to be able to unravel and accurately predict the great world events about to unfold. Man reveres the past, but he is intoxicated by the heady wine of prophecy. The very claim, then, of these many books — that they can reveal to us things which are soon to come — helps to explain the popularity of those books on the Revelation.

The most popular of the apocalyptic entrepreneurs undoubtedly is Hal Lindsey, the author of the sensationalist book *The Late Great Planet Earth* and other more recent titles. His combination of literalist biblical interpretation and outright scare tactics have resulted in gaining him an extremely wide readership. But — his predictions have continually needed readjustment in the light of deadlines which have come and gone without fulfillment! Also, according to the February/March 1980 "special report to the members of the 700 Club," entitled "Pat Robertson's Perspective," the beast of Revelation was to have been the Soviet Union, which he believed was about to attack Israel "to gain unrestricted access to Middle East oil plus a land bridge to the mineral wealth of Africa." The economy of Western Europe would be doomed by this and the world would then see the rise of a "counterfeit Messiah," a satanic figure "more malevolent than Adolph Hitler," who in 1980 was "approximately twenty-seven years old" and was being groomed for his sinister task. His nightmarish seven-year reign is the time of the "Great Tribulation," which supposedly will come to an end with the second coming of Christ, who will destroy the Antichrist at the battle of Armageddon. I do not hesitate to tell you that all such speculation, which purports to unravel the immediate future of world events out of the prophecies of the book of Revelation, are doomed to failure. *None of them will come to pass!* Church history is full of these schemes. Every generation, from the early church to the present, has been impacted by prophecies of that sort. I could write page after page, and go on and on, about all the end-time predictions that have been taught out of the book of Revelation that weren't worth the paper they were written on, and often times were proven wrong almost before the ink was dry on the paper!

I am wearied and my spirit vexed with all the newspaper eschatology and comic book theology, with everybody talking about everybody and everything **except what Jesus Christ is doing!** I've had my fill of preachers trying to figure out what the European Community, the Russians, the Chinese, the Israelis, the United Nations, the Illuminati, the Moslems, Saddam Hussein and everybody else is doing, while they have not the foggiest notion what the firstborn

Son of God is doing! Alive today on the face of this earth are more people than have lived in a hundred previous generations. Don't think for one moment, precious friend of mine, that God is going to walk away from the greatest harvest, the grandest opportunity to pour out His love and grace and make known His power and glory, released for man at Calvary. Don't let it even enter your mind that God is about to turn this old world over to the devil to tread down, torment, enslave, ruin, destroy, and damn into judgment and hell. The Antichrist is not a world political leader, the Antichrist is the false religious spirit in the church that has everybody looking at everybody and everything **except Jesus Christ!**

Go to these so-called "Prophecy Conferences" and all you hear is newspaper clippings, world events, and wild speculations about conspiracies of doom and gloom. My God! It's time to bow the knee, fall upon our faces, and rend our garments, until we receive a revelation out of the heavenly realms about the triumph of our Lord Jesus Christ in the earth in this great and glorious Day of the Lord! God has an elect people in the earth in this very hour who have done, and are doing, just that! We know by the spirit of wisdom and revelation that God is not up in heaven building some kind of Christian Resort for His saints while the world rushes madly onward to hell and damnation. Oh, no! Calvary was for real — the Lamb slain to take away the sin of *the world*, the sacrifice made to reconcile *all things* to God, the Christ who came to draw *all men* to Himself **will not fail!**

The book of Revelation is THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST. Revelation is a book that teaches who and what Jesus Christ is. It reveals Him in all of His glory, unveils Him in all of His fullness. You will find Jesus the Christ in every chapter of the book, for it is the revelation of Himself. When we read the message of the Revelation with a heart that seeks after Christ, we see in every page His face and hear from every line His voice. If we do not see Christ in the pages of the Revelation, then all we see is vanity. By drawing near to this book in the power of the Holy Spirit, we draw near to Christ. How beautiful that is! May the elect of God receive much grace to see more and more of Christ in the pages of this book!

The book of Revelation is the Sixth Gospel of Jesus Christ. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John wrote what they saw of Jesus Christ on the earth in the days of His flesh. Luke, in the book of Acts, wrote of the revelation of Jesus that came by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and throughout the in-part realm of the earnest of the Spirit during the church age. But John, in the book of Revelation, wrote what he witnessed of the full and complete revelation of Jesus Christ that comes to and through "him that overcometh." It is the revelation of Jesus Christ in sons upon mount Zion, in the Manchild on the throne, and in the New Jerusalem come down from God out of heaven. John the Revelator wrote what he saw of the ascended and glorified Christ manifesting out of the heavens of God's Spirit. This book releases the mind of Christ out of celestial realms. We must by the Holy Ghost get on the horse, put our feet in the stirrups, take hold of the reins and ride through this book experientially in the anointing from on High. We must be *in the Spirit on the Lord's day* to understand it, just as John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day to receive it. And when we do — we see *Jesus!*

Walk in the Spirit of the Lord, and you'll see Jesus,
Walk in the Spirit of the Lord, you'll see the King;
Walk in the Spirit of the Lord, and you will find Him:
He's resurrected in His body, He lives in me!

As dew distilling from the heavens comes the revelation of Jesus Christ from every page of John's vision. It is the drama of God's great plan of the ages wrought out first in the saints, then in the nations, and finally in all the vast creations of God. Everything is viewed from the

divine perspective. It is not the history of Satan's activity in men, but the all-conquering power of God's Christ! It is the *spiritual drama* of Father's dealings in our lives.

In chapter one John gets his first view of the exalted Christ. He sees Him not with the hair, eyes, hands, feet, voice and clothing of the prophet of Galilee. Now he hears a voice as the sound of many waters and, turning to see the voice, he sees God's Christ, God's complete Christ, Head and body, dressed in the garments of a king-priest, with hair like a lamb, eyes of fire, his countenance as the brightness of the noonday sun, with a two-edged sword flashing out of His mouth, and feet like glowing brass.

In chapters two and three John sees the Christ in the midst of the seven churches, representing the whole church realm throughout the present age while God is calling out and forming a people for His purpose. And it's not a pretty sight — for as well as faith and love and patience and good works and the word of the Kingdom, there is also carnality, sin, heresies, apostasy, ceremonialism, false prophets, fleshly control, satanic activity, lukewarmness and abominations of every kind. Who can deny that this has been precisely the history of the church world for all of the past 2,000 years!

In chapter four John sees a door standing open in the heavens. With holy astonishment he beheld an open heaven and a voice bidding him to "come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter" — after the candlestick realm! John was invited *spiritually* to ascend from the horse and buggy age into the space age! That, I know, is the testimony of a vast company of saints in this generation who are journeying from the natural to the spiritual realm. We have heard within our spirit the voice John heard on Patmos in that long ago, and standing in the midst of the seven-churches-realm we have turned to see a glory high above the candlestick realm, even the surpassing glory of Christ promised to *him that overcometh*. Do not our hearts rejoice within us, for we have *seen* the opened heavens, we have *seen* in the heavens of God's Spirit a throne set, we have *seen* One sitting upon the throne, and the sovereignty and glory of God's Kingdom realm has shed its transforming light upon our earth, dispelling the mists of natural understanding and religion, making us glad partakers of the mind of Christ, raising us up into the heavenly places *in Christ Jesus!*

The book of Revelation reveals the centrality of Jesus Christ upon the throne of the universe and upon His throne within our hearts. It gives us centeredness. It gives us something to build our life around. It gives us our proper orbit in the heavens of God's Spirit. In 400 B.C. the philosophers and scientists thought the earth was flat, and the planets were wandering stars. They had no comprehension of any order of the universe. It was in 340 B.C. that Aristotle first introduced the concept that there was order in the universe and that the earth was the center of the universe. He saw the sun and the stars as lights in the canopy of the heavens that moved around the earth. But for 1600 years they struggled to make sense out of the times and seasons with any predictability. Then, about 400 years ago, Copernicus discovered that the sun is the center of our solar system. As this knowledge expanded it gave stability and predictability to all the events on earth that are controlled by the order of the heavens.

If one does not have the right center, his life will be out of order and out of orbit. There are people who have their job, business, or money as the center of their life. There are others who have their husband, their wife, or their children as the center of their life. Some have amusement and pleasure as the center of their life. Many Christians have their church, their pastor, or their ministry as the center of their life. Some in this Kingdom walk even have "revelation" as their center! Men have different things as their center, but not HE who sits upon the throne! Then all it takes is for their center to be shaken, and their whole world falls apart —

their orbit becomes erratic, world's collide, and destruction overtakes them. All it takes is for their *center* — the preacher — to be caught in adultery or a homosexual act; they lose their job, their business goes under, their spouse leaves them, their children get into drugs and crime, or are tragically killed in an accident, and their lives go out of orbit, emotionally and spiritually they fall apart, go haywire, and self destruct. But when the resurrected, ascended, glorified, exalted Christ upon the throne of our hearts is truly our center, **no matter what comes or goes, we will not spin out of orbit!** When the mighty Christ within is the sovereign center of our lives, when the One who sits upon the throne sits upon the throne *within*, heaven kisses earth and heaven and earth intersect *within us!* And it is just there that there is a mighty REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

In the early chapters of the book of Genesis we read that Abel went out and took of the *firstling* of his flock to offer in sacrifice to God. "The *first* of his flock" indicates not merely the firstborn, but the very best, a lamb without spot or blemish. But Cain, his brother, took of the fruit of the *ground* for his offering. In Abel's sacrifice we find a beautiful picture of our Lord Jesus Christ, for Christ was the firstling of the flock, the firstborn of many brethren, the beginning of the creation of God, and out of the whole family of mankind He was the most excellent specimen, unsurpassed in purity of character, excellence of mind and body, and all attributes of divine nature. But then again we still have the same scenario of Cain, people are still offering to God out of the fruit of their human efforts, the best the flesh can produce. It is a great fact, however, that the best we can produce of ourselves is Adam, and old Adam is not good enough, he's not acceptable. In the living out of the life of sonship, which is the life of Christ, we are not talking about modifying the carnal mind, we're not talking about overhauling Adam. The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be! You can make Adam memorize as much scripture as you can, go to church every Sunday, sing in the choir, learn all the doctrines, do every kind of good work, lay the law on him and force him to act like a saint, but he's still not acceptable in the sight of God. Just as the dog returns to his vomit, and the hog to his wallowing, so the corruption of the Adam man will eventually break out, revealing him to be exactly who he really is. Sonship is not about modifying the behavior of the *old man*, the man of earth. It's about putting on the life of Christ, the firstling of the flock, a new creation in the image and likeness of God! Don't struggle, dear one, with old Adam with his weaknesses, failures, limitations and corruption. Give yourself to the *putting on of Christ* and the *more you put Him on* the more the Adamic nature will disappear as the snow before the noonday sun.

These beautiful representations of divine truth appear in the opening chapters of Genesis and follow through all the wonderful types and shadows of the Old Testament. The Word of God is replete with pictures of Christ — in Genesis He is the seed of the woman. In Exodus He is the lamb whose blood is on the door post. He's the manna that fell in the wilderness, He's the rock that was smitten. In Leviticus He is our great High Priest. In Numbers He is the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. He's the glory over the mercy seat, and He's the mercy seat as well! In Deuteronomy He is the prophet like unto Moses. In Joshua He's our heavenly Commander who is going to take us across this Jordan of death to old Adam and into our inheritance in the Kingdom of God. He is, furthermore, the ark in the middle of the river, He's the ram's horn that's blown to introduce us to the beginning of our inheritance in Jericho, where you don't even have to fight in the battle, all you have to do is blow on the ram's horn, march around the city, and send up a loud shout. All you have to do is sound forth the message that comes from the throne of God, march forward in the consciousness of the presence and covenant of God, and then shout the victory, and God will give you the city! It's not based on you and me, my beloved, it's rooted in HIM, and HE is the one who will lead us into the fullness of our inheritance in God!

Everywhere in the word of God, matters not where you go, **it is a revelation of Jesus Christ!** There are thousands of experiences of the people of Israel with their journeys, their battles, their kings, their priesthood, their temple, their offerings, their laws, their rituals and infinitely more in which the work and glory of God's Christ is shown forth. So why is it, when we get to the book of Revelation and read where the Holy Spirit says, "This is the revelation of Jesus Christ," the preachers then proceed to preach **everything but Jesus!**

It never ceases to amaze me that people read the Bible and never get a glimmer of these mysteries. The reason the Holy Spirit arranged for the book of Revelation to become the last book in the Bible is so that after you have finished reading the other 65 books you should have at least an idea of what some of the types are about, so that when you get over to the book of Revelation and read about a temple being measured, you won't be over in the Middle East somewhere carrying around a measuring stick! Over the past several years a number of people have sent me books and letters and they are all excited because men are raising red heifers to take over to the land of Israel to sacrifice for the purification of the priesthood. I see them as they read these reports and get all excited about these red heifers. As Lynn Hiles has said, I, too, want to shake them and say to them, "If your theology brings you to the place where you go back to outward temples made with hands, and the ashes of red heifers, and the blood of bulls and goats — *somewhere you missed the point!* There are few things that I will argue with anyone about, but I tell you, if your theology ends with the blood and ashes of bulls and heifers, someone has hoodwinked you and pulled the wool over your eyes! If you think the blood of red heifers will ever purify a priesthood to serve in a temple in Jerusalem, or that some Antichrist will one day sit and reign from a Jewish temple, you haven't learned your ABC's of spiritual truth and divine revelation. I can hear the Holy Ghost saying, What! Are you *mad?* You mean to say that after 65 books of the Bible you *didn't get that point?*" "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for *ye are the temple* of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (II Cor. 6:16). "Him that overcometh will I make a *pillar in the temple* of my God, and he shall go no more out" (Rev. 3:12).

We might fill this whole article with illustrations of the futility and limitation of the natural mind in comprehending things spiritual, but that is not our purpose now. Our purpose now is to show that the book of Revelation is the revelation of Jesus Christ to, in, through, and as the glorious many-membered son of God! So many truths are in this hour quickened by the Spirit that it seems several lifetimes would be required to expound in depth upon them. It seems to me that for centuries our eyes have been kept holden to the truth and greatness of God's purpose in earth, in His people, and in the universe. We have diligently studied the scriptures, burning the midnight oil, pouring over musty volumes and reference works about the Bible, grasping with the natural mind the superficial, surface meaning, taking for granted that we understood what was written, yet missing completely the deep kernel of truth concealed within. There is no need to mourn this lack of understanding, for the great truth is that God never reveals anything to anybody until *He is ready* to reveal it, and He is never ready to reveal anything until the time has arrived for a people to appropriate and enter into that truth within themselves, becoming partakers of, participators in, and the very manifestation of that which He is prepared to accomplish.

This is nowhere more true than it is in regard to the book of Revelation! George Hawtin penned words that are still instructive for all today who follow on to know the fullness of God. "No, we need not worry about our ignorance of things. Our only concern should be that when God does send us light that *we receive it*, for if we reject it, the light we have becomes darkness and we can understand nothing. The moment the Spirit of God begins to shed light on a truth, it is time

to begin to ask Him to instruct us in it. Do not submit God's revelation to the criticism of some dead church member or preacher, for they like the birds of the air will steal away the seed of the truth before it has a chance to sprout or take root within you. We are looking for the *unveiling* of the sons of God. We are looking for the *revelation* of Jesus Christ. The revelation will reveal what is hidden. The unveiling will reveal what has been kept veiled. As the lightning flashes forth from inky clouds, so the manifestation will disclose that which has been hidden in darkness. 'Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.'" — end quote.

The prophetic word of the Lord is **perceptive to the Initiated**. The book of Revelation is God's unique deposit of **ultimate truth**. There is no part of scripture richer or more bounteous in rewards for those who hear and see by the spirit. It is a garden of flowers and nuts, a jewelry box of wondrous pearls and dazzling diamonds. It is a vast and varied landscape of the realm of earth, the depths of the sea, and the glory of the heavens of God's Spirit, filled with beauty and grandeur, the horizon of which is fringed with the bright dawning of eternal Day. Here, and here alone, we can see the real scope and magnificence of God's working and purposes in His sons and in His kingdom. Here, and here alone, we can trace God's redemptive, reconciliative, and restorative plans to their ultimate consummation, and behold the depth and power of the counsels of His love. At every step there is something to encourage and instruct God's elect as we pass through our present trials, testings, purgings, and dealings on to the glory of *manifested sonship*.

Consider this, dear saint of God — if the limits of our earthly knowledge can be extended and increased by the study of rocks and bones, and beasts, and birds, and stars, how much more profitable in our spiritual life will be the enlightened understanding of those heavenly, divine things set forth in the book of Revelation in the prophetic language of voices, seals, trumpets and vials; of suns, moons and stars; of beasts, scorpions, dragons and colored horses; of horns, crowns, thrones, rainbows and glassy seas; of angels, thunders, lightnings, arks and temples; of earthquakes, meteors, fires, odors, olive trees and candlesticks; of lewd women and chaste women, of a Manchild on a throne, of a great city of evil and a beloved city coming down out heaven full of the glory of God. All these things sound very wonderful: but what do they really mean? Can we unravel the story? Can we decipher the strange symbols? Can we unlock the treasures of this book? And what does it mean to us in our journey into sonship in this great Day of the Lord? As in the natural world we must have eyes to see the beauties around us, so in the spiritual world of God's kingdom it is the Holy Spirit's illuminating power that sheds upon our pathway the light of the heavenly realm. My heart sings a thousand hallelujahs, for this is the hour of THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

There is no benefit in any knowledge if it merely builds your intelligence, satisfies your curiosity, or inflates your ego. Hear me! I am neither writing nor teaching for the purpose of merely increasing knowledge, of simply putting *facts* into men's heads. If that was all we could accomplish, I would forever lay down my pen today. It's not that we shouldn't have knowledge, but the point of the knowledge is to define in understandable terms the deeper and higher reality of our relationship with God and the working of His purpose within our lives. Knowledge for the sake of knowledge is vain, pointless, and powerless. "Knowledge puffeth up," the apostle pointedly wrote. To fill our heads with mere information will bloat us like the pompous frog, allowing us to croak loudly, but accomplish nothing. The word that will transform us in this hour does not come by the seeing of the outer eye or the hearing of the outer ear. But just as a warhead is carried by a missile to its target, so is the living word of the Lord borne by that which is communicated in the outward as a written, spoken, or acted word, borne to pierce into the innermost part of our being, that we may be quickened by the spirit of that word in the

deepest part of our life. If we receive that word only in our mind, if it never penetrates by the Spirit into our heart as a living power, then it is just knowledge and will never bear any fruit in our experience.

There are levels to understanding the word of God. There is the plain and literal surface meaning; there is the symbolic, figurative, or representative meaning; there is the spiritual or mystical meaning; and these meanings are on an ascending scale in that order. The highest of all meanings is the spiritual meaning, for that is where we meet and touch and experience the reality of God who *is Spirit*. The beloved apostle John referred to these three levels of truth in these significant words: "I write unto you, *little children*, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake...I write unto you, *young men*, because ye have overcome the wicked one...I write unto you, *fathers*, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning" (1 Jn. 2:13). It is the same word, but on different levels to each realm. The word of God will meet you at a different place depending upon where you are in the progression of your spiritual development from babes to young men to fathers. And one can tell where people are in their spiritual stature by the level of the word they are feasting upon! The called-out elect of the Lord today is able to appropriate the truth of God in higher and higher dimensions of reality as we grow up into Christ in all things! We are continually thrust into deeper applications and experiences of God's living word by the renewing of our minds from realm to realm!

Praise God for the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation! It is entirely different from all other books. It is altogether a new book — everything is new! It is a revelation from the Throne! It is a book that carries us beyond the church age! It is a book of Ultimates! Just as the book of Genesis is the book of beginnings, so is the Revelation the book of consummations! In this book is revealed a *new name* (nature), a *new song* (revelation, message), a *new Jerusalem* (people), a *new heaven* (government), a *new earth* (order, expression), and finally it is proclaimed, "Behold, I make A-L-L T-H-I-N-G-S NEW!" (Rev. 21:5). Hallelujah! The whole purpose of God in this book is to declare the eternal passing of all that is old, and the establishment of ALL THAT IS NEW.

In addition, every utterance to the body of Christ in this book is the utterance of the seven-fold Spirit of God. It is always the Spirit who is speaking! "He that hath an ear, let him hear **what the Spirit saith** to the churches" (Rev. 2:7). Seven times in chapters two and three we read that it is the Spirit who is speaking to the churches. "Yea, saith the Spirit" (Rev. 14:13). How different from the prophecies of the prophets who through the ages have prophesied, "Yea, my people, thus saith the Lord..." And how different from the writings of the apostles in their epistles to the churches! "This I (Paul) say" (1 Cor. 7:6), or "I (Peter) exhort" (1 Pet. 5:1). Here in this superlative book of Revelation it never says, "Thus saith the Lord," or "This I say." Rather, it is, "The Spirit saith, the Spirit saith, the Spirit saith!" Seven times — the number of completion and perfection — the admonition sounds forth, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." Why is this repeated seven times? Because of the seven-fold Spirit! He who hears the seven-fold Spirit will be an overcomer! He who overcomes will be a son! He who is a son shall inherit all things! He who inherits all things receives the fullness of the seven Spirits of God! Oh, the wonder of it!

Because the seven-fold Spirit is bestowed upon the overcomers, eventually the entire book is concluded in this way: "And the Spirit *and* the bride say..." (Rev. 22:17). We read in the beginning of this book that the Spirit is speaking to the churches. But by the end of the book, through the dealings, quickenings, purgings and processings of the Spirit, the soul and spirit of the elect have been brought into union, the masculine nature of the regenerated spirit has wooed and won the affections and obedience of the feminine nature of the soul, and the

marriage of the Lamb has come, for His wife has made herself ready. I shall not attempt to develop this thought at this time, for that is not our purpose now, but the Spirit and Bride have BECOME ONE — they speak together! They speak with one voice! The Spirit and the Bride in this passage are a compound subject. The two have been integrated — the two have become one within God's elect. God is making us as overcomers one with the seven Spirits, and the seven Spirits are being fully inworked into the overcomers. This is God's great work! It is experientially taking place within those who follow the Lamb in this great Day! This is the consummation of His eternal purpose within us!

The book of Revelation is a book that is written for kings and priests. It is not intended for the world to understand, neither will it be understood by carnal Christians. To be a king-priest doesn't mean that we will strut around in splendid robes and all who meet us on the street will bow their heads and genuflect, acknowledging that we are great and mighty ones. God is not interested in carnal recognition, neither are those to whom is given the kingly spirit and the priestly nature. At the very outset the book is addressed to a peculiar class of people: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto **His servants** things which must shortly come to pass" (Rev. 1:1). The term "servants" here does not indicate *servants* as contrasted with *sons*, but *sons who are servants* even as was the firstborn among many brethren, our Lord Jesus Christ. There has never been a greater servant than King Jesus! "Behold, *my Servant* shall deal prudently, He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men: so shall He sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at Him; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider" (Isa. 52:13-15). What a *servant*!

When you read the book of Revelation and the book begins to *speak to you*, that is a good indication that it is *for you*! The book cannot and does not speak to the individual it is not intended for. Even then, the understanding of the book does not come all at once. You don't open the book at chapter one, verse one, following on to verse two, three, and so on, trying to figure out the meaning of each verse as you go. If you think the message of the book will instantaneously be revealed in your spirit by that method, each event systematically falling into place, you will be greatly disappointed. It doesn't work that way! As you seek the Lord in the book different parts will speak to you that are for you at that appointed time. The book will be revealed **in your experience** as you grow and progress into the stature of sonship to God. The wisdom of man is *foolishness with God*. The wisdom of man would seek an understanding of the book of Revelation verse by verse in the letter of the Word, but the wisdom of God teaches it **experience by experience**. Don't try to understand it, but pray for obedience, that you might apprehend the ways of the Lord. Seek that your mind and heart (soul) will come into that relationship with God where the Spirit of God in your spirit can reveal. Then the book will commence to speak to you out of your relationship with the Father! Instead of mere head knowledge, the message of the book will begin to apply to your life in the power of kingship and priesthood.

Most of the book is rooted in the symbology of the Old Testament. You will find there the temple, the sacrifices, the worshippers, the ark of the covenant, the candlestick, the city Jerusalem, mount Zion, the prophets, the priesthood, the king and the throne, the archangel, the serpent, trumpets, feasts, and many more. Now by the spirit of wisdom and revelation all these things begin to relate to *your experience, your life, and your walk in God*. You cross the thresholds of spiritual reality where all that was natural and external to Israel in the Old Testament now becomes spiritual and internal as the revelation of Jesus Christ in the elect. The symbols of the Revelation appear to be highly complicated, and they are to the carnal

mind! How crude and presumptuous is the darkened carnal mind that would lift its voice in pretentious wisdom to *understand the deep mysteries of God!* We must consider such mysteries with reverence and godly fear, remembering above all else that our Father has willed that we be *partakers of His mind*. I have no hesitation in saying that just as surely and truly as the mind of the Father dwelt in the firstborn Son, Jesus Christ, so also that same mind that dwelt in Him will dwell in all that blessed company now becoming sons of God. The deep mysteries of God and the unfathomable wisdom and knowledge hid in Jesus Christ cannot be discovered by the natural man or the carnal mind, but God *reveals them unto us by His Spirit*. The secret then is not in studying, burning the midnight oil, pouring over vast volumes searching out information and understanding, but the divine secret that unlocks all the divine depths of divine things is *walking in the Spirit and hearing what the Spirit saith*. The same Spirit that *inspired* the book *reveals* the book, opening the precious storehouse of truths of the Kingdom of Heaven to the sincere and seeking heart.

The visions of the book of Revelation are well-ordered and each of the keys to the book testifies of itself. The idea that the body of Christ is a company of kings and priests, so graphically set forth in chapters four and five, suggests that our ministry is to bring people out of an old world order into a new world. Noah was commissioned by God to bring his family out of an old world into a new world. He passed through the destruction of the flood, stepped out of the ark, and established a new age and a new order in the earth. When we come to the book of Revelation there is so much that looks like judgment, destruction and retribution upon mankind and the earth — the grass, the trees, the rivers, the seas, the mountains and valleys, the cities, nations and peoples — but these are mere figures for the passing away of a *realm of life, a sphere of existence and a state of being* — old Adam with all the systems, order, society, culture, institutions and ways of the *fleshly mind and life*. The Spirit is speaking of the coming into being of a new heavens and a new earth *within ourselves*. God is raising up in the earth today a new people with a new mind, nature and heart, a new spirit, a new temple of God, a new order of priesthood and kingship, a new habitation of God, a new revelation of God, a new city of God, a new government of God, a new order of God within men. Hallelujah!

The book of Revelation is *the revelation of Jesus Christ*. The word "revelation" means to *unveil, uncover or take the cover off*. The *unveiling* of Jesus Christ — that's what is happening in God's elect! That is what is taking place in the earth today! That's what the book of Revelation is all about! As that which has been hidden in Jesus Christ is revealed, uncovered, brought out into the open and exhibited, the glory of Jesus Christ is shining forth from His body in all the earth. Christ is *in us!* The revelation of Jesus Christ must be *within us!* Christ in you IS the hope of glory, the apostle wrote. There is no *hope* for creation in a rapture. There is no *hope* of glory to be revealed in the earth through dying and going to heaven. There is no *hope* for a new and bright future for the world in understanding world events. There is no *hope* for the raising up of Christ in our lives by a Great Tribulation out there upon the nations of earth. Oh, no! Our only hope is *Christ in us*. Until we grasp the eternal significance and transcendent importance of this wonderful truth, the carnal mind and its silly interpretations of the book of Revelation will lie and cheat and deceive. CHRIST IN US is our hope of glory! And it is the world's only hope! Furthermore, God has now delivered His true elect from the foolish notions of the church systems that God's glory has something to do with some far-off heaven somewhere, streets of gold, walls of jasper, gates of pearl or fluttering around in white nightgowns playing harps! Glory is nothing more nor less than the expression of God's nature through a human vessel. That's what glory is! Christ in us is the *hope* of God expressing Himself through us to creation.

The book of Revelation gives us the keys that unlock the necessary events within ourselves to bring forth this manifestation of God. Before there can ever be a new heaven and a new earth in all the power of them there will be some mighty dealings of God that will burn up the grass — those surface coverings and masks in our lives; they will destroy the trees — those deeply rooted things that grow out of our earthly nature; they will shake the mountains — those high and exalted kingdoms we have built up from our carnal minds; they will turn the seas to blood until every living thing in them dies — the raging passions, surging emotions, relentless, unsatisfiable desires, and foaming agitations of the Adam nature which we must pass through to get to the other side. When John said that he beheld and there was no more sea, he meant that there was no longer anything within us preventing the pure and full expression of Christ in our earth. The reason there is a new heaven and a new earth is not because there is coming a great cataclysmic destruction in the outer world, but rather, all the walls and barriers that religion has built up in us, that have separated God from the earth, are to be obliterated so that there shall be an expression of God's Spirit through us to creation. Religion has taught people that they have to die to obtain God's fullness, while others have taught that we will fly away to some far-off heaven somewhere to get it while the world suffers the horrors of the damned and untold billions of humanity are consigned to eternal torture in the unquenchable fires of hell. We have been told a thousand things that aren't true and have been used, beaten, threatened, controlled, bled of our money, time and peace, brain washed and deceived by the carnality of the harlot system that calls itself the church. Oh, how men have been tossed to and fro upon the violent waves of the sea of the doctrines, laws, methods, schemes, promotions, gimmicks, deceptions, fraud and foolishness of the church systems! Thank God, the day is coming when there will **be no more sea!** And for many of us, blessed be His name, it has already become a glorious fact that within ourselves there **is no more sea!**

God has in these days powerfully spoken to His elect that there is an inner working of His Spirit that leads to the full expression and manifestation of *His glory*. There must be a new heaven because heaven represents the realm that is invisible, the dimension of spirit and the mind of Christ. We can never change our outer world until we change our inner world. There will never be a new earth (visible expression) until there is a new heaven (inner, invisible reality), for one cannot change what he is outwardly until he has been changed in what he is inwardly. And that's where vast multitudes of the Lord's people are missing it. They are trying to obey some set of rules, the traditions of religion, be faithful to the programs and please the church which makes them appear godly, but works no change or transformation of the nature. These things give no life nor do they in any way help us grow up into the power of the life of the Son of God.

Ask a crop farmer what he does, and he'll say, "I'm a grain farmer," or, "I raise cucumbers," or, "I grow grapes." No farmer sums up his work by saying, "I plow up weeds," or, "I get rid of bad bugs." Although farmers do those things, their main focus isn't what they plow up or get rid of; it's what they produce. God is a farmer! He is working to produce a good crop in His people! We sometimes think of God only in terms of what He is against, but that's a mistake. Of course, God is against carnality and various sins and works to rid us of them, but His main focus is PRODUCING A RICH HARVEST OF CHRIST'S NATURE WITHIN US. For all who are in step with God's Spirit, that is their main focus too!

What's the use of being against things if we're not *for* anything? If a farmer plows under every weed but doesn't plant good seed, and properly care for and nourish them, he won't get a harvest. In fact, if he plows but doesn't plant, he'll soon have more weeds than ever! Once he plows, a good way to prevent more weeds from taking over is to plant good plants. So, too, God has planted within His chosen elect the good seed of the Christ life and the book of Revelation is the symbolical, illustrative, figurative, metaphorical, and allegorical

Chapter 2

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

continued

The book of Revelation is without doubt one of the most important and wonderful books ever written. It is a work of art, marvelous art, divine art. This remarkable book is written in the form of a drama and is skillfully divided into seven acts with seven scenes each. Scenes of glory surpassing fable are unveiled before us in this book. No other book takes us at once, and so irresistibly, into another sphere. Long vistas are here opened before us that carry us into other worlds and urge upon us the realities of our call into the high places of God's Spirit and purpose. There is one revelation and one only in the whole book — *the* revelation of Jesus Christ. It is not the book of Revelations as many refer to it. The simple adding of an "s" totally distorts the true meaning of the book! It is not many revelations. Although many things are said in this book, there is only one thing that God is *revealing*, and that one thing is JESUS CHRIST! John did not reveal many revelations, though there were many visions shown him and many things spoken to him. All together made but *one revelation*.

I further exhort all who read these lines to never call this book the Revelation of Saint John. It is in no sense the Revelation of John! John's part in this is that of a third party. The revelation is given to Jesus Christ by the Father as His very own state of being — Jesus *is* the revelation of the Father! The glory of this revelation of God in Christ was communicated to John through a very wonderful messenger, who was so wonderful that he showed John all these marvelous truths and realities in the form of dramatic symbols. It is a powerful series of spiritual revelation unrolled in pictures which John saw in spirit, and which he recorded, and to which he was led by the *prophetic spirit*. The messenger who showed John these things is none other than the *spirit of prophecy* which is the *testimony of Jesus!* (Rev. 19:10). This book is preeminently the revelation of Jesus Christ, for that is precisely what the true title of the book is!

The book opens up the unveiling of Jesus Christ in His person, in His church, in His sons, and in His kingdom. The book can be very confusing unless we find some sense of direction and guidance in it. To help in our meditations, let us take a look at the word "revelation" itself. It is more than a book in the Bible! It is more than a vision given to a man nearly two thousand years ago! Eventually it becomes an *inner discovery*, an activity within our very own consciousness, in the reality of our own experience, and *this* is the revelation that we are concerned with! It is not intended to be an outline of outer-world events because it is the revelation of a *person*, the God-man, the firstborn of many brethren, the beginning of the creation of God, even our Lord Jesus the Christ! Within the lives of those called to sonship Jesus Christ is now being raised up unto a revelation in and out from our inner-world, and I do not hesitate to tell you that it is from *there* that the prophecy will be fulfilled! All of creation groans, waiting for this glorious unveiling of THE SON in THE SONS!

One of the reasons that the book of Revelation has been so misunderstood is because men have thought it was the unveiling of external events that are in the future. It is not the unveiling

of world events but the unveiling of a Person who has not yet been seen in all of His glory, beauty and majesty! Today He is like a statue that has the veil put over it, awaiting the day when the veil shall be removed and He shall be seen in all of His glory. Another reason people do not understand the book is because they read it looking for "a revelation." When it is "revelation" we are seeking in place of the REVELATOR, we will no doubt get our revelation but will miss the reality altogether! It is not a revelation, it is **THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!** Should I send you a book titled SPANISH MADE SIMPLE, how many would expect to read in that book how to cook Hungarian Goulash? If the title says SPANISH MADE SIMPLE, what will you expect to learn out of this book? Why, *how to speak Spanish*, of course! Since the book of Revelation is *the revelation of Jesus Christ*, why is it that when theologians teach from it they teach about the beast, the mark of the beast, the antichrist, world wars, great tribulation, woes, sorrows, pestilences and devastations, but they never seem to come to THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST! Ah, yes, there are beasts and woes and tribulation in the book, but these are not the message — they are merely the things *exposed* by the unveiling of Himself — exposed to be dealt with and brought to naught! And sometimes they are the very instruments used to bring forth the unveiling!

When you uncover a thing you don't have to bring it from some other place, you only need to remove the cover, because what is under it is already present. This book reveals to our wondering spirits that Jesus Christ doesn't have to come crashing down through the clouds from outer space in order to be revealed! He is covered up, His glory is concealed in this world by a fleshly, religious mind; His grace and mercy are concealed by a harsh, legalistic mindset that thunders right out of mount Sinai, and is full of death; His love is concealed by false church doctrines of divine vindictiveness, judgment, damnation and eternal torture for billions in hell fire; His righteousness is concealed by human good works, self effort, and outward laws and regulations; His truth and purpose are concealed by natural, carnal understanding; His power is concealed by soulish religious exercises, rituals, ceremonies, programs and promotions. To be *carnally minded* is death, but to be *spiritually minded* is life! The Lord is the Spirit! The Lord, the Spirit, dwells within us! To uncover the real Christ has nothing to do with Christ coming from heaven, or us going to heaven — He must be UNCOVERED WITHIN US! "But... it pleased God, who *separated me* from my mother's womb (the old-order religious system), and called me by His grace, *to reveal (unveil) His Son in me...*" (Gal. 1:15-16).

The veil that hides Him is upon the mind. It is not something apart from us or away from us. The veil must be removed from where the Christ is concealed from us within ourselves, for we are the body of Christ, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. The Lord is not hidden in some far-off heaven somewhere, He has already come within us, for Christ is in us, except we be reprobates — counterfeits (II Cor. 13:5). Those who are walking with the Lord in the light of this new Day know that it is not Jesus coming down from heaven that shall reveal Him, but the uncovering of the full reality within ourselves of Him who *is our life*. The veil has been upon our minds, when we saw Him we looked through all the trappings of religion, the traditions, creeds, doctrines, forms, and concepts of men who know Him only after the flesh. But when you know Christ after the flesh, *as He was* two thousand years ago, you can never see Him *as He is*.

Every believer should seek that God would open his eyes to see the glorious Christ of God *as He is*. The sad truth is that the hope of the Christians in the church systems today is to again see Christ *as He was*. They cannot conceive that they can see Him, that they can look upon His face, unless they see the form of the man who walked the shores of Galilee. Like Thomas the doubter, they stubbornly refuse to believe that it is the Lord unless they can see the nail prints in His hands, thrust their hand into His side, and gaze intently into His piercing blue eyes. Not having this Jesus of Nazareth to see and know, they focus on the baby in the

manger. But if you return to that every December 25, and make Him a baby again, you will *never know Him as He is*. Christmas is an invention of the carnal Babylonian religious system! Furthermore, it is a *commercial* season, sponsored and kept alive by the heaviest retail advertising campaigns of the year. The so-called "Christmas spirit" is **created** each year, not to honor Christ, but to **sell merchandise!** That is not the path that leads to sonship. It is the path that leads to spiritual foolishness and spiritual stalemate and infancy.

How many who read these lines would appreciate if your friends and loved ones, would every year on your birthday, put you back in the bassinet, dressed in baby clothes, and remember you as an infant? What if every birthday was a celebration of your infancy instead of a celebration of the stature you have attained during the years *since* you came into the world. Think of it! I do not doubt that most of us would be offended, if not *incensed*, by such a celebration! Yet religion plays out this drama every December 25 of the baby Jesus in the manger all dressed in swaddling clothes, and *that is the level they know Him on*. Christians of nearly all traditions today relate to Jesus on the purely human level. They know Him not as He appeared in glory to Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road, nor yet in His glory as the resurrected, ascended, glorified Lord who lives and walks in His body upon the earth.

When Jesus trod the pathways of earth He called twelve men to be His disciples. They followed Him, heard His wonderful teaching, saw the mighty signs and wonders, and enjoyed communion with Him as no other man or woman on earth. Yet Jesus said to these men, "*No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him*" (Mat. 11:27). Surely these men knew the Son! No, not at all! Not one of them knew the Son of God. "*No man knoweth the Son, but the Father.*" These men knew **Jesus**, but they did not know the **Son of God**. Even in the days of His flesh He could only be known after the Spirit! To know Jesus after the flesh did not qualify as knowing Him at all. One could walk with Him, talk with Him, eat with Him, share His most intimate human experiences, and yet never *know Him!*

It was many years afterward that one of these disciples, John the beloved, was granted **the revelation of Jesus Christ**. Only then did John truly see Him as He is! Through the book of Revelation John has shared, in the limited measure any writing can convey reality, that revelation of Jesus Christ. What he really has communicated to us is the *way*, the *manner*, the *process* by which the revelation of Jesus Christ takes place. But it must become our very own *personal experience* just as it did to John. This revelation doesn't come out of the manger, this revelation doesn't come out from the shores of blue Galilee, this revelation doesn't come from the resurrected One who appeared for forty days to His astonished disciples, this revelation doesn't come from the pages of a book. A mere glimpse of this revelation came to Peter one day when Jesus asked, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" And Peter replied out of an illumination that burst forth from his spirit, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" In that one brief moment the veil came off of Peter's mind and he saw the man in front of him as He actually is. He glimpsed in that inspired moment the glory of His sonship in all that it means. It was A REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

After the Lord Jesus ascended into the heavens, He remained hidden behind the cloud that had received Him on the mount of Olives. When He came back in mighty spirit-power on the day of Pentecost to indwell His people on earth, He still, for the most part, has remained hidden behind the veil of the carnal mind, behind the selfhood of our natural life, and behind the traditions and forms of religion. But on Patmos, to John, there comes THE REVELATION to unveil Him! From this we understand that all that pertains to this writing of John is to reveal, to uncover Jesus Christ. All that has been hidden or obscured to our thinking, consciousness,

understanding or experience of Him is to be plainly grasped and made a glorious and eternal reality. As the scenes depicted in the book are *experienced* truly and spiritually *within our lives*, Jesus Christ emerges within our reality demonstrating in and through us the fullness of His nature, character, love, wisdom, power and abilities. Understood as the revelation of Jesus Christ in and through His body, immediately the book is changed from a prophecy of apocalyptic end-time events, to a progressive unfolding of the very life, victory and triumph of Christ in His elect and unto creation! With the increasing light of the Holy Spirit of Truth shining upon its pages, we are entering into more and more of its hidden truths, howbeit, we have much yet to learn of the full and complete vision. But be assured that in very truth every scene within the book, of the woes, thunders, trumpets, earthquakes, conflicts, vials, beasts, etc., in all their sundry manifestations, serve but one purpose, and contribute but to one end, namely, to bring forth THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST IN ALL THE SONS OF GOD.

As this revelation comes to its magnificent conclusion in this great Day of the Lord, HE shall stand revealed, uncovered, seen, touched, experienced, expressed and manifested unto the unbounded heavens! "We don't know what we shall become in the future. We only know that, if reality were to break through, we should reflect His likeness, for we should see Him as He really is!" (I Jn. 3:2, Phillips). *Reality shall break through!* And we shall be like Him! "Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you *at the revelation of Jesus Christ*" (I Pet. 1:13). Paul writes of "waiting for the coming (revelation) of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall confirm you unto the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 1:7-9). There is a grace that is brought to us by the revelation of our Lord, it is a grace which will climax all the processings and travail, bringing us into the ultimate realm of His glory — the fullness of His abundant life. God is faithful! He is confirming unto the end all those blessed ones who have received the call to separation unto Him, to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, to be conformed to His image, to put on His mind, to be sons who reign with Him in His kingdom. He has confirmed you, precious called one, unto full redemption of the purchased possession — complete salvation in spirit, soul and body — the unveiling of HIS LIFE!

The Greek word for revelation is, as I have mentioned previously, APOKALUPSIS. This word has been translated in the Bible by various English words such as lighten, revelation, manifestation, coming, appearing, and revealed. We can easily understand how the translators could use such a variety of word-meanings to describe the word APOKALUPSIS, but it was not really because APOKALUPSIS held various shades of meaning in the original tongue. To know the past of an individual helps us to understand him better. To know the life history of a word makes its present meaning clearer and more nearly unforgettable. In English, for instance, the word rostrum is defined as a place where one stands in giving a speech. But originally this Latin word meant "a bird's beak," such as the beak of a hawk or sparrow. But now this meaning does not even enter one's mind when he hears or reads the word. In the days when Rome was a world power naval vessels were constructed with long, sharp prows for ramming enemy ships. Because of the appearance, it came to be known as "the bird's beak," and this portion of the vessel was considered a trophy of war. The captured rostrum was taken to the Coliseum at the time a victorious commander went there to receive the acclaim of the people, and he would stand in the rostrum to receive his trophy and to give his speech.

The Greek word APOKALUPSIS is a derivative of APOKALUPTO. APOKALUPTO is a compound word composed of APO, meaning "off" or "away," and KALUPTO, meaning "to cover up." Thus APOKALUPSIS means to take the cover off, to uncover, unveil, reveal or disclose. It implies the drawing away or removal of everything that veils or hides, and therefore

it is always opposed to concealment or secrecy. I know experientially that the process to remove the things that prevent the life of Christ from shining forth in glory and power through our lives sometimes requires the heavy dealings of the Lord in severe purgings, deep prunings, extreme chastisements, uncompromising judgments and the blast of refining fires. God will make war against the carnal mind, God will make war against the religious mind, God will make war against our pride, selfishness, self-will, self-sufficiency and self-righteousness, God will make war against the flesh, the world and the devil in us, until He has melted all arrogance into humility, and all that is self has died in the bloody sweat and all-conquering cross of Christ which will never give up its redeeming power until all that stands between us and the purpose of God in our sonship has no more a name among the sons of God.

I warn you that the heights of sonship, the kingdom, and *all the fullness of God* are not attained by merely hearing about them. Neither are they inherently ours as a result of the "finished work" of Calvary. Calvary takes care of *your past*, but your future demands a heart-absorbing, soul-consuming quest. IF we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him! It has always been a vicious trait of man to want everything handed to him on a silver platter. Thousands love to hear about manifested sonship and reigning with Christ, but never raise a finger to attain because they expect it as another of God's gracious "gifts." Salvation is indeed a gift, and there are a great many wonderful gifts of God that are ours merely for the taking, but the *high calling* of God in Christ Jesus requires a *pressing toward the mark for the prize*. There is a world of difference between a *gift* and a *prize*! A gift is given because of the goodness of the giver, not because of the merit of the recipient. But to obtain a prize one must qualify. Oh yes, there are *qualifications* to be met for sonship and rulership in the kingdom of God! That is why we read in the Revelation again and again, "To him the *overcometh* will I give!" The "finished work" of Christ did not secure the throne for you, my beloved! Don't try to persuade me that all we need do is believe. If that were the case all of us would have been manifested sons of God a long time ago! It is *still* true that "whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, and *scourgeth every son* whom He receiveth" (Heb. 12:6). God does not scourge every sinner whom He saves — scourging is not a part of forgiveness and regeneration. One does not need to be scourged in order to receive what is freely given because of Calvary. But chastening, discipline, scourging, purging and refining *are* a vital part of the process of growing up into the character of God!

With these thoughts in mind we should better grasp the significance and meaning of the woes, earthquakes, burning mountains, hail storms, vials, and judgments in the book of Revelation! These are poured out upon men (Adam, flesh), upon the earth (carnality, souliness), upon the sea (wickedness), upon the rivers and streams (doctrines, creeds, philosophies, mind-sets), upon the beast (natural constitution), upon the harlot (religious systems, spirits), upon the mountains (strongholds, dominions, kingdoms within), and a number of other realms. You will understand a great truth when you understand that all of these things are as truly *within us* as they are without! These are the very things that must be purged and eradicated once and for all and completely from our lives if we are to share the glory of Christ's kingdom! And what earthquakes shake our lives as God brings His dealing hand upon the citadels of self and flesh and worldliness that dwarf and conceal the Christ-life within! What fires are ignited in our souls as the Lord comes to His temple and sits in His temple as a refiner's fire and as fuller's soap, purging and purifying His Royal Priesthood! What hailstones of a "hard word" fall from the heavens of God's Spirit into our land as He smashes our religious idols and all the things we treasure more than His will and way! Oh, yes! There is an *uncovering*, an *unveiling*, a *revelation* of Jesus Christ! "We greatly rejoice...that the trial of your faith...might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing (apokalupsis, disclosure, uncovering, revelation) of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:6-7). Prayerful pondering of this scripture is all that is needed to grasp the meaning of the honor and glory that shall be ours, not in being caught up into the starry

skies out of the trials, testings and provings which produce the honor and glory, but when He is UNVEILED TO THE WHOLE CREATION IN HIS MANY-MEMBERED BODY bringing deliverance from the bondage of sin, sickness, fear, pain, limitation and death to all men and all realms through the outflowing of His love, grace, glory and power.

THE UNVEILING OF THE SONS OF GOD

There is a wonderful act of God that transcends by far anything that has ever been known. It is the *unveiling* of the sons of God. Early in the opening verses of the Revelation we read that Christ "hath made us *kings and priests* unto God and His Father" (Rev. 1:6). As the revelation progresses with *the Christ* always as the central figure, we next find Him standing *in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks* with a special message and call to *the overcomers* out of these various churches. It is significant to note that in the letters to the seven churches hardly one promise is made to the churches themselves — the promises are made to *the overcomers*! To the overcomer He says, "I will write upon him *my new name*; he will walk *with me* in white; I will grant him to *sit with me in my throne*." Thus, in the unveiling of Jesus Christ, we also come to the UNVEILING OF THE OVERCOMER — those who *eat with Him* of the tree of life, *live with Him* free from corruption and death, *share with Him* a new name, *rule with Him* over the nations and all things, *walk with Him* clothed upon with the dazzling brightness of the light of God's glory, *dwell with Him* in the city and the temple of God, *stand with Him* on the pinnacle of mount Zion, *come with Him* to smite all nations with the irresistible sword of the living Word of God, and *sit with Him* upon the Father's throne from whence He rules over all the vastnesses of infinity for evermore! And so, through the book, again and again, we see this many-splendored unveiling — THE SON and the sons, THE OVERCOMER and the overcomers, THE LAMB and those with Him on mount Zion, THE WORD and they that are with Him who are called, chosen, and faithful, THE KING and those who reign with Him, THE HIGH PRIEST clothed in the priestly garment and those who are in Him made a kingdom of priests unto God.

There is coming a day — and it is the next major event of God's program of the ages — when all the glories of the Son of God will be revealed and manifested in the sons of God. As one has written, "Let us open our hearts that God may speak to us and show us what a son of God really is, for the *greater works* (Jn. 14:12) of which Jesus spoke are not to be performed by ordinary believers, but by **that vast family of sons** who are now nearing the hour of manifestation. They are that chosen company, selected from many ages, who through fires and furnaces of affliction have been brought into that same glorious **image of Jesus Christ**. These sons of God are **like Him**. They are **exactly** like Him. They are **in His image** (Rom. 8:29). They are **in His image and after His likeness**. They are so completely **sons of God**, and so completely **like Him**, so completely **born of Him**, so completely **of His mind and will** and **purpose** their one difference is that He (the blessed Jesus) **is the eldest in that vast family of sons** and they with Him are **the bridegroom, the last Adam in all His completeness**" — The Page.

With all emphasis I must declare that we are now hastening toward the hour of the long awaited *unveiling* of the sons of God! That is the word used in the Greek — "For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the *apokalupsis*, the unveiling, the revelation of the sons of God!" (Rom. 8:19). For millennia creation has groaned under the thralldom of sin, sorrow and death, and who among us does not in some measure groan with it even now? But our heavenly Father had a purpose wonderful and glorious beyond words to express, for He *in hope* subjected creation to futility, condemned it to frustration, placed it under the yoke of sin, pain, and death. His hope was that out of this realm He would bring forth sons — tried, tested,

proven sons — who out of the crucible of experience with all the negatives, would grow strong and bright and holy, overcoming all the darkness of this dread realm, to stand tall and victorious in the image and glory of their Father. They would be holy, not because they were created holy with no knowledge of sin and death, but out of their experience with sin and death would chose the wisdom and life of their Father, by it throwing off the shackles of weakness, waywardness, limitation, error and mortality. They would then know as God knows! They would understand the true nature of all things! They would perceive the deep mysteries of creation and redemption! They would become *incorruptible* in mind, heart and nature! These firstborn sons would be the *hope* of all creation! "For the creation itself *also* shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:21). And because God subjected creation to this gross material realm with all its sorrows *in hope* of His sons who would first overcome within themselves, and then deliver all creation, we read of that hope which springs perennial within the bosom of every man and all things, because it was placed there by the Creator, "the whole creation *waits expectantly* and *longs earnestly* for God's sons to be made known — waits for the revealing, the disclosing of their sonship!" (Rom. 8:19, Amplified).

Understood as THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, immediately the book is transformed from a history book into a *spiritual book* showing forth the victory and triumph of the Christ of God, Head and body. The saints have heard the term "apocalypse" and it conjures up ideas of the wrath and vengeance of God, tribulation, destruction, and the end of the world. Yet the word *apokalupsis* from which our English word "apocalypse" is derived, carries no negative connotation in the Greek! The whole book of Revelation is the Apocalypse that is so important to us! Whatever is happening, good or bad, sweet or painful, is a part of the unveiling of Jesus Christ! By that unveiling many things are made to appear in their true light. Thousands of God's elect who read these lines today see the church system for what it is — the harlot, Mystery Babylon the Great. Truly we have come to loathe the carnality, shame, self-righteousness, spiritual fornication, uncleanness, lewdness and wanton haughtiness of this corrupt system! Was it not the *light of the mind of Christ* arising within our lives that caused us to see *it as it is*? And oh, what struggles and dealings and strippings we passed through as God purged our hearts from the love of Babylon and our lives from its fleshly ways! What earthquakes shook our world, what hailstorms fell in our land, what fires of God burned in our souls! You see, beloved, the vengeance of God is not against His creation, nor is it against men of any nation, ethnicity, character, or religion. "God so *loved the world*." The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against every *evil* that pollutes, enslaves, distorts, and destroys His creation and men's lives! That is but one small example of what we see in the Revelation. By the pure and true revelation of Christ within our hearts many things are made to appear in their true light. That means that all the evil things which appear do so **because** of the true light, and in **that light** they are made to appear in their true character: JUST WHAT THEY ARE! It is the light of the Lamb which makes this so! As in the holy city, so throughout the book *the Lamb is the light thereof*. For He is the true light which lights every man, coming into the world.

Let me say again, as I may say a hundred times more, one can never understand correctly the book of Revelation so long as his eyes are fastened on events in the outer world. The understanding of "the beast" and "his image" and "his mark" comes only by the inner illumination that the Spirit brings. That is, they are revealed by the flooding light radiating forth from the indwelling Christ! In that true light of God all that is not born of God appears *as it truly is*, that it may be duly brought to judgment, dealt with and eradicated from our lives. The fiercest beast I have encountered in my years upon this earth is the beast of old Adam's nature, the carnal mind, the seed of the serpent slithering about within my very bosom. The heart of our natural life is *still* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know

it? How I praise God with joy unspeakable and full of glory for the penetrating light of God's Christ which uncovers the subtleness and deceitfulness of this wild beast, the bestial nature lumbering about in OUR EARTH.

It is not getting rid of the "old man" that enables us to blissfully live the Christ life. It is the unveiling of Jesus Christ as the glorious *light of life* that chases away the darkness of the carnal mind, exposing the flesh with all of its corruption that it may once and for all be dethroned from mind, heart and action. As the dawn dissolves the night, so the light and life which *Christ is* swallows up the darkness and death within us. The daylight *fills* the world just as truly as the night darkness ever did! Even so, the light of God shall fill the world, our world, and the world outside of us, as truly as the darkness of sin, fear and death has done. And when it is all over every creature in heaven, earth and hell shall have had a REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

Once we see clearly the great *spiritual principles* in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, the wars that take place, and all the judgments, vials, earthquakes, etc., begin to make *divine sense*! It is not unlike the conflicts that arise in a home as parents raise their children. There are problems, commotions, disciplines, and sometimes open warfare! There is also love, mercy, forgiveness, admonition, counsel, blessing and sacrifice. What makes it all worthwhile is the finished product — children that grow up with love and respect for their parents, and with purpose, maturity, ability, judgment, and responsibility in the world. God is raising up and bringing forth a new life in the land, a new creation in Him, a new family of sons. And what conflicts, chastisements, counsels, and corrections, with love, faithfulness and blessings, take place within us as the old passes away and all things are made new!

God makes war because He loves us. All that appears in the book of Revelation as destruction and devastation is but a picture of God's love, correction and instruction that is consuming the ignorance, self-will and foolishness within the heart of a child. The more you love your children the more you will meditate upon how to confront them and deal with them in order to change them from their immature and rebellious state of being to bring them to a higher and wiser state of being as mature and responsible citizens. Your purpose is not to destroy them, but to bring their childish ways into the captivity of obedience that leads to wisdom and knowledge. The childish mind sees instruction and correction as its enemy — the child will huff and puff and chafe under the chastisement, because in his inexperience and ignorance he cannot see the overall purpose. Children can't see why they have to go to bed, why they have to take a bath, why it is necessary to share, why they can't go here or there and do this or that, why they can't hang out with their friends, why the homework must be done first, why there are chores and responsibilities that cannot be shirked, why they must keep their room clean, obey their parents and a hundred other things.

Children fail to perceive the beauty and blessing and purpose of the life you are preparing them for or the realm you are bringing them into. The reason you make war with them is to bring them into a wonderful adult life that will be rich and free and abundant. You are shaping their characters to be honored among men, to be leaders, to have and provide for their own families, to hold their heads high with accomplishment, purpose and dignity. When the course is finished they will rise up and call you blessed and always thank you and honor you for your steadfastness, faithfulness, and persistence in wisely guiding them to that delectable world. But before that comes, there are mighty conflicts— and so it is in the family of God — the Lamb is warring against the beast! The Lamb nature makes war with the beastly character of the carnal mind. This is the supreme message of the book of Revelation! It is the story of

God's dealings with **sons** to bring them to perfection and maturity, to the status of overcomers, to the throne of God and of the Lamb!

How do I know this? I know it because the subject of the book is KINGSHIP and PRIESTHOOD! All the promises to the overcomers, set against the backdrop of the problems, sins, corruption, disobedience, fleshliness, and abominations of the seven churches, speak of this great truth. It is the mind of man that keeps the world in *continual turmoil*. It seethes and bubbles and boils and erupts like a vast cauldron and the wisdom of man is powerless to help it. The earth abounds in forms of godliness, yet justice and equality have taken wings and righteous judgment is scarcely known. In spite of plenty, hunger stalks the earth because of the misrule and greed of ignorant and covetous men. Men in the church and out of it are lovers of pleasure *far more* than lovers of God. For six thousand years man has struggled to bring about a sort of Utopia, but the human mind and the fleshly nature, prone as they are to self-interest, self-will, greed, lust, arrogance and violence have filled the earth with corruption and evil. The natural man can never deliver the world or bring in a reign of righteousness!

The world must be delivered into the hands of a new and different and higher race of men! The message of the Revelation concerns the dealings of God by which He raises up that superior race of men, men in the image and likeness of God, men filled with the mind and the wisdom of Christ, men impregnated with the nature and spirit of the Father in heaven. These are *the manifested sons of God!* These are the *overcomers* of whom the Lord Jesus testifies in the closing chapters of the Revelation: "He that overcometh shall *inherit all things*; and I will be his God, and he shall be *my son*" (Rev. 21:7). The book of Revelation is the drama of God's dealings with His sons to make them kings and priests for the deliverance and salvation of the whole world and all men. We must never overlook that fact!

The great truth that is wide open to our understanding is this: No trial that we pass through is merely a trial — it is a battle with God! You will understand that if you are truly called to sonship! The only problem we have is our problem with God. If there was no issue of *our will* and *our ways* versus *God's will* and *God's ways*, the test would cease to be a test, for there would be no doubt, no hesitation, no struggle, no conflict, no controversy. The issue would not exist or would at once be resolved — swallowed up in the blessedness of obedience! We would all be sons qualified to rule and reign with Christ, delivering creation, just as soon as we truly embraced the "finished work" of Christ!

There are areas of our lives where many who treasure the bright hope of sonship still obey God because of the fear of punishment. That is the knowledge of good and evil! In those areas we are still under the law, untransformed in spirit and nature. There remains a struggle between our will and God's will. Is there, then, no punishment? I tell you, my beloved, the Lamb will make war with us! The wrath of the Lamb will be revealed from heaven — the redemptive judgments of God. It is His all-consuming love revealed in Christ. It works in us a new nature, the divine nature. It creates within us a new mind, the mind of Christ. It puts within us a new spirit, the spirit of the Lord. It makes us the sons of God with sonship understanding, sonship wisdom, sonship love, sonship maturity, sonship power, and sonship responsibility in the beauty of His ways, no longer trapped in the childish mind that still wonders if God is going to spank us. "Behold! I make **all things new!** Behold! The tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they **shall be His people**, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God!" (Rev. 21:3,5).

As you read the book of Revelation with the illumination of the Spirit it will speak to you! You will find yourself experientially in one of the seven churches, with its characteristics either

positive or negative; or you will see yourself in the seals, the trumpets, or the vials of wrath; you will discover yourself in the glory of the bride, or in the judgments of the whore; you will lie in the bed with Jezebel, or stand with the 144,000 on mount Zion; you will be cut to pieces by the sword of God's Word that proceeds out of His mouth, or you will ascend to the throne of God to rule the nations with a rod of iron; you will be refined in the burning inferno of the lake of fire, or you will have pouring out of the throne of God within you the invigorating waters of the river of life; your flesh will be served up as food for the vultures (spirits), or you will be clothed in fine linen, pure and white, and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Oh, yes! You are there, my friend, in every verse and every line. Only the Spirit of God can show you to you, and finish the work, that you may *become* THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST in the earth!

You are writing a gospel,
A chapter each day;
By deeds that you do;
By words that you say;
Men read what you write,
Whether faithless or true.
Say, what is the gospel
According to you?

The church today is full of energetic and sincere preachers and teachers who are just full and bubbling over concerning things that are going to happen. Almost daily I receive across my desk their dire prophecies of doom and terrifying predictions of the coming antichrist, economic collapse, world war, assassinations, earthquakes, famines, conspiracies or that this or that is the mark of the beast, often complete with dates and timetables, *none of which ever come to pass*. It should be very humiliating to have world events continually follow a course exactly opposite to that which has been mapped out by one's prophetic teaching, and to have one's predictions proven false almost before the ink is dry on his paper. But not these false prophets! They are masters at glibly side-stepping their repeated failures with the assertion that they said merely that such-and-such "might" happen or "could" happen, or enough people prayed so that it *didn't* happen, or their vision of the date involved was a little hazy so that it *may* have been 2012 instead of 2002! With feigned words and deceit they dupe and delude their sensation-seeking followers.

The world pays no attention to the modern day preacher when he always cries "Wolf." By that I mean that the world today pays no attention to all this "calamity howling" being broadcast by the preachers. It is just something to joke about, or to be endured by the world at large. Prophecies and sermons are given in the thousands of words. Books are published by the hundreds of thousands, giving dates and times and cycles and calamities that are to take place and *never do they come to pass*. Think of all the prophecies that were written about what the Soviet Union was going to do, and now the Soviet Union doesn't even exist anymore! And it will not be revived! So the world scarcely notices, and goes on about its business of trying to make ends meet and keep up with the demands of daily living in a technological world. People sell or give away all their possessions and loudly proclaim the end of the world or the second coming of Christ, and many times assemble themselves in various places to await the supposed coming events. And some, even in this word of sonship and the kingdom, secretly wonder, "Could they be right? Maybe it will come to pass!" But the time for their happening comes and goes, and the disappointed and disillusioned people are left destitute. Yet there are countless others waiting to be duped and disillusioned by someone else! Ah, it is high time for all the preachers and teachers and would-be prophets to leave their ignorance of God and His

majestic purposes and acknowledge publicly their desperate lack, forsaking forever the delusions of their dead letter-of-the-word interpretations of prophecy, and turning to the Lord for true *spiritual wisdom and understanding*. Thank God! He is thoroughly delivering *every one* of His chosen elect from all this carnal tomfoolery, replacing it with the glorious mind of Christ in the Spirit. The change is taking place in some even as they read these lines!

Thank God! The "apocalypse" is a thing of rarest beauty and divine majesty rather than a frightening, dreadful and fearful time as the preachers of Babylon proclaim. True, not all the uncovering is glorious at the time, the woes and thunders are fearful experiences, and the occurrences of the beast and the dragon, with their rise and fall, are shuddering to the natural mind; but viewed from the position that all is the consequence of HIS UNVEILING, and results in a new heaven and a new earth *within us*, indeed *all things new*, so overwhelms us and entralls us that we can but respond in glad unison with the revered Seer of Patmos, "Even so, Come (be revealed), Lord Jesus!"

The book of Revelation sets before us a glorious Person, with the veil removed from Him, and with the veil removed from *our eyes* so that we may look upon Him and see with the beloved John that the important things are:

1. The Judge — not the judgments!
2. The Lamb — not the dragon!
3. The Seven Spirits of God — not the spirits of devils!
4. The Rider on the White Horse who has Four Names — not the four horses!
5. The Throne of God — not the seat of the beast!
6. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah — not the beast out of the sea!
7. The Faithful and True Witness — not the false prophet!
8. The 144,000 Sons of God on Mount Zion — not the beast out of the earth!
9. Those who have the Father's name on their forehead — not the mark of the beast!
10. The New Jerusalem — not Mystery Babylon!
11. The Bride of the Lamb — not the harlot!
12. The Manchild on the Throne — not the dragon cast out of heaven!
13. The Glory of God — not the darkness that covers the earth!
14. The Overcomers — not the churches whose candlesticks are removed!
15. The Unveiling of Jesus Christ — not the antichrist!

There is a dimension of the revelation of Jesus Christ that transcends the speaking of words, the writing of books, and the preaching of sermons. The unveiling of Jesus Christ is the need of the hour, the purpose of this Day, and the hope of creation! If God does not give a special ministration of the spirit of wisdom, righteousness, and power to meet the need of creation, it will not be met. There are no buttons to press that can deliver mankind from the power of sin and death, or solve the complex and frightening problems that exist in the world today. The "name it and claim it" theology which says that Jesus has done it all, and all we need now is to just *believe it*, has not and will not produce this manifestation! The further we move in God the more helpless and totally empty we become, for our nothingness is met and satisfied only in the surpassing light and power of HIS GLORY!

The whole earth and all creation is waiting for the glory of the Lord to be revealed in sons. The dealings of God in your life and mine are fraught with divine purpose. There is something far greater ahead of us than walking on streets of gold or flitting about in white night gowns strumming harps! This was the mentality installed in me as a young man. Thank God there is a heaven, yea, there are many heavens, but I want to tell you something. All the dealings of God us-ward, the cross, the suffering, the processing, the blessing, the glory — are intended to put something of His nature and character into us! And this is not to make us holy enough for heaven, but to enable Him to be made manifest in all the fullness of Himself right here in this old dark world in which we live! God has purposed that righteousness, glory and power shine forth before the face of all nations! This will be accomplished through those who are now being transformed into the likeness of His Son! We are being changed *now*! A new order is arising in the earth! The kingdom glory of the Lord shall be revealed from the living, completed temple of His body! His righteousness and life shall fill the earth! His power will shake the nations and all nations shall come and worship before HIM! The harvest of this age shall be gathered! All things shall be made new! Creation shall be released from the bondage of corruption! Sin and death shall reign no more! God's elect is being prepared for this even as I pen these words!

The following words by Paul Mueller are so very true and encouraging that I choose to close this message with them: "Although darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the hearts of the people, Christ is being revealed in a great light to His Brethren — to those who are of like calling and spirit. Were it not for the present unveiling and manifestation of Christ within us, the darkness would overwhelm us and cover us in its stifling, oppressive mantle of doom. But Christ is being revealed! Because of Him, the darkness shall not overwhelm us, for the night is light around us (Ps. 139:11-12). We are being sustained by His presence. He is giving us the strength and fortitude to press on to the utmost heights in Him. Christ is the Light; He is the Day Star rising in our hearts, filling us with hope for the greater glory that is to come. While others may be surrendering to the darkness or to anything else that might detract from the kingdom of God, the elect are walking in solitude with the Lord, singing through this night with gladness of heart. Why do we sing in the midst of this darkness? Because we have **become** the answer and have been given a fore-taste of the restoration to come! We are singing because we are ascending the mount of the Lord, resulting in spiritual growth that brings forth a joy that passes understanding (Is. 35:10)" — end quote.

Chapter 3

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

continued

The first thing we should note about the wonderful book of Revelation is what it is about. We're told what it is about! It isn't about the devil, or demons, or hobgoblins. It isn't about the antichrist. Now, you can find antichrist there, if you really want, and you can find the devil described in many shapes, forms, colors, and sizes. But the book isn't *about* him! Nor is it about Nero, the Jews, Charlemagne, the Roman Catholic Church, the Moslems, Kaiser Wilhelm, Hitler, Mussolini, Communism, the New World Order, the European Community, the Arabs, Saddam Hussein, or laser tattoos.

The very first line of the very first verse tells us precisely what it is about! It is "the revelation of JESUS CHRIST." It is the *unveiling* of Jesus Christ. It is the presentation to us of the Lord Jesus Christ in all His beauty, majesty, power and glory. That's what the book is about! If you read the book and fail to see Jesus Christ unveiled, magnified, glorified and revealed in all His glorious and eternal reality, then you have missed the whole message of the book!

In the Gospels you have the Lord Jesus as He walked the earth. You see Him not only in His marvelous ministry of teaching and miracles, you see Him in His humanity, in His weakness, in His humiliation, in His reproach, in His rejection, in His suffering, and in His death. But the Gospels aimed at the resurrection and ascension. The last view you have of Jesus in the Gospels is of Him ascending in a cloud, and He was received out of their sight. What happened after that? That is where the book of Revelation begins! It is the unveiling of Jesus Christ *as He is!* We don't need a revelation of Jesus as He *was*. That is history. That story is chronicled in the Gospels and has been trumpeted by the church systems for two thousand years. That Jesus is forever gone, never to walk the paths of earth again. "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth (from this time on) know we Him *no more*" (II Cor. 5:16). What we need is a revelation of the *present glory* of Jesus Christ! Where is Jesus *now*? What is He doing *now*? What is He like *now*? This book begins right at the beginning with Jesus alive, Jesus incorruptible and immortal, Jesus ascended, Jesus glorified, Jesus crowned, Jesus enthroned, Jesus formed in His body, Jesus reigning in and through His many brethren, Jesus manifested, revealed, and unveiled in His people, the corporate Son, and Jesus coming and coming and continuing to come from one degree of glory to another, Jesus triumphant as Lord of all!

The revelation of Jesus Christ is also the revelation of the body of Christ, for it is impossible to have a revelation of Christ the Head apart from a revelation of Christ the body. We are members of Christ, bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, mind of His mind, will of His will, nature of His nature, and spirit of His spirit. The book of Revelation is about Jesus Christ raised up in, and revealed in, HIS BODY! That should not surprise us, for "when Christ, who *is our life*, shall *appear*, then shall we also *appear with Him* in glory" (Col. 3:4). Wherever the Head is, there is the body. If you want to find me, look for my body — I'm usually there! If you

want to find Jesus Christ, look for His body! Wherever Jesus Christ appears, His body will appear. In whatever degree of glory Jesus Christ shall be revealed, His body shall be revealed in that same glory, for we are the *fullness of Him* that filleth all in all (Eph. 1:23). Christ dwells in fullness in His body, just as you live and move and speak and act in and through your body. A revelation of Christ apart from His body would be a travesty, an incredible absurdity. So in the book of Revelation there is the revelation of Christ in His body. It cannot be otherwise!

THE REVELATION OF — WHICH CHRIST?

We speak too carelessly of the deep and sacred things of God. One of the greatest truths ever kept hidden from the eyes of men is the truth about the revelation of Jesus Christ. I must hastily add, the revelation is not the revelation of "Jesus" — neither is it the revelation of "Christ." It is the revelation of JESUS CHRIST! Although Jesus and Christ are forever one and inseparable, yet there are distinct revelations and manifestations of each one. Jesus simply means *Saviour*. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus (*Yashua*, Yahweh is Salvation), for He shall save His people from their sins" (Mat. 1:21). This was the word of the angel Gabriel to Mary! The name Jesus reveals His Saviourship. Jesus asked His disciples one day, "Whom say ye that I am?" And Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art **the Christ**, the **Son of the living God!**" And Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Mat. 16:16-17).

The disciples knew that they had been walking, talking, and eating with Jesus of Nazareth. But it took a revelation of the Spirit for them to see that this same Jesus of Nazareth was also "**the Christ**, the Son of the living God." When Jesus was born, heavenly angels announced His birth to the startled shepherds, saying, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a **Saviour**, which **is Christ** the Lord" (Lk. 2:11). You see, despite the fact that a large percentage of present day believers frequently use the word *Christ* to refer to the Lord Jesus, very few people even know what the word means, much less understand the message behind it. Christ is not Jesus' *last name*! Christ is not an English word — it's a Greek word. Why translators have neglected to translate it for so many years, I don't know. But because they did not translate it, but merely brought it over into the English virtually in its Greek form, generations of Christians have missed out on its great meaning and significance. For hundreds of years western believers have ignorantly used the word Christ merely as a religious title!

The plain truth is the word Christ means *Anointed*. Although we generally think of the word anointed in a spiritual context, the word in and of itself isn't spiritual. *Anointed* simply means *to pour over, smear on and rub into*. When you go to the beach, you anoint yourself with suntan lotion. So there's nothing particularly special about the generic word *anoint*. But when you begin to talk about Jesus being **The Christ**, the One who has been sent by God and anointed with God's reconciling, quickening, saving, transforming power, the word becomes very, very special. It takes on great significance, not just because it's some kind of mystical, religious term, but because of the powerful, practical nature of what the *anointing of God* is, and can do!

Christ is the transliteration of the Greek word "Christos," which simply means one anointed with holy oil. The Hebrew "Mashiach," from which we get our word Messiah, has the same meaning as the Greek word "Christos," which is **the anointed**. It comes from a root word which simply means to smear or rub with oil. The first time we meet with holy oil in the scriptures is in the narrative of Jacob's experience at Bethel. "And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place! . . . And Jacob took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Beth-el." And from that memorable morning, all through the Old Testament,

wherever there was a spot of common earth to be separated unto God and consecrated, or a common object to be dedicated to holy use, or a common man to be set apart and sanctified as a priest, or a sovereign to be enthroned and crowned, Jacob's holy oil was always employed for that sacred purpose. Holy oil became one of the most impressive and important, as well as one of the most universal, of all the sacramental signs and seals in the Old Testament economy.

It continued to be so, till all consecration, and all sacrifice, and all priesthood, and all sovereignty came to their consummation in Jesus, the Christ of God — *the Anointed of Yahweh!* And thus it is that His Old Testament name, The Messiah, and His New Testament name, The Christ, and His English name, The Anointed One, contain and convey to us the whole heavenly history of His election from everlasting, His predestination, His incarnation, His calling, His consecration, and His complete equipment, in every way, for all the position and ministry and glory and dominion He now fills as the Son of God. When our Lord first announced Himself to Israel, He opened the book of Isaiah, and found the place where it was written of Him: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath **anointed me** to preach the gospel to the poor: He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty them that are bruised." This, then, is the true Messiah, the true Christ, the true Anointed — *the Christ of God!* Even as Peter opened his mouth, and began to preach Christ to Cornelius, and to all his house, in these very words: "How God **anointed** Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him."

And this is how this great name, "The Christ," came to be given to the man, Jesus of Nazareth, above all other men. Almighty God took that chosen man and anointed Him, as man had never been before, with the Holy Ghost. That is to say, God filled the man Jesus of Nazareth as full as human nature could hold of the mind, and the spirit, and the grace, and the glory, and the power of the Divine Nature. And having so anointed Him, God then presented Him to Israel, and through Israel to the whole world, as the Son of God in human flesh.

Some say that Christ is the **anointing**, but that is not quite the truth. Jesus the Christ is **the anointed**, the **anointed one**, and Christ is the **one anointed**, not the **anointing**. The oil typifies the **anoint-ing**, but the one upon whom the oil was poured was the **anoint-ed**. Others teach that Jesus "had the Christ" or that "the Christ was in Jesus." Those terms are foreign to scripture and make no sense whatsoever. The Christ is not something that came upon Jesus or that dwelt in Jesus — the Christ is **who and what Jesus was and is!** "Thou **art** the Christ..." (Mat. 16:16). "God has **made** this same Jesus both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). "Whosoever believeth that Jesus **is** the Christ is born of God" (I Jn. 5:1). Jesus was not the oil — He was the prophet, priest, and king upon whom the oil was poured! He is not the **anoint-ing** — He is the **anoint-ed!**

While we rejoice in the wonderful fact that Jesus is the Christ, the deeper truth is that as Jesus is the Anointed, or the Christ, *even so are we!* Contrary to popular teaching Christ is not only the one man, Jesus — not merely *one person*, but *many*. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: **so also is Christ!**" (I Cor. 12:12). In union with Jesus Christ, the anointing which *made* Jesus the Christ now *makes* you and me the Christ. It is because "the Anointed" is in us, and we are in Him! We have received of HIS ANOINTING. "But the anointing which *ye have received of Him* abideth in you...and ye shall abide in Him" (I Jn. 2:27). According to this passage the anointing which we have received from Him has now become our anointing because we abide or dwell *in Him*. Jesus Christ is THE ANOINTED ONE and we are members of His body — therefore we are IN

THE ANOINTED ONE and share HIS ANOINTING. It is not Christ as the *anointing* that makes us the anointed, it is our participation in the very substance of Christ — the Anointed One — that makes us anointed! He is not our anointing — the anointing which *He received* from the Father is now also *our anointing*!

The spirit of sonship from God is the *holy oil* and Jesus Christ is the Head that was first anointed with that oil. Many do not understand this simple truth! Therefore they try to separate "Christ" from "Jesus Christ." Jesus the Christ is the Head of this body, and the very life and reality of this body which we are. The same anointing that is poured upon the Head-Christ flows all the way down to the feet of the Christ-Body, so that every member of the body is anointed with the *same anointing* as the Head. The Head is not *the anointing*! The Head is *the Anointed*, and as members of His body we have received from Him the *same anointing*! It is impossible to separate Jesus from the Christ, or Christ from Jesus Christ, just as it is impossible to separate ourselves from the Christ of God. When we are truly apprehended of the Father as sons of God, in the same family and order as Jesus, we receive the same spirit of sonship from the Father, which is the anointing that makes us THE ANOINTED SON! Flesh and blood cannot reveal this truth to our hearts! The Father, from whom issues the spirit of sonship, must reveal it within ourselves by the Spirit! It is the Spirit that searches out the mysteries of the kingdom of God and all the deep things of God, and that same spirit must reveal these truths to His apprehended ones! As I write these lines and make a feeble attempt to set forth to the Lord's precious elect what I see in the Spirit, I sense the presence and power of the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead!

There is no point in over emphasizing this fact, but we want to clearly establish the truth that "Christ" is not something Jesus possessed, but it is who and what HE IS. It is not "Christ" as something or someone separate from Jesus that we have received, and in whom we live, but it is JESUS CHRIST who is our very own reality. Let us note but a few of the many passages that make this truth plain. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into *Jesus Christ*, were baptized into His death?" (Rom. 6:3). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in *Christ Jesus*" (Rom. 8:1). "But put ye on the *Lord Jesus Christ*" (Rom. 13:14). "Unto...them which are sanctified in *Christ Jesus*" (I Cor. 1:2). "But of Him are ye in *Christ Jesus*, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30). "Know ye not your own selves, how that *Jesus Christ* is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (II Cor. 13:5). "For ye are all one in *Christ Jesus*" (Gal. 3:28). "And hath...made us sit together in heavenly places in *Christ Jesus*" (Eph. 2:6). "For we are His workmanship, created in *Christ Jesus* unto good works..." (Eph. 2:10).

Christ means THE ANOINTED! It will be very helpful if in every place in the New Testament where the word Christ appears we would read it with the understanding that it means *the Anointed* or the *anointed One*. Anointed with the spirit of sonship we shall overcome in every area, triumphing gloriously in every situation, and will come forth in His victory over all things! Our lives have been foreordained by the Father to walk this path unto sonship. It is a path that was predestined for us in Christ Jesus before the world began. This path was established in Christ for all who are apprehended of the Father to the glory of *manifest sonship*. It is not "Christ" as something other than Jesus that energizes us, but it is the risen, ascended, glorified, spiritualized, and universalized Jesus Christ who is the genetics of our very own sonship! Therefore we are assured that we shall be able to attain to the same fullness of sonship as it is fulfilled in our Lord Jesus the Christ! What a word! What a hope! Hallelujah!

With this exhortation fresh upon our minds, let us think a little further about the book of Revelation as THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST. Again I say, it is not simply the

revelation of "Jesus," nor is it merely the revelation of "Christ." It is the revelation of J-E-S-U-S C-H-R-I-S-T! Nothing more, and nothing less. There is "another Jesus" and "another Christ" that is proclaimed today by the New Age movement, and the concept of some who call themselves kingdom people and sons of God is not far removed from this *other Jesus* and this *other Christ*.

The New Age terminology can be mistakenly taken for Kingdom Truth. They speak much of the kingdom of God within man, of Christ within man, of love, mercy, goodness, and spiritual perfection and oneness with God. The ancient serpent is wise, shrewd, crafty and subtle, and he knows that the most effectual way to instill error into the minds of the unwary is to use old and precious words and put a new meaning into them. So when his messengers, masquerading as "ministers of righteousness," seek to lead, if possible, the very elect astray, they use the old precious words, but put an entirely different and false meaning. When they talk about God and our heavenly Father they don't mean the God of the Bible, the *personal* God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. They mean the *impersonal energy* that is resident in all things animate and inanimate. They talk of atonement, but they do not mean at all the redemptive death of Jesus Christ on our behalf by which we are reconciled to God by His blood. They mean the at-one-ment in which we recognize our oneness with *all things*, a cosmic unity, not with the Creator, but within ourselves and with the creation. Jesus has nothing to do with it at all, except as a great Teacher, a Way-shower, revealing to us the divine potential inherent in every man. They believe there are *many ways* to God — Jesus is merely a way given to Christians — one of many ways to God.

What do the New Age people look to for salvation? A complete or perfect union with this "inexorable principle" or "divine energy" permeating all things, which is their god! It is the same thing as *Nirvana* of the Buddhist, *Brahma* of the Hindu — an imaginary god-consciousness, into which all will finally be absorbed. And this is attained by discovering and developing your "inner self" — which "inner self" is the corrupted *soul* rather than the *regenerated spirit*! And when they talk about Christ, they do not mean at all our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the actual historic Jesus who lived and died for us, who rose from the dead, ascended up to the right hand of God, and came back again in mighty spirit-power. Oh, no! They mean an "ideal Christ, or a "Christ principle" that is in every man! They mean the "inner self" of the *soul*! They see God as the life principle of every man and Christ is the name that is given to man once he has awakened to his godhood. Now, it is true that the seed of God is in every man! But no man is "Christ," that is, an anointed one, until the seed of God in him is quickened, germinated, and empowered by the infusion of God's Holy Spirit! Jesus, in the New Age view, was no more the Son of God than the drunk in the gutter. He was simply a good man, a highly developed man, a "Master-Spirit" who developed the Christ principle within him and showed men how to awaken to their true inner self. According to their teaching Jesus was a man who went through many incarnations. These incarnations of Jesus took the form of Confucius, Buddha, Moses, David, and many others. These lives were his days at school, and he arrived at a state of consciousness, while manifesting as Jesus of Nazareth, where he remembered his past lives. They see no need for Jesus as the Lamb slain, for redemption, justification, regeneration, new birth, sanctification, baptism in the Holy Spirit, or any other New Testament experience. Men don't need to be saved, reconciled to God, or cleansed by the washing of regeneration — just awakened to the god within! What the New Age movement has done in America and other western nations is to combine Christian terminology with the tenets of various eastern religions, wrap them all up in a new package, and put a label on the package which guarantees everyone *salvation without a Saviour*! And what some in this Kingdom walk have done is create their own hybrid strain of sonship, speaking Kingdom truth deadly laced with pagan New Age concepts!

The New Age movement is a modern form of eastern pagan religion — mingled with the darkness of the occult. While they do espouse some principles that contain truth, these are at best but half-truths, which are more deadly than the outright lie! All true reality of the *living Jesus Christ* is missing — they know not the Lord Jesus as Saviour, nor the cleansing power of His blood, nor the quickening, regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, nor the authority of His name, nor the baptism in His Spirit, nor the fellowship of His body, nor the truth of the Holy Scriptures — in short they are at best bastard sons, subtle counterfeits, and there is no light in them for the light they do have is darkness, merely their own supposed inherent godhood, unquickened and unregenerated, which is the godhood of *the self*, old Adam — not the true and living God! This "inner self" of all men is the "Cosmic Christ" of the New Age!

No truer words have been penned than those by Bob Torango wherein he writes, "I don't care how much it grieves some to think about having a Lord over themselves, no matter how much it makes their flesh to rebel, there is only one Lord over all heaven and earth, and that is Jesus Christ. It is not your perceived higher self, your I Amness, your shifted consciousness, your universal oneness, your metaphysical self, neither is it your egotistical, sinless, Adamless, fleshless self. Let me go down on record and say that there is only One worthy of honor and glory and adoration, only One to be worshipped and exalted, and it is not YOU. It is Him. If you cannot see Him beyond YOU, then you have a problem, and we need to talk. We don't have to exalt ourselves to feel better about our status in the kingdom. If we would only exalt Him, then He would lift us above our woeful self and bring us into His glory and crown us with everlasting joy. Isn't that enough? Do you really need to lower Jesus in rank and file in order to set yourselves up as kings? Must you continue to try to find another door, another way into God? He is the door, and it is wide open for all. Walk through Him, sit down with Him and drink the new wine and eat the bread of the kingdom. It is enough."

The book of Revelation is not the revelation of this *Cosmic Christ*, nor of a *Christ principle*, nor of the old *inner self* of unregenerated men — it is the revelation of the crucified, risen, ascended, glorified, spiritualized, universalized JESUS CHRIST who is Saviour of all men and Lord of all! It is the revelation of Jesus Christ as Head and body in the earth by the power of the spirit of His sonship! Remember, dear ones, that there is no truth beyond Jesus Christ! He has been given *the name* which is above every name in the heavens and in the earth! To Him has been given *all power* and *all authority* in heaven and in earth! Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven by which we *must be saved*! He is the Head of *all* principality and power! He is the prince of the kings of the earth! He is the firstborn among many brethren! He is King of kings and Lord of lords! He is the Mighty God and the Everlasting Father! In Him dwelleth *all the fullness* of the Godhead bodily! We are the *body* in which His fullness is revealed! Those who seek an ultimate truth beyond Jesus Christ, an ultimate reality beyond Him, will discover to their dreadful dismay that they have taken a fearful detour into the realms of *outer darkness*!

TAKING THE COVER OFF

As I write these words I am aware that God's love, wisdom, glory and power are undefinable. No one can estimate or express the limitless love, the unmeasured goodness, or the unbounded power of God in His universe. As I pen these paragraphs I am reminded of the story related by Fred Barlow about what Will Snow did the first time he saw the Pacific Ocean. Will Snow, a Zyante Indian from Northern California, forty-three years of age, in the early part of the twentieth century, had been chosen to be trained to a place of leadership among the Zyantes by the late Dr. Harry Rimmer, scientist and author. Snow had never seen an automobile, a train, electric lights, a city, anything remotely resembling civilization when

Rimmer chose him for training. He simply was a native American from the deep forests of the Northern California mountains.

One day Rimmer took Snow to San Francisco, then on to the Pacific Ocean. The sight of that sea staggered the Indian's imagination. He wanted to know what lake that was. The largest lake he had ever seen was Clear Lake back in those northern mountains where Will had canoed and fished for blackfish. Rimmer replied, "Will, this is not a lake, but it is an ocean, the Pacific Ocean." Snow nodded. "How big is it?" Dr. Rimmer knew the answer — its area, its width, its depth; but how could he explain these figures to an illiterate Indian. Those facts would mean nothing to a man who had known only lakes, rivers, streams, forest.

So he suggested, "Will, you know Clear Lake?" "Yes." "Will, can you imagine ten Clear Lakes in one place?" "Maybe." "Will, can you imagine one hundred Clear Lakes in one place?" "Too much," replied the Indian. "You got that much in this ocean?" Rimmer responded, "That much would only be a drop, Will, if you took it out of the ocean." The Indian shook his head. Then he asked, "Who drinks it?" "No one; it is salty." The Indian stooped down, tasted it, spat it out with a wry face. He walked further down the beach and tasted it there. The result was the same. He waded out in it and tasted it there. Again he spat it out. By now he believed his teacher.

Later in the day Dr. Rimmer was watching Will. Fascinated, amazed by that ocean, and the scope of it, he studied it, waded in it, thrilled to it. About time for them to leave, Rimmer saw Snow go to the ocean again. This time he had a pint bottle. He bent over, filling it with water. "What are you going to do with it, Will?" The Indian held up his filled bottle. "I'm going to take it home. My people will never believe what I've seen today. I want them to see for themselves!" We smile at the ignorance of this poor Indian who thought that pint bottle could capture the vastness, the limitlessness, the surging surf, the thrilling, stirring emotions, sights, smells, and sounds of that greatest of the oceans!

h, can we not see by this how it is that not any single one of us contains all the greatness, vastness, glory and majesty of God, but *together* all the perfected and matured members of the body of God's glorious Christ *do* contain *all the fullness of God!* You cannot put all the vastness of the ocean in a pint jar of sea water, yet, within that pint jar of sea water is contained *the essence of all that the ocean is*. All the ingredients that make up sea water are within that jar! You have the essence of all the ocean is, but you do not have all the ocean. In like manner, every son of God contains within him *all that God is*, although he does not contain all of God. But there is a majesty in the whole that cannot be known in the measure! That is why Jesus Christ has purposed the increase of Himself, the enlargement of Himself, into a many-membered Son!

here can be no doubt that this is the very truth the apostle Paul was opening to the hearts of the believers when he wrote of Jesus Christ, "God...gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is His body, the **fullness of Him that filleth all in all**" (Eph. 1:22-23). "And He is the Head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him (Head and body) should **all fullness dwell**" (Col. 1:18-19). "That Christ may dwell in your hearts...that ye...may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye (plural, you *all together*) might be filled with **all the fullness of God**" (Eph. 3:17-19).

When you walk through the dramatic, poetic and prophetic book of Revelation looking for Jesus Christ, the symbols and signs literally jump out on the stage of your mind to see a risen,

ascended, victorious, conquering, triumphant Christ — Head and body. This Christ is being formed in the life of every son of God, the reality of our life, and here within His temple *which we are* He reigns and reconciles, transforms and matures, to be revealed in all His glory. Capture the deeper meaning of Jesus Christ. Open your spirit and eyes to see! The earthly body of Jesus of Nazareth cannot contain the magnitude of God's Christ! Let's now see Him no longer after the flesh. We now see Him as He is! Celebrate His awesome presence! Bow within yourself in honor and humility before His majesty! God hath made this Jesus both Lord and Christ! And He is now revealed through the many-membered heavenly man of new creation people! This, my beloved, IS THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

I am reminded of the story I read once that related how one day on their way home from a gathering of saints, a little girl turned to her mother and said, "Mommy, the message this morning confused me." The mother said, "Oh? Why is that?" The little girl replied, "Well, brother Smith said that God is bigger than we are. Is that true?" The mother replied, "Yes, that's true honey." "And he also said that God lives in us. Is that true, Mommy?" Again the mother replied, "Yes." "Well," said the little girl, "if God is bigger than us *and* He lives in us, *wouldn't He show through?*" Ah, dear ones, that is just the whole matter of the revelation of Jesus Christ — that **He might show through!**

Charles Weller once illustrated this truth from another perspective. He wrote, "I heard a story once of a brother who God told to cross his legs and sit facing a wall. When he did so, God knocked the wall down. The brother rejoiced that he could see a whole new world out there (outside of himself, for the wall was his body of the outer man holding in the inner man). God rebuked him, for it was not for him to see out that the wall was knocked down, but rather for those people who live in their outer man to see in and see the man who resides inside! How carnal we can be! I, too, identified with the brother and his idea of seeing out, which I, too, thought was spiritual; but it really was a carnal thought when viewed from God's perspective. We aren't to reveal Christ to release *ourselves* from corruption, rather we are to reveal Christ that *creation may see Him* and live!"

A missionary in China was telling of Jesus for the first time to a group of people in an inland town. When he had finished, someone spoke up and said: "Oh, yes, we knew Him. He used to live here." Surprised, the missionary said, "No, He didn't live here. He lived centuries ago in another land." Insisting that he had seen Jesus, the man said, "Not so. He lived in this village. We knew him." Then the simple country folk took the missionary out to the village cemetery and showed him the grave of a missionary who had lived, healed, served, and died in their community. And they thought he was Jesus — **and he was!**

When this experience of the Lord's indwelling truly becomes life to us, the world sees the difference in us. They begin to see Christ shining forth through our vessel. God has purposed from the beginning that He would live inside of man, and be glorified from that place. Christ is beginning to appear on the scene in a greater way in His saints! He is appearing as the dawning of a new Day, and will increase in glory until He is seen as the brightness of the noonday sun from the east to the west. This is the revelation of the Lord to which we are committed to attaining! This is the coming of the Lord to be glorified in His saints, to be admired in all them that believe into this Day! This is the tabernacling of Christ with man! This is the experience of the elect in this hour that is so transforming them that the glory of the indwelling Lord is showing through to the exterior!

We are standing in the hour of a unique revelation of Jesus Christ. The mystery of it is that the revelation of Jesus Christ does not mean the bringing of Christ to maturity and fullness within

us, it's not adding something to the Christ that is within us. That must take place *before* the unveiling, but it's not the unveiling! The unveiling is an *uncovering*. It doesn't speak of the *production* or *formation* of the Christ, but it's the *uncovering* of the Christ who is already formed within!

Some centuries ago, in the city of Florence, Italy, there was a very famous man who erected a little shack down in the central plaza. For two years, he labored in secret, behind the confines of that little shack. Nobody in the city of Florence had an inkling of what was going on in that shack. Everyone knew *who* was in there, but they did not understand *what* was being accomplished there. Most people in the world are aware that there is a God, and they are sure that God is working, and most Christians would admit today that God is *in us*, and that God must be *doing* something in us, but very few of them have any idea of *what* is taking place! So this man labored for two years, and then announced to the citizens of Florence a day of unveiling. All the city gathered into the central plaza and with bated breath, with ardent curiosity and intense expectation, stood waiting for the unveiling. The great painter and sculptor, Michelangelo, began to tear apart the little shack. When it was all removed, there was a veiled object standing in the center. Michelangelo lifted the veil, and the whole city beheld with astonishment and wonder his marvelous statue of David.

I have stood in the museum in Florence, and I have looked upon that statue, and I tell you it's magnificent!. You can see every vein running down the legs of David, every ripple of the muscles, every detail of that exquisite body. You discern the handsome character of the man. Now then, the wonder of the revelation, the unveiling of that statue, was not in the making of it. That work was wrought in secret! When the day of the unveiling came, the work was finished. Every detail was accomplished. Every chip of the chisel had been made. Every sound of the hammer had been silenced. All the majesty and the glory of it had been produced by the skill of one of the world's greatest artists! But on the day of the uncovering, there was a *revelation* of that which had been accomplished! Can we not see by this that the revelation of Jesus Christ does not mean the production of Christ within us. The revelation of Jesus Christ is the *unveiling* of the Christ fully formed and matured in every son of God!

I want to share something with those who read these lines today that God has been speaking deeply within my heart. I, together with all God's called out ones who have been pressing on into the kingdom of God in this hour, have been greatly concerned with ministering to the Lord's people, to bring forth an increase of the Christ within us. We have wanted to see growth, we have desired to see change, we have sought to see development and yearned for maturity to come within every member of the Christ body. We have known that God is working, but our testimony has so often been that of the apostle Paul, in which he said, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12). We have confessed our lack, we have admitted our faults, we have always felt that we come short of the glory of God. And we have looked upon the Lord's dealings with the trials and testings as the work of God to mature the Christ in us, to bring us to the full stature of the Son of God. But I am hearing a word, and the word is this: GOD IS FINISHING HIS WORK! God is putting the finishing touches on the image and likeness of God in our inner man!

I know some, in reading these words, will exclaim, "Who — me? You mean God has done everything in me that He is going to do? Is this all there is? You mean I'm mature? You mean I've got all the mind of Christ? You mean all the changes are in place? You mean I have received unlimited power? You mean I'm a son of God ready to be revealed?" It seems incredible to us! But listen, my beloved, the work of God in sonship is first and foremost in the

inner man, the hidden man of the heart! It is the *spirit, the deep inward life* that God is raising up into His mind, heart and nature. And I do believe that God has a people, gathered out of the ages, and a people walking the earth in this very hour, in whom Christ *is formed!* It is not the outer man, it is not old Adam, it is not the natural life that God is rehabilitating and perfecting — it is *Christ in you the hope of glory!* We need to get our eyes on who we are and what we have attained *in the spirit*, not on how good and perfect the flesh has become!

Let me make one thing very clear. When I talk about "the finished work" I don't mean the same thing that we often hear taught today. I'm not talking about the so-called "finished work of Calvary." There *is no* finished work of Calvary! When Jesus cried out on the cross, "It is finished!" He wasn't proclaiming that the whole work of redemption and restoration was finished. Not at all! Nothing was "finished" at the cross except His death, the shedding of His precious atoning blood. But that's not all there is to God's great redemptive, restorative, and transformative work! Paul stated it this way: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God *by the death of His Son*, much more, being reconciled, we *shall be saved by His life*" (Rom. 5:10). You see, we were reconciled by His *death*, but our full salvation comes by the working of His *life!* His life is His *resurrection*. Without His life you have no finished work!

I would never belittle nor depreciate any aspect of the great work of Christ on behalf of man. I am extremely thankful for Calvary and for the death of Christ. But if the work done at Calvary is the *finished* work, then we are all still lost, doomed sinners. This fact is articulated so powerfully by the apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:14-18 wherein he writes, "And if Christ be not risen, our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God: because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up...and if Christ *be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.*" If Calvary finished the work, then there was no need for Christ to be raised! But if Christ be not raised, we are still in our sins, and those who sleep will remain silent in their graves forever! If the work was finished when Christ died on the cross, then our old man died with Him but we received no *new man* by the power of His resurrection! "God...when we were dead in sins, hath *quicken*ed us together with Christ..." (Eph. 2:6). "If ye then *be risen with Christ*, seek those things which are above" (Col. 3:1). If redemption was finished at Calvary our old man is passed away, but our new man, the *new creation*, has not been raised up in His life, so we are left in limbo, in the twilight zone of spiritual unconsciousness! Oh, no, Calvary did not finish the work! Christ had to be crucified, buried, **and raised from the dead** in order for us to be fully redeemed and made a new creation in Christ Jesus! But even His glorious resurrection did not "finish" the work! He ascended! He was enthroned! He poured out the Holy Spirit that He might come and dwell within us as our very life! So without Pentecost there is no "finished work." And now we are coming to see that only in the feast of Tabernacles is there truly a finished work!

What, then, did Jesus mean when He cried, "It is finished!" It is my conviction that He could *not* have meant that redemption was finished! Rather, it was the whole course that He was given to fulfill in the flesh, from the moment of His conception to the hour of His death, that was finished. His walk in this earth realm as a son of God in the flesh, with His life, obedience, and ministry, was brought to an end by His death on the cross. When He arose He would be the Son of God on a higher plain! The sorrows, tears, pain, limitation, and humiliation of mortal existence would be forever over. He finished His course, He kept the faith, He was obedient to the end, and now, dying, He cries, "It is finished!" It wasn't what He was doing for us that was finished, but His own walking out of the Father's purpose for Him in the flesh was finished. The term "the finished work of Calvary" is but a play of words on that cry of Jesus as He died, but it

is scripturally unsound and incorrect. But a particular work that God had appointed His firstborn Son to accomplish in the flesh *was finished* at the hour of His death. And, beloved, we have come to that very point in this hour as we await the manifestation of the sons of God! The seed of Christ has grown within us, we have answered the Father's call to follow the Lamb, we have obeyed the word of the Lord birthed within our hearts, we have endured through the years of testings and provings, we have overcome from realm to realm, and the word I hear in this hour is that same wonderful word — IT IS FINISHED! I feel I cannot be too strong in my earnest exhortation to all who read that God in this Day is finishing His work in a people who are now the sons of God.

I am not interested in eternal processing. Fifty-four years have passed since the revelation of sonship and the kingdom of God burst forth in glory upon the called out of God. Thousands upon thousands have walked with God in separation, dealings, obedience, growth and experience for many years. I have no desire to be among those who are *ever learning*, but *never coming to the experiential knowledge of the truth* (II Tim. 3:7). It's not in my heart to forever be a child, to spend all my days on this planet confessing that I have not attained, neither am I perfect, nor have I apprehended that for which Christ Jesus has apprehended me, nor yet have I grown up into Christ. Am I saying by this that I am now a *manifested son* of God? No way! Manifested sonship is the *unveiling*, the *uncovering*. But at some point there must be a work of God, a maturity of the Christ within, worthy of being revealed! That is what I am saying. I do believe that a people has come to a high place of attainment in sonship to God!

Through the years of our walk in the kingdom we have lived in various parts of the country, traveled extensively, fellowshipped with groups of God's elect and listened to tapes of ministry from a great many brethren. There is one thing I hear that has been disturbing. And it troubled my spirit for a long time before the mind of the Lord came clearly to me. I hear brethren saying, "Well, you know, I admit that I still have problems in my life. I still get mad. I fly off the handle sometimes. I say things I shouldn't say. I think things I shouldn't think. I do things I shouldn't do. I struggle with habits and lusts and weaknesses like all of you do. But God is still working on me!" Someone asks, "Well, brother Eby, what's wrong with that? Don't we still have the flesh to contend with? Isn't God still working on all of us?" Listen! Here's the problem. Some of those preachers I was listening to thirty years ago, and they were saying the same thing! I'm not talking about preachers out in the church systems or in some revival realm. I'm talking about kingdom preachers, sons of God, Melchisedek kings and priests, men who proclaim that they will conquer death, by-pass the grave, and deliver creation!! But they continue to zero in on everybody's problems, weaknesses, difficulties, carnality and shame, including their own, and how Christ in you is able to give you the victory. Now, that is true, and declaring it is fine when you're preaching to spiritual babes and adolescents. But thirty years of preaching that word every Sunday to the same people should be *enough*! How many lives will God give us to attain? How many years will we need to live in order to finally get some victory? One hundred? Two hundred? A thousand? We should not get stuck in *eternal processing*! There must come a day when we can cry, "It is finished!"

We don't perceive that it is finished because we see the chaff of the outer flesh man and we say, "Something's wrong — this doesn't look right! I know that Christ lives in me, I know that Christ has grown in me, I know that sonship is working mightily in me, I know that the glory of God is bursting within me, but what I see in my flesh outwardly doesn't correspond with what I know is on the inside." Ah, you're seeing the chaff that lies on the surface, but you are failing to discern the fully ripe kernel of wheat that lies within! The chaff is removed on the threshing floor at the time of the harvest. The tares are torn out of the field and burned in the day of

harvest. Don't confuse the kernel of wheat with the chaff or the tares with the wheat! Just because we have this treasure in earthen vessels doesn't mean that the value of the treasure within is diminished!

The revelation of Jesus Christ is when the treasure within is unveiled, uncovered, released! The veil is the flesh and the carnal mind. The veil is the outer life of old Adam. The revelation of Jesus Christ is when the almighty Father comes to separate the chaff, burn up the tares, vaporize the flesh, surgically remove the carnal mind, once and for all delivering us from the outer life and the limitations of this gross material realm, as He did with Jesus when He raised Him from the dead! The unveiling is the *removing* of all those things that obstruct, hinder, distort, hide, conceal, and frustrate the shining forth of God's incorruptible glory. The revelation is the removal of the outer life, swallowing it up in victory, so that what the Master Craftsman has wrought over many years in the deepest part of our being may be revealed, released, and seen in all of its beauty and majesty! Hallelujah!

When we say that Christ is to be revealed in His body, that revealing does not come by *adding things* to the Christ within. Truly the seed of Christ does grow up within us, yet all the potential of Christ is within that seed and cannot be added to. How could you add anything to Christ? He is the brightness of God's glory, the express image of His person, and in Him all fullness dwells! For those who are truly sons of God, who have walked with Christ on this path of sonship, learning to suffer with Him and to reign with Him, it is not *more of Jesus* that we need. It is no longer a matter of more and more of Jesus — it is a matter of *less and less* of us! The book of Revelation is not about what is added to Christ in order for Him to radiate in fullness from our lives, but the book is about what is *removed* from us so that this treasure in earthen vessels may be seen.

The type for this is found in Israel entering into their promised land. Christ Himself is **our promised land!** In the Old Testament promised land it wasn't raising a larger army, or giving the soldiers more swords, or giving them special training that gave Israel the land. They entered only by *faith* and *obedience!* But they possessed their land by *removing* the enemy tribes that were entrenched in the land. It is necessary for us to *dispossess* some things in our lives that obscure, conceal, becloud, cover, veil, hide, hinder and prevent the manifestation of Christ through us. Dearly beloved brethren, you cannot get these carnal, fleshly, worldly and religious things out of your land by any self-effort or religious works! Only God Himself by His Fatherly chastenings, by His parental disciplines, by His husbandmanly pruning and purgings, by His refining fire and redemptive judgments can remove the veil of *flesh* that restricts and limits the outshining of His glory!

God's method of dealing with "self" is the *cross of Christ*. The cross of Christ is not the wooden cross, the old rugged cross of Golgotha's hill — it is the principle and power of the cross **WROUGHT OUT IN OUR LIVES**. The Lamb of God is the Man of the cross, but in the book of Revelation the Lamb is never seen on mount Calvary. The very first view we have of the Lamb is in the midst of the throne! "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain..." (Rev. 5:6). He is not the Lamb dying outside the wall of Jerusalem, He is the exalted Lamb slain in the midst of the throne! In the midst of the four living creatures (sonship, kingship) and in the midst of the twenty-four elders (priesthood) — in the midst of God's kings and priests **the cross is working!** It is the cross in the heart of God, the cross in the throne, the death of the outer life that comes to God's elect by the omnipotence of His Lordship!

The next setting of the Lamb in Revelation is on mount Zion. "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on mount Zion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads" (Rev. 14:1). This again is the exalted Lamb, not now working *within* His elect, but manifesting and reigning *through* the sons of God! These have the mind of Christ and the nature of the Father plainly visible upon their foreheads — the outer life has been removed, there is the revelation of Jesus Christ.

The great truth of the rending of the veil is seen in Jesus. The veil in the temple was rent at the precise moment of Jesus' death. But the temple was merely a symbol, a shadow of the greater and true and eternal temple — Christ and His body. Where was the veil rent? "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh" (Heb. 10:19-20). The true veil that was rent was HIS FLESH, for He Himself was the true temple of God, the Holiest of all, the dwelling place of the glory of His Father. His flesh as a man was rent. His human flesh, His natural life, was the veil that covered and concealed the Holy of holies within Him in the same way that the veil in Herod's temple concealed the Shekinah of Yahweh from the priesthood of Israel. His flesh was rent that the glory of God in Him might be seen in the power of His resurrection. I do not propose to discuss here other beautiful lessons contained in the rending of the veil of *His flesh*, but I would point out that today we are the *body of Christ*, the temple of God, and the Most Holy Place is in the spirit of sonship within us. The only way that the glory of God within us can be revealed in the power of His resurrection is for the veil *in us* to be rent! We must have the *same experience*! Your veil has to be rent! My veil has to be rent! The veil of the flesh, the veil of the carnal mind, the veil of the natural understanding within us must be rent. Jesus is not only the truth and the life — He is the *way*. He is the forerunner who on our behalf has entered in to the Holiest of all. But only the forerunner, mark you, for we must follow in His steps and enter in by the power of His blood through the veil of our flesh. Jesus is the Pattern Son! He is the Apostle and High Priest of our profession! He has made it possible for us, He has opened up the way, He has blazed the trail, He has set the example.

Every step of the revelation of Christ is an unveiling. God removes the hindrances and when they are removed we see what God has done. Some of us were in church systems, and God began to stir us. God's work was already there! God had finished a work up to that point in our lives. When He brought us out of the systems of men He burst the cocoon that we were in, so that the thing He had done in us could step out, stretch its wings, and fly away into the heavens of God's Spirit! The work He had accomplished in us was released from man's control and bondage to *find expression*.

We are now in the hour of the unveiling, the greatest and most glorious of all unveilings, the unveiling of God's sons! All those things you have struggled with and battled with, all the fears, limitations, and lack you have sensed that have been a wall about you and a barrier to the revelation of Christ, shall be broken asunder in *this Day* that there might be a manifestation of the work God has accomplished in you! The revelation of Jesus Christ has nothing whatever to do with what is happening out there in the external world. It has nothing to do with economic collapse, nuclear war, or bugs the size of Volkswagens. The world God is shaking is *our world*. The beast God is destroying is the beast of *our nature*. The locusts that come out of the abyss arise from the abyss of our *own hearts* which are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. The trees that are being burned up are those manifestations that grow out of *our own earthiness*. The tree of life, on the other hand, grows out of the *river of God's Spirit*! The tree of the knowledge of good and evil within us shall be consumed. But the tree of life will grow out of the river that flows from the throne of God within us!

Oh, Hallelujah! The revelation of Jesus Christ *brings* the end of the world, but the world that it ends is truly *this world of our outer life*. The sign of "the end" is what God has accomplished within us! And my brother, my sister, you will never have a work that is completed without there following *an unveiling!*

Chapter 4

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

continued

Fifty-four years have passed since the revelation of sonship and the kingdom of God burst anew in glory and power upon a people apprehended to be the elect of God. Thousands upon thousands have heard the call to come apart with God and walk with Him in the high places of His Spirit, to experience His dealings, to learn obedience to His voice and submission to His will and ways, to partake of His mind and His nature, and grow up into the maturity of the fullness of Christ. Within ourselves we have seen growth, we have experienced change, we have passed on from glory to glory into the wisdom and knowledge of the Lord, we have partaken of the mind of Christ, we have sensed the increase of the life of sonship within, we have been taught of the Father, we have been tested and tried and have overcome many things, and have witnessed a maturity of the Christ coming forth in each member of God's household of sons. I do know that God has a people walking the earth in this very hour, in whom Christ is formed! I am hearing a word from the Lord, and the word is this: GOD IS FINISHING HIS WORK! God is putting the finishing touches on the image and likeness of God in His apprehended ones!

Some time ago Joyce Morris sent out a message which bore a deep witness within my spirit. She said, "About two weeks ago we heard the Lord say very clearly, 'THE STAGE IS SET!' I said, 'Father, what do you mean, the stage is set?' God said, 'I have a stage. And my stage is set. I'm getting ready to put my performers on that stage. Just as I appointed my first Son...I appointed my Son to come forth in a particular day, at a particular time. When that time came, I announced before man that This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. I am about to announce again — the many-membered corporate son. I am about to announce again, not just my first Son, but that my first Son is the Captain over these sons, in whom I am well pleased. Those who have been faithful unto the counsel of the Lord, and are walking in the obedience of Christ.'

"Again, the stage is being set! When Jesus came forth at that time, no one had ever seen a ministry like that. Man had never beheld such power, or miracles. It confounded religion, it confounded man; it confounded the governments, and it confounded everything that stood around Him. They couldn't figure it out! They said, 'What is this? We haven't seen anything like this before!' Why? Because God had set the stage! Jesus had to go through a time of preparation. And when it was appointed by the Father, God gave Him the Spirit without measure! And God is getting ready to give His sons the Spirit without measure — to fulfill His purpose. This time is upon us. THE STAGE IS SET!

"The Lord began to show me that, even in the natural, a man writes his script; you have a play to put on; each individual has their part, and nobody can perform another's part. God has written His script! Let me tell you — anything in the script that God has written, He is going to carry it out! He told His people, even in the Old Testament, that there was going to be a Holy One born out of Judah, and that He would be the Messiah. God wrote that script, and what He

wrote came to pass! And when He came, they didn't know who He was! They asked, 'What thing is this?' What was happening on the scene at that time—they didn't understand! Yet it had been written in the script! It had been written in the script about the Son of man coming. There is a Son of man coming again, and that Son of man is a corporate man. It is a many-membered body. It is a man who has been conformed into the image of Christ. This Son of man is the overcomers on that side (in the invisible spirit realm), and the overcomers on this side (in the flesh). They will be gathered from the four corners of the earth, and they will come as the Son of man — for mankind!

"So we see, the stage is set. I heard the Spirit say, 'THE CURTAINS ARE GETTING READY TO BE DRAWN!' I said, 'God, what do you mean, the curtains are going to be pulled back?' He said, 'Just like Jesus — He was hidden for thirty years until He came to full maturity as the first Son.' But when He came to maturity and the stage was set — guess what God did? God opened the curtains! He let His power, and His splendor, and His glory manifest in one man. I want to tell you, when you begin to see it's in God's corporate man, it will no longer be in just the one man Jesus! That's why Jesus said, 'I'm limited. I have to go to the cross. I've got to go back to my Father. I must make a way so that many sons can come into my nature and have the same power and glory that I have.' He knew that the time would come when God was going to raise up many sons, and that He would be the Captain over all these sons. He would come again as the Son of man, as a corporate, many-membered man, for the whole world to see!

"The whole world shall see the manifestation of the glory of the Lord! The manifestation of Christ is already happening in the invisible realm. But the open, public manifestation to the world, has not been seen yet. You see, the Christ has been hidden in you; and you have been hidden in Christ; in the same way that Jesus was hidden in the bosom of the Father. The Father had a particular time for His glory to be seen. We've seen miracles, we've seen signs and wonders. God has moved in different individuals, and He has revealed Himself to mankind through various ministries; but that has only been a foreshadow of what is about to take place! Some have run here, others have run afar; some have run to this miracle meeting and to that, thinking 'This is it!' But this is not the 'grand finale'! The grand finale is getting ready to take place!

"When God opens the curtains, everyone that has been faithful, that has done his part, and has not broken rank; everyone who knows his part and stays faithful and does his part — when it's time for the grand finale, God is going to have that individual on that stage! The stage is the world. And God will reveal Himself to mankind again just as He did in Jesus. He is coming as Lord, and the Son of man. That corporate man is coming in an open manifestation! The Lord began to speak to me concerning the scripture where it says that the whole creation is groaning for the manifestation of the sons of God. The Father began to show me that there are many kinds of rulers in the world. There are rulers in our government; there are rulers in our educational systems; there are rulers of many kinds all around the world — but these governments have not been effective. They have not worked! And there is a cry in people wanting righteousness, wanting something genuine, something real! Nothing has worked. But let me tell you — the Kingdom of God is going to work! And the stage is set!" — end quote.

The Christ in our spirit is a whole Christ, but the hidings of God's power within this Christ are like the hidings of God's power in nature. We have always had the lightning's flash in the heavens, but we have not always been able to chain that mighty electrical power and make it give us light as we have in our homes and cities today. We have not always been able to make it transmit our voices to distant lands as we do when we talk into the telephone. We have not

always been able to use it to transmit pictures from one part of the earth to another as we do today with our satellites and televisions. The lightning was always there. The electricity was always there, but we were not prepared to harness it, apply it and use it. And so it is with the spirit of Christ within us! The dynamic of it has always been there, and it is there today. The almighty Christ is within us! The Son of God dwells in our hearts! We are being conformed to His image, and we are putting on His mind and nature! An explorer of another century said, "We lay down to sleep on beds of silver when we were starving to death." He meant that in the 1800's, when they crossed the Sierra Nevada's into California, they absolutely lay on the top of those great silver beds. They did not know those beds were there, and it is said that they boiled their stirrup straps to get some soup. That is the way with the church systems today, they are lying upon beds of silver and gold, and boiling their old theological and religious program stirrup straps for food!

God has a people in this hour who are getting out of the mines of God's Truth what is there for them. They are going forward to receive the inheritance in God that belongs to God's sons in this great Day of the Lord! Christ is being revealed to us and in our lives more and more! This unveiling of Christ shall continue until He is revealed in all His fullness. The revelation of Christ in 2002 is far greater than the revelation of Christ was to us in 1992. The Lord has not changed. Rather, He has released out of His life within us a greater measure of the revelation of Himself in His truth, purpose, life, nature and glory. We now experience Him in a greater and higher degree than we did in the past. This is a wonderful hour of the greater unveiling of Christ for all the elect and chosen ones. A new spirit is moving within the elect! A new power of life is being raised up within us! The Christ of kingdom glory is disclosing Himself! He comes in secret and in the silence as a thief in the night! The present, unseen work of the Spirit is resulting in immediate and progressive changes that are preparing us for our full transformation in that moment of time, which is as the twinkling of an eye or a flash of lightning, when He breaks forth out of us in full and eternal salvation. Even our body will be metamorphosed as mortality is swallowed up of life!

Some think we are preaching a "someday" manifestation, that, like the old rapture teaching, we are just waiting, expecting to be manifested sons "someday." That is not it at all! There is a bright tomorrow in God! And our today will bring us to that even more glorious tomorrow! Some want "name it and claim it" sonship. They want to believe that all the fullness has always been available and is now available, we just need to believe it, confess it, and appropriate it. That isn't working any better in sonship than it has worked in the revival realms and faith churches! Of those who don't want to wait for anything in God I haven't seen even one moving on a level beyond Pentecost, all their flowery oratory notwithstanding! And that's the truth. Talk is cheap, but the revelation of Jesus Christ is an on-going revelation, from glory to glory and from realm to realm. Nothing in this world comes to us all neatly packaged and completed. Children must grow! Students must learn! Houses must be built! Technology must be developed! Workers must become experienced! The sun shines from the east to the west! As the inner glory broke through the outer form of Jesus on the holy mount, so the full radiance of Christ shall be revealed in the hour of our unveiling. As we approach this wonderful unveiling let us then cast off the lingering fragments of the old order and of lesser realms, and embrace the new with faith and trust in Him who bids us to follow the Lamb to mount Zion!

UNION WITH CHRIST

The body of Christ is a mystery. It is a marvelous temple that God our Father is in the process of building. It is a temple not made with hands! The stones of its all-glorious walls are living stones, each one born of incorruptible seed and knowing within himself the power of Christ's

endless life. The Greek passage (Heb. 7:15-17) which speaks of Christ as a priest "made after the power of an endless life," when traced back to its root could also be translated, "after the power of a UNITED LIFE." It speaks of a life that is eternal only because of its union with God. "I and my Father are one" (Jn. 10:30). In that glorious body, that wonderful temple of sons, there never has been any falling away or apostasy, for it is composed of overcomers, and from the beginning of the age until now it has been steadily rising upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets as each new living stone was readied and permanently placed within its living walls. The body of Christ is unhindered by fire, by tribulation or persecution, unaffected by the squabblings of sects and denominations, but rising in the power of incorruption and bound by the everlasting ties of the mind of Christ, it is built a holy and living temple unto the Lord!

It is from this glorious temple that Ezekiel saw the Living Waters flowing, deeper and deeper, passing through the desolate land and emptying into the Dead Sea of humanity's sin and corruption, bringing life where ere it went. Would you be a part of God's wonderful RIVER OF LIFE COMPANY? Seek, then, to be joined in eternal union with Christ, set your affection on things above, that the things of earth may grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace. Our great High Priest, the firstborn Son of God, is made after the power of a united life! And we, too, are made after the power of a united life in Him! Seek not to flow, seek to abide! Seek not to be a river, seek to be joined in union with the Fountain of Living Water! In intimacy of fellowship and vital union with Him, as sure as the heavens are higher than the earth, so sure is it that YOU WILL FLOW IN HIS LIFE AND HIS LIFE WILL FLOW THROUGH YOU!

Let it be thoroughly known that God flows as life only through those who live in union with Him in the Spirit. The stream of the river of life has in every age flowed out through those who lived in the Spirit. God has always accomplished His work through those who walked in the stream of His purposes. Where the stream flows, there is the work of God! What is that kind of work which is the work of God? Is it toiling to build larger and larger churches, bigger Sunday Schools, more attractive programs? Ah, God's work is always in the stream of living water! God is spirit, and God's works are in the stream of His Spirit. "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said..." (Gen. 1:2-3). Where the stream flows, there is the work of God! God works by the flowing of the stream of His divine life. On the cross of Calvary blood and water flowed forth from the side of Jesus and redemption was provided for all mankind! On the day of Pentecost this stream of divine life flowed out of God Himself in Christ with transforming power from the throne! It began to flow in Jerusalem. From there it flowed to Antioch, and then from Antioch it turned west; it flowed to Asia, and through Asia it flowed to Macedonia, and onward to Europe. From Europe it flowed to the New World, and it has flowed to every nation, and tongue, and tribe, and people on the face of the whole earth!

This stream has continued to flow right up to this very day, it has finally flowed into you and me, and it shall flow out through us, and from generation to generation, through age after age, until the last enemy has been destroyed throughout all God's vast universe, worlds without end, and there is no more death anywhere, for God is All-in-all! Where this stream flows, there is the life of God! Where there is the life of God, there is the unity of God! And where there is the unity of God, there is the out-flowing of God! And though the city of God is a great and glorious city, the river flows forth from the throne of God. To the overcomer is the promise given, "I will grant to you to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21). Just as there are saints who are stones in the wall of the city, or pillars in the temple of God, so there are those who become a throne people. These

are the ruling sons of God, and it is from the throne of God and of the Lamb that the living stream proceeds! The greatest manifestation of life the world has ever seen shall yet come forth in the earth through a people who become the throne of God in the earth! The glory of God fills the city, and the whole earth is full of His glory, and His glory is above the heavens — yet God sits upon His throne — there is a unique concentration of divine life, power, and dominion from those who make up the throne of God!

To be identified with His throne is the ultimate attainment of union with God. He is making us one with Him to such a degree that when He acts we act, when He moves we move, when He speaks we speak, and when He speaks all will speak because of the united life in the Spirit. It is a unity with Christ and with all who have grown up into the measure of His stature. When God speaks from His throne, it is the voice of the many-membered Son, the voice that is as the sound of many waters, many spirits merged into one gigantic waterfall — ONE GREAT RIVER OF LIFE! Take the shoes from off your feet, oh saint of God, for the ground on which we stand is holy ground! Put away all lightness and foolishness that with heads bowed down, and hearts lifted up in worship, the Spirit of God may reveal how the life of God flowing in the exalted and enthroned Christ and the life of Christ flowing through His many brethren is ONE STREAM OF THE WATER OF LIFE! This is the river that flowed out of Eden's beautiful garden, one river, the flowing out of God Himself as reality and life. As long as Adam walked in the Spirit in the Garden, the river flowed forth out of that dominion which was his!

FROM THE WORKS TO THE PERSON

It should not be difficult to understand that this is the answer to all the worlds needs! For this purpose the elect of God have been passing through all the dealings and workings of God, particularly during the past few years, in order that Christ might be fully formed within as life. We must know Him as life within ourselves before there can be a flowing out of that life from a state of being. We learn to know the majesty of His power within by the crucible of experience so that God may have a people through whom He can manifest Himself WITHOUT INHIBITION, WITHOUT LIMITATION, WITHOUT ANY HINDERING OF THE FULL FLOW OF HIMSELF, SO THAT IT WILL BE THE FULL MANIFESTATION OF HIS LOVE, GRACE, WISDOM, POWER, LIFE, SALVATION, AND DELIVERANCE TO ALL HUMANITY. A people no longer seeking God's works, wonderful though His works are, but conscious of God Himself. A river of life people not proclaiming doctrines, creeds, rituals, experiences, ordinances, programs, or works, but just the Lord Himself as Life and Light and Love, GOD manifest in the flesh!

For years we have been saying, "If the world could only see the works of God!" Well, I tell you now that we have shown them His works and it was not the answer, for far too often the works — the signs, wonders, and miracles — fascinated the lustful eyes of the curious and blessed the people's flesh, but failed to impart unto them the LIFE OF THE SON OF GOD! God did not save the world by works, He saved the world by A PERSON! This life is a Person! "I AM the life" (Jn. 14:6). Is it not a miracle that God is bringing us to this hour when there is that awareness within us that there must be an expression, a revelation, an unveiling, an uncovering, and out-flowing of the Person of God! What a marvelous work is coming in these days! As an evangelist years ago, I loved to travel through the country and tell people that there is a remedy for sin, sickness and sorrow through the blood of Jesus Christ, and an energizing power in the Holy Spirit. People were saved and delivered, healed and blessed, and miracles were wrought. The days which are before us will excel in glory, for now there will be an emanation, a radiation, an out-shining of the very presence and glory and person of Christ, that men may see HIM as He is and be changed into His likeness. They will find they have the

full effects of His sacrifice, atonement, redemption, resurrection, ascension, glorification, exaltation and enthronement!

God is breaking forth unto an hour of expression and revelation of Himself. This is the revelation of Jesus Christ! In those heaven blest days ahead at the manifestation of the sons of God the present "in part" realm of the church age will pass away, for it will appear as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, and have nothing to offer in the light of HIS FULLNESS. The old order church system will be swallowed up in the out-flowing of the fullness of God in His sons, and in that day people will find themselves moving into salvation and on into the infilling of the Spirit and on into the glory of the Lord in all its majesty, as easily as a man is converted today, because the Person of Christ is coming into focus and He Himself is coming into expression through His chosen ones. The people's bodies shall even be changed to be fashioned like unto His glorious body as the sons of God go forth to DELIVER CREATION FROM THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION!

There is a dimension of the revelation of Jesus Christ that transcends the speaking of words, the writing of books, the preaching of sermons, and the manifestation of gifts and works. The revelation of Jesus Christ is the need of the hour! Only a present intervention of the divine Mind and Will, only a present intrusion of the divine Power and Glory, only a present interjection of the divine Spirit of Life will be able to deliver creation. If God does not give a special ministration of the spirit of wisdom and power to meet the need of the world, it will not be met. After two thousand years of church order it has not been met! There are no buttons to press that can solve the complex and frightening problems that exist in the world today! The further we move in God the more helpless we are to ourselves, for our nothingness is magnified in the light of HIS GLORY.

The hour for the unveiling of God's sons is at hand. May God grant to each of His apprehended ones the understanding that from this time on God is not interested in what He has done for you. From now on it must be "When Christ who is our life shall appear..." If there is a mind in us, it must be the mind of Christ, not our religious mind that has been cultivated through the years until it is religious and devoted and full of the Bible and stayed on God. From now on it must not be your mind stayed on God, it must be His mind in you! What we have witnessed to for years was a work of God, His salvation in us, His peace in us, His victory in us, how we had become a product of the work of God; but God's purpose is not that we shall be a testimony of the work of God, but that there shall come a revelation of HIMSELF, that the revelation will BE CHRIST. This is what the Holy Spirit means by the revelation of Jesus Christ! It will not be a revelation of His grace, or His goodness, or His works, or His gifts, or His anything, but the unveiling of the Person of God in us!

God is talking to His sons about PERSONIFICATION, EMBODIMENT, MANIFESTATION AND REVELATION. All who are pressing forward into sonship are going to embody Christ as we have been embodying the works of Christ. Christians represent the work of God: saved from this, having received that, experiencing the other, and changed into something else; but it is still "ME." What you see is a marvelous expression of the handiwork of God. And I would not depreciate this one iota, for it is the handiwork of God! But God intends that the hour should come when there shall be a revelation of GOD HIMSELF! Are you willing, precious friend of mine, to have nothing but the Person? Are you willing to lay aside the work and forget the experience, to have the Person? The hoary headed old prophet took up the baby Jesus in his arms and declared, "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation!" The salvation He saw was not a work, not a gift, not an experience, it was in the baby. There are thousands of people living in the state of Texas and around the world today who are living witnesses to the work of God, of

His handiwork, the power of the blood, His saving grace, the gifts and anointings of God. But what is God still looking for, what is creation yet groaning for, and what is to be ushered in by the manifested sons of God that is any different from what we have had for two thousand years? A PEOPLE WHO ARE NO LONGER WITNESSES TO THE WORK OF GOD, NO LONGER OPERATORS OF THE GIFTS OF GOD, BUT WHO BEAR THE VERY PERSON OF GOD IN A TRANSCENDENTAL WAY, IN WHOM THE VERY LIFE-BEING OF GOD IS FORMED, SO THAT WHEN THEY BEAR WITNESS TO SALVATION, IT WILL BE BEARING WITNESS TO THE PERSON OF THE LORD.

What the Spirit is saying is that God must have a people in whom the Lord is becoming rather than doing. That is what the manifestation of the sons of God is, that is what the revelation of Jesus Christ is, and there will never be a revelation of Jesus Christ if all I can talk about and demonstrate is of what He has done. His works are not Him — HE IS A PERSON! His gifts are not Him — HE IS A PERSON! Paul said, "It pleased God to reveal His Son in me," not, "It pleased God to reveal some of the works of His Son in me and give me some great experiences." And when He prayed, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again till Christ be formed in you," Paul did not mean that they should receive a little more cleansing, a little greater anointing in the gifts, do a few more good works, die a little more death, and so on. Oh, no! There came an hour when Paul knew that the works of the Lord would not be sufficient, but that the Lord Himself had to be put on in all fullness, so that instead of having a work of peace or patience or power, The Lord Himself would be the peace, the patience, and the power!

The scripture says, "The Lord is my strength." It does not refer to some strength the Lord has dished out to us, but, the Lord Himself has become our strength; not a work, not a gift, but a Person. THAT IS SONSHIP AS A COMPLETED FACT. The revelation now is the revelation of a Person, our witness is unto Him because the Person has become in us. It looks as though you are turning your back on these wonderful works of God, but you needed them to bring you to where you are in God. And I do not doubt that thousands and millions of believers need them still! But now you are "forgetting those things which are behind." From now on, what Christ is, becomes the expression! If at this hour we still need God to DO for us rather than for the Christ to BECOME in us, then we are not ready for the manifestation of the sons of God! When God sends forth His sons, He sends them forth as those in whom Christ is so fully formed that it is not a matter of needing God to do anything anymore, but that Christ has BECOME in them, praise His name!

It is vastly more important to reveal the life of the Son of God in meeting creation's need, than to be witnessing to people about salvation, healing, or any other thing. We have become so conditioned to the notion that we aren't doing anything for God unless we are able to get out and witness and skillfully use the scriptures. That is all good, and there is a place for it, but that is not the manifestation of the sons of God! When you are truly helping people you are becoming a living word to them which says, "God cares for you!" That is simply Christ living His life through you. We become a word that is alive to them, not a dead, printed word, or a testimony, but the living manifestation of the Christ. There is something we can do, and it is more important and powerful than witnessing, quoting scriptures, or teaching. Instead of witnessing about God, we become the witness — the embodiment of what Jesus Christ really is!

May Christ be so fully revealed to all of us is my earnest prayer and deepest desire, that in these significant days there will not be any longer a cry in our spirit, "O God, do something for me!" That leaves me with myself on my hands! The secret of Jesus was that for three and a half years He did not have to be more consecrated, He did not have to be more dedicated, He

did not have to become more victorious, He did not need another experience, or another blessing; all He had to do was let the Father live out through Him! And may it be so in the days ahead that it will be Christ fully formed in us, Christ living out in all the glory of God, in all the fullness of His life and love and power and victory — HIMSELF! This is the revelation of Jesus Christ!

THE APPEARING OF CHRIST IN THE SONS

The revelation of Jesus Christ is the appearing of Jesus Christ, and the appearing of Jesus Christ is the coming of Jesus Christ. "Who shall abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth?" Ah, Jesus Christ has come as Saviour and has appeared in saving power in the midst of all the saved ones. He has come as Baptizer in the Holy Spirit and has appeared in the glory of the anointing in the midst of all the Spirit-filled ones. He has come as Healer and has appeared in miracle-working wonder in the midst of all the healed ones. But now, in the full manifestation of His Sonship, He must come as LORD, as KING, as PRIEST, as the SON OF GOD!

The world will never know Him as King of kings until there are kings among whom He can stand and reveal Himself as King of the kings. The world will never know Him as Lord, until there are lords among whom He can stand and reveal Himself as Lord of the lords. The world will never know Him as High Priest until there are priests among whom He can stand and reveal Himself as the great High Priest of their profession. Why is God bringing many sons to glory? That in the midst of all Jesus Christ might appear as the pre-eminent One, THE SON among the sons. As long as we remain children, He can not appear as the Son in the midst of children. How are you going to have a Son who is pre-eminent among a group of babies? There is no pre-eminence at all, that gives Him no eminence whatsoever, it gives Him no honor. You cannot say, "He is the first-begotten, the first-born among many babies!" But as our Father brings us to maturity, bringing many sons to glory, He appears as the pre-eminent One, as the first-born among MANY BRETHREN! Why does God want us to grow up into the fullness of sonship? So that the Son of God can be revealed in all His glory, wisdom, virtue, and power in and through the sons. Why does God want us to be king-priests, maturing in the priestly nature and ministry? So that He can appear in the midst as the great Royal High Priest after the order of Melchizedek to bless and redeem and restore all of creation to God!

As long as we remain down on some spiritual plane below this high calling, even though He is greater than we, He has to condescend and limit His manifestation in and through us to the level we are on. It is like a father playing ball with his three-year old! He condescends to that level and manifests on that level, and is glad to do so, but that is not who and what he is! It is beneath him! In like manner, Jesus Christ appears in the midst of WHAT WE ARE IN HIM! He comes as El Shaddai, the breasted one, bearing the milk of the Word in the midst of all the babes in Christ. He appears as the gift-giver to all the children who delight in gifts. But as the sons of God arise to the throne of the heavenlies to occupy the place God has ordained for them, in the place of exaltation, glory and dominion, then Christ can be revealed in greater glory, in greater majesty, and in greater might!

The apostle Paul lived in a dark and treacherous hour at the dawn of the church age. The Roman world was pregnant with difficulties; the Pax Romana was weakening; the barbarians were clamoring at the gates of Rome; Herod, Pilate, and Caesar had conspired to destroy the Christ and His newly budding religion; the religions of paganism had lost their force and were only nominally held by most of the pagan world. Even the religion of the chosen people had degenerated until it was in a deplorable state. The world was half slave and half free.

Infanticide was prevalent everywhere. Perversion was approved by the philosophers, as well as the masses. What hope was there for a world in such a state? Things, indeed, looked dark!

They were dark also in the heart of Saul of Tarsus, a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee. He came in religious zeal breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. He was a man who was filled with indignity and hostility and bitterness. If he found any Christians, men or women, he sought to bind them and bring them to Jerusalem where they might be tortured and killed, if they refused to recant of this Christian heresy. He went to the High Priest to secure papers to go to Damascus. As he drew near, there suddenly shone a light from heaven so bright as to pale the sun by comparison, and it caused him to be thrown from his horse to the ground! In this blinding light Saul heard a voice which called his name saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Trembling with astonishment, Saul asked, "Who art thou, Lord?" The reply thundered back, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest!"

In that moment Saul saw a vision that was to change his entire life! Everything was changed in the brilliance of that light! His world was turned upside down — rather, right side up! His right, he discovered, was wrong; his faith was unbelief; his earnestness was treason; his truth was error; his zeal was rebellion. Everything suddenly turned topsy-turvy and he realized that this Jesus, whose name just a moment before had been an epithet, an object of derision, of laughter, of scorn, of hatred, now suddenly was the Lord of Glory, the All Holy One, the Altogether Lovely One, the Creator and Redeemer of the world! In that blessed moment Saul was changed from the persecutor to a disciple. He fell to the ground a sinner, and rose a saint; he fell to the ground a sighted man who was blind, and rose a blind man who could see! He saw the greatest sight in all the world! He saw His God for who He really is. In that moment Saul bowed low before the God of grace and power; he was brought to submission to Jesus Christ. It was after this that he testified, "But...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to REVEAL HIS SON IN ME..." (Gal. 1:15). And through Paul's life and ministry the church was established throughout the far-flung Empire, and the course of history was forever altered. Skeptics down through the centuries have tried to explain that conversion and the dramatic events it precipitated. But, precious friend of mine, there is no explanation other than the SUPERNATURAL SOVEREIGN WORK OF GOD! That is our God! And I do not hesitate to tell you, my beloved, that God is getting ready to move again! All over the world in this particular moment in history, the Spirit of God is speaking to His apprehended ones concerning the imminent manifestation of the sons of God! The trumpet has sounded — the appointed time has come! Elect saints in every nation under heaven have heard the voice of the prophets, foretelling of this most awesome intervention of God's power that is about to sweep the earth and shake all nations!

We are now living in the most momentous hours anyone could possibly imagine! In fact, it is beyond the power of human imagination to see and understand the greatness of the things that are happening all about us, and to fully comprehend what God is doing so deeply within His people. There is an awakening among the elect of the Lord that transcends human knowledge! As at a certain time of the year God puts it into the minds of salmon to leave the vastnesses of the sea and start their long journey back to the river in which they were born, so He is putting into the hearts of His chosen people the desire to ready themselves for the sonship He has prepared for them from the foundation of the world! He is putting in their minds and hearts the very nature and spirit of sonship, in preparation for their role as the deliverers and shepherds of the nations!

God has been using people in every generation and in every nation and place to whatever degree He has prepared the vessel as a revelation of Himself. There has been that unfolding

of His purpose, that flowing of His life, that manifestation of Himself. Great and wonderful beyond description has been the moving of God from age to age and from generation to generation! God has been using preachers and people in every denomination and movement everywhere to whatever degree He purposed for that season and degree of revelation. But there shall come the ultimate, the total, and complete revelation of Jesus Christ — not a narrow, limited thing, not to get a number of people saved and blessed and healed and filled with the Spirit and used, but the kingdom of God coming with power and great glory, as an expression and manifestation of God in its total capacity with no limitations, with all the glory, all the power, all the might, all the majesty, all the authority, so that nations will be swept into the kingdom of God, and the whole creation delivered from all the bondage of corruption!

A thousand, yea, tens of thousands, a mighty army has been touched by the fire from off the altar of God! A vast company of king-priests has been set ablaze with the life and love and power of God that will cause the nations of the world to turn to the living God! Too long men have occupied themselves in religious efforts to embalm the spirit of yesterday's revival, wrapping it in the grave clothes of ecclesiastical systems and securing it in sepulchers that speak only of the past. We must watch that! If we are trying to perpetuate even the Pentecostal or Latter Rain revivals we are missing God! Pentecost has gone the way of all flesh, and the Rain is over and gone! Even now, a move of God of unprecedented and world-wide dimensions is in the making! It is being formed in a people, in a sonship company that is becoming the embodiment and personification of all He is! Ah, this will not be a revival of healing campaigns, evangelistic crusades, television programs, concerts, bus ministries, coffee houses, or the building of church buildings, but the overflow of divine passion and power from a people so consecrated to God that their minds, hearts, and bodies have been filled with HIMSELF! Already bright clouds are gathering on the horizon, clouds of a multitude of witnesses to the deep and vital work of God in their lives. The work of preparation has been long and meticulous, and it is now drawing to a close. The celestial rivers are running full, and great glory is about to break forth upon the earth! In due time the clouds shall burst and empty themselves upon the earth, and the river of life shall flow in mighty power from the throne of God!

Let your heart be lifted high, for God is on the move, and this can be YOUR HOUR OF MANIFESTATION! Only that will erupt and overflow from God's people which has first been inworked by Father's hand. Do not belittle or depreciate this day when it may seem so little is happening in your midst. The accent of the Spirit is not on the external works and gifts and manifestations in this hour; His concern is with the inner development of the Christ life, the personal appropriation of all He is, becoming the essence and substance of His nature and character. Right now the greatest service we can give to others is to die out to all our own ego-self, that the living of His life becomes its own declaration of all that He is and can do, to His glory and praise!

It is my conviction that all who treasure the beautiful hope of sonship will agree that the manifestation of the sons of God is the next thing on God's agenda for planet earth, and that it must be ONE HUNDRED PERCENT THE WORK OF GOD. But it cannot be one hundred percent God's work when there is still ninety percent of us, or eighty, forty, ten, or one percent of us. If the expression of God that is coming will be "Jesus and me," then we will also give the glory to "Jesus and me." But if it is Jesus alone, I may be the vessel, you may be the vessel, but the manifestation and the excellency of the power shall be of God and not of us. So much manifestation has been "God and us." Our drive, our holiness, our spirituality, our faith, our commitment, our dedication, our fasting, our praying, our ability, our wisdom, our strength, has been mingled with self. But today the Spirit is saying that all our confidence in the flesh must

go — Christ in us is becoming the totality of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, power and glory, and nothing of us. It is THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST! How can it be us when it is HIM? God shall now be glorified in and through us, by Jesus Christ!

I feel it in my spirit and we are seeking God and praying, crying out mightily unto Him, and waiting on God until that full manifestation of all that God has purposed will come. We cannot continue on with the motions of the old order, for it is a weariness to us. All over the world there are people who are seeking God like this! Many have been drawn away and separated from all their former involvements and religious exercises, the church systems of men, and the old ways of doing things, to wait for His NEW ORDERS! God is making choice among us, reaching down in this hour and choosing those whom He has brought to weakness and nothingness, predestinated for this Day.

Ah, He does not have to use us! We have heard His call and present ourselves before Him for His choosing. I have a deep desire to stand among the company of God's manifested sons! But let us leave the choosing to God. And if God is pleased to choose us, we will give Him all the glory. And if He is pleased to bypass us and choose others, there will be no recrimination in our spirit. We will say, "Lord, Thou art altogether righteous in all things." We are not grasping after the throne, like the mother of James and John, but we are yielding ourselves unto God. In previous moves of the Spirit, God picked me up and used me and He said, "I am not using you because of anything in yourself, but out of sovereign choice." I saw other people that were more ready to be used than I was, not used, and I asked God why, and He answered, "Out of my sovereign purposes I am not using them." That is why I do not criticize anybody who was not in the previous visitations, or in the word God is giving us today. I know it was God who kept many people out, who shut them up and hedged them in to a lesser thing in God, and God brought other people in. God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts! God searches the reins and the hearts of all men! He knows us better than we know ourselves! He knows if there is any wicked way in us that even we do not know! But He is going to use people! People like you and me! This is not daydreaming or wishful thinking, neither are we deluded. God is ready to manifest Himself through all the earth, so let us say, "Lord, let us be among those. We are available."

To the above counsel I would add this word of admonition: No one has to strive to make himself a son of God, for this calling was determined before the foundation of the world when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. It is not a matter of trying to press (force) your way into something, but of yielding to the sovereign dealings and the divine inworkings of the Father and fitting by His choice into His glorious scheme. We are king-priests by the same oath that made our blessed Forerunner a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. The process has been long, the dealings have been severe, the disciplining has been rigorous, but soon, O soon! shall the day for the showing, the uncovering, the unveiling dawn in all its power and glory! The blessed sons of God shall be arrayed in order with the manifestation of HIS LIFE flowing out from them!

There are no counterfeits in this realm, when God manifests reality. There are no phonies in this kingdom realm of God! When the sons of God arise to bless the nations either you will "have it" or you won't "have it." As long as we remain in preparation there is opportunity for men to proclaim themselves, to jump on the bandwagon, to mouth all the right words and utter all the correct terminology, and appear to be of those chosen to be sons. These "clouds without water" sometimes teach with flowery oratory, oozing with charisma, and some even lay claim to already being manifested as the fulfillment of their message. Presumptuously claiming that which they do not possess, they make their boasts, and many are deceived by their great

swelling words of vanity. But the day of manifestation approaches! The Day will declare every man's work, of what sort it is! There is a remnant in whom the Spirit of God is working a transformation. In due time God shall manifest this many-membered son and their NEW STATE OF BEING shall utterly silence all the false claims of carnal impostors. Conformed to His image, filled with His Spirit, the embodiment and personification of His wisdom, nature, grace and power — no man will be able to counterfeit the reality of this new state of being, and these shall redound to the glory of God. God starts this work, God works it out, and God brings it to its conclusion; it is all of Him and that is why the flesh or any religious spirit cannot duplicate such glorious, divine handiwork!

The revelation of Jesus Christ is yet to have its greatest stage! If you think creation was something — you ain't seen nothin' yet! If you think it was the greatest of all times when Jesus Christ came into the earth touchable and knowable, healing, delivering, teaching, touching, revealing the Father — you ain't seen nothin' yet! On the day of Pentecost Jesus came back in the Holy Spirit speaking in tongues, prophesying, with signs and wonders and divers gifts of power and glory, calling out His elect and forming in the earth a body for Himself — but I tell you, you ain't seen nothin' yet! God has reserved the greatest manifestation of Himself through the many sons He is bringing to glory!

The sons of God are marching forth: with Victory as their song.
No enemy or foe from North shall change their right to wrong.
For in their bosom is a seed more precious than fine gold,
And it shall be forevermore THE GREATEST STORY TOLD!
There is no need to speak against the things He hath revealed,
For unto babes and sucklings shall be made known His will.
Though they appear as "frail and weak" as some would say they are,
Yet their heart's eye beholds the Bright and Morning Star.
And He hath burned within their hearts, a message to proclaim;
For every knee shall soon be bowed, all tongues confess His name.
The sons of God are marching forth — His banner to unfurl,
The greatest story ever told — shall be told all the world!
For in a lowly manger and a place of secrecy
His first appearing wasn't known; all mankind could not see.
Then was the time when some could hear, those having ears, said He;
But...when He comes the second time — not in a borrowed stall,
But in a house not made with hands — He'll be admired by all!
In flaming fire and with His sword, He shall eternally
Destroy the ones who know not God — who are His enemies.
The sons of God are marching forth — though it may seem to some
That in their battles they have lost, and have been overcome.
But doth His Word not even say...that though this be the case,
The pure in heart with victory, shall look upon His face.
For in His presence they do drink — His blood from Calvary,
They know that He was born to die; but they were born set free.
And in His law both day and night, their thoughts shall ever be
UNTIL THE VISION THEY HAVE CAUGHT BECOMES REALITY!
Until the enemy of death, even death of Adam be
Acknowledged as a death undone, undone at Calvary;
Then shall the saying come to pass, "Oh death, where is thy sting?"
And then the song of Moses shall the saints begin to sing.
Thanks be to God which giveth us victory through our Lord,

He hath divided unto us His swift and terrible sword;
All things that unto Him belong: all things that He obtained;
We are His heirs, joint heirs we are — of us He's not ashamed.
It is not for our righteousness He bringeth us reward,
But for His grace and grace alone, could any man afford;
And judgment shall be given to the Son of God, said He,
For He alone is capable of judging righteously!
I looked! And lo! A Lamb stood! Upon a mount called Zion,
And with Him were the children that are wonders and are signs;
And in their mouths was found no guile, His image they portrayed;
His Spirit led, they followed Him...His light was their array.
Oh! That the wonder of it all might be made known to thee,
That in the New Jerusalem no night shall ever be.
For in the Potter's House...one pearl has groaned in great travail
Until His love is known to be THE ANSWER FOR THE WORLD!
— Charlene Appleby

Chapter 5

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

continued

If you believe in the traditional literalist interpretation of the book of Revelation, there are some serious issues you are going to have to face. Teachers like Hal Lindsey and scores of others tell us that the whole book is fulfilled in the brief span of 1260 days, or three and one half years. They tell us that in the days of the Great Tribulation there issues a world-wide famine from which one billion people die, believers are martyred in incredible numbers, a nuclear war takes place, one third of the world's vegetation is destroyed, one third of the world's oceans are turned into blood, one third of the world's drinking water is so polluted that to drink it kills people, horrible locusts (maybe helicopters!) plague the world's unbelievers for a solid five months, and then 200,000,000 Chinese communists, with perhaps Japanese allies, march on Israel, and on their way they kill nearly one billion more people.

By the time these armies reach Israel, the world's oceans have *all* been turned into blood, the world's drinking water, *all of it*, has been turned to blood, as the blood of a dead man; there is a world wide epidemic of ulcers and skin cancers under a global heat wave. There is no fresh water to drink anywhere on the planet, and there is going to be a great run on Coca Cola, but even the stores of bottled drinks give out. Then, while there is no water, and no food, and no health, and no ability to work or earn a living, we're going to have this great battle of Armageddon involving 200,000,000 invading soldiers! Now the scene gets even more bizarre! With billions dead or dying, with war and famine and disease and trouble and torment everywhere, if you take the mark of the beast you are given the liberty to buy and sell! Buy and sell *what?* I ask. There's no water, it's all blood. There are no trees, no grass, no agriculture; there is world war, devastating earthquakes, broiling heat, and nuclear destruction; and while these 200,000,000 soldiers are attacking Israel, there are 200 pound hailstones falling on them!

I'm not trying to be cynical, friends, but it seems to me that anyone with one eye and half sense could see that the logistics of this scheme transcend absurdity — they are *impossible!* There is no geographical space for 200,000,000 soldiers with tanks, trucks, airplanes, supplies, and all the rest in the valley of Megiddo — not counting the armies of Russia, the United States and their allies who are all supposed to gather there. Hear me, my brother, my sister — *it ain't going to happen!* These armies can't fight — there is no geographical space in all of Israel for so many people to even *stand* properly. So we have a problem! When you calculate the effect of all these events, if they are *literal*, and all happen at the same time during three and a half years, you really have a contradictory, unreasonable, illogical, ridiculous absurdity. May the blessed *spirit of truth* help all who read these lines to think *soberly*, and *righteously*, and *spiritually* about what is portrayed here!

The question follows — What do all these things mean? Ah, it's all GOOD NEWS! Our heavenly Father is not some kind of angry, vindictive, psychotic, sadistic monster who is grinning and kind and merciful for two thousand years and then suddenly throws a temper tantrum, becomes vicious and vengeful, turning on that portion of the human race that just happens to be living at that time, pouring out wrath and spewing forth judgment that makes Adolph Hitler look like Santa Clause, and the Second World War appear as a church picnic. IS THAT THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST? IS IT? Is that the revelation of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world? Is that what Jesus Christ is all about? Is that the final word of the One who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to redeem it? Is that the true, hidden nature of the One who has presented Himself as Love, who has posed as the all-merciful, caring, compassionate, Saviour of all men? Is it? Lynn Hiles calls preachers who peddle the foolishness I have spoken of above **spiritual terrorists!** They scare people to death with a revelation that is supposed to be the *unveiling of Jesus Christ!* If that is the unveiling of Jesus Christ, then please *keep the lid on Him!* In my younger years the things I heard taught out of the book of Revelation would send tingles up your spine and make your hair curl. Thank God! Now we know it is the REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, God's wonderful, gracious, loving, redeeming, saving, transforming, life-giving Son!

Christ is revealing Himself! The scriptures clearly reveal four stages in the revelation of Christ. First, He reveals Himself *to us*. Then He reveals Himself *in us*.. Third, He reveals Himself *as us*. And finally, He reveals Himself *through or out from us*. Those are the four dimensions of the revelation of Jesus Christ!

When Christ reveals Himself *to us*, He seems to us as an external Christ, the man Jesus who walked the shores of Galilee, who died on a cross, was buried, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. In the beginning of our walk in God there is a revelation to us of Jesus Christ, that He was God's Son, born of a virgin, that He lived and walked here upon this earth for thirty-three and a half years, was baptized by John in the river Jordan, the heavens were opened to Him, the Holy Spirit came upon Him, the Father witnessed by a voice from heaven that this was His beloved Son, and He went about doing good, healing all that were oppressed of the devil, casting out devils, raising the dead, for God was with Him.

Jesus testified of Himself, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (Jn. 14:6). Again Jesus proclaimed, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (Jn. 10:9). He is the Son of man and He is Jacob's ladder, the bottom of which stands upon the earth and the top of which reaches into the heavens and the angels of God ascend and descend upon *Him*. He went to the cross of Calvary and there tasted death for every man. God raised Him from the dead, thus declaring Him to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness. When one encounters this glorious Christ of God, when we receive Him into our heart and life, our spirit being quickened by His Spirit, in that blessed moment we receive a supernatural revelation of the life, reality, glory and power of this exalted One and our redeemed spirit bows before Him in adoration and praise as we behold with awe and holy reverence the divine mystery of God's love, redeeming grace, and omniscient purpose in the person of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. This is the beginning of the revelation of Jesus Christ *to us!* Millions of saints, and thousands who now read these lines, bear unimpeachable witness to the wonder of that magnificent moment when Christ the Lord was revealed *to them!* And I do not hesitate to tell you that I have no time for those who would depreciate, lower, cheapen, detract from, belittle, minimize, discredit, or in any way make light of this precious firstborn Son of God, the Captain of my salvation, the Author and Finisher of my faith, the Forerunner who by Himself has opened up the way into the Holiest of all for every son of God to follow! May He in all things

forever have the preeminence, may His name be praised and exalted throughout all ages, world without end! We owe everything to Him!

By the revelation of Jesus Christ *in us* we discover another dimension of Himself. We find experientially that Christ is not out there beyond the Milky Way someplace — He is right here within our very own reality. Oh, He's out there alright — but not out there *for us*. God is everywhere, God is omnipresent, but He is not just everywhere to us! We are the *temple* of God and the *body* of Christ! And it is there within that temple *which we are* that we have truly learned to know Him as *He is!*

Then follows the revelation of Jesus Christ *as us*. You, precious saint of God, are a location where God has chosen to break forth to express and manifest Himself in personality. You are an extension and projection of the invisible God! He has integrated Himself into your life, not as a separate entity within your personality, but in the union of life He has become the essence of being within you. Incredible as these words may appear to some who read them, it was to Paul that the Holy Spirit gave the understanding of the transcendent significance of Christ in his life, and this is what the beloved apostle said: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; *yet not I*, but *Christ liveth in me*" (Gal. 2:20). When Paul explained, "Nevertheless I live; *yet not I*," he was setting forth by divine wisdom the fact that he lived, but the life within him was not his own; it was, in very fact, the life of another, *even Christ* — the anointed Son of God! Can we not see by this that Christ not only lived *in* Paul — Christ lived *as* Paul! The personality of Jesus Christ had now replaced and become the personality of Paul the apostle. This, in my opinion, is **the only true reincarnation** in the universe! The body of Christ *is* the reincarnation of Jesus Christ the Son of God! Behold what unspeakable honor this is, and consider well what inexpressible, ineffable glory! Why should I seek any *other* reincarnation!

Finally, the revelation of Jesus Christ *through us* and *out from us* reveals us to creation as the Corporate Son of God in the earth! The whole creation is standing on tip-toe, earnestly expecting and waiting with great anticipation the manifestation of God's sons! The sons of God are the sons of love, for God is love. The manifestation of the sons of God is the full and complete expression of the love of God through a many-membered body throughout the whole earth. Some today are trying to sell us a bill of goods, teaching that the present measure of the expression of Christ in His people *is the manifestation of the sons of God*. Don't buy that bill of goods, my friend, for it will rob you of your inheritance. Some who have wearied with the waiting for manifested sonship have watered it down, and would settle for something less, calling the measure of Christ we have seen for two thousand years — sonship. I exhort the saints of God to be not deceived by that which would entice you to sell your birthright for a mess of porridge! I tell you the truth, my beloved, when manifested sonship comes on the scene the world cannot say, "No," to it — they will not be able to resist the manifestation of *unconditional omnipotent love*! Unconditional, omnipotent love is *irresistible*! It breaks down every barrier, it climbs over the walls and goes in at the windows, it conquers every will and melts every heart. **There has never been such a people on this planet!** For three and a half years there was **one!** But God is raising up the life of His Son in a people in this new Kingdom Day. He is bringing this life to maturity in the sons of God! When His wonderful work in His called out elect is complete, all phoniness will be gone, all hypocrisy will be put away, all religiosity will be renounced and purged by the all-consuming fire of God, all self-righteousness will be abandoned, all selfishness will be forsaken, all ulterior motives will be discarded, all gimmickry will cease, every manifestation of the flesh and of the carnal, religious mind will forever disappear from the life of each and every son of the Most High; the Lord alone shall be seen in that day in all of His unsurpassable beauty, in all His boundless glory, in all His omnipotent power, through the transformed lives of the manifested sons of God! Some

disparagingly refer to these truths as "classical sonship." Let me tell you something. I say it kindly, but I say it with holy boldness and unrelenting firmness. That which they undervalue by this cynical term "classical sonship" is, in all truth, *the only true message of manifested sonship* God has sovereignly and supernaturally birthed in the earth! Every other edition I have seen has been either altered, corrupted, distorted, or diluted. We are at the hour in history when we *must not* settle for anything less!

All creation will respond to this universal outpouring of God's love, goodness and grace. Every man that has ever lived, does live, or shall ever live, will come into God's great and eternal kingdom — sooner or later! The furniture store says, "Pay now, or pay later." We say, "Come now, or come later." That will be the ultimate and eternal accomplishment of THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

THE REVELATION WHICH GOD GAVE UNTO HIM

"The revelation of Jesus Christ, *which God gave unto Him...*" (Rev. 1:1).

This revelation was given *to* Jesus Christ and *through* Jesus Christ! The reality of sonship to God was first revealed *to* Jesus, then *in* Jesus, afterwards *as* Jesus, and finally *through* Jesus. Now, unto the saints it is revealed *by* Jesus within His body, and unto creation through His many brethren. The firstborn Son was given a message for all the sons who would follow. Yea, He IS HIMSELF the message!

The origin of this revelation is God. God gave it to Christ — that is, God appointed and anointed His Son to unveil Himself to mankind. This is the revelation of Jesus Christ that *God gave unto Him* from the time of His birth in Bethlehem, on to the time when His mind began to understand as a young child, until He went forth in His ministry at thirty years of age, until He died, rose, and ascended up far above all heavens as King of kings and Lord of lords. This is the revelation that God gave to Him as the knowledge and understanding of the path of sonship!

When Jesus came into the world He possessed a dual identity. In His spirit He was the mighty God and the everlasting Father! But according to His flesh He was a man, made in all things like unto His brethren. When Jesus was growing up as a boy in the understanding of who He was, He could have chosen one of two ways. He could identify with His spirit, or He could identify with His flesh. Jesus was born in a difficult situation, for no one knew who His Father was. I do not doubt for one moment that as a small child Jesus identified with His flesh. He was just a little boy like all other little boys, and His parents were Joseph and Mary. But in the early years God came to Jesus and gave Him something special in His understanding. It was an unveiling of who He was! It seems clear that this unveiling began in His life somewhere before or around the age of twelve. From that time, throughout the eighteen years of silence when we have no credible record of Him, Jesus was awakened to His true heritage.

When Jesus was a boy twelve years old, He was taken up to the feast of Passover, and then for the first time He saw the holy city Jerusalem and the temple of Yahweh on mount Moriah. Young as He was, His spirit was stirred as He walked among the courts of the temple and saw the altar with its smoking sacrifice, the priests in their white robes, and the Levites with their silver trumpets. Though a boy, Jesus began to sense within Himself that He was the Son of God and that this was His Father's house! His heart was so filled with the worship of the temple, with the words of the scribes or the teachers whom He heard in the courts, and with His own thoughts, that when it was time to go home to Nazareth, He stayed behind, held fast

by His overwhelming love for the house of the Lord. The company of people who were traveling together was large, and at first He was not missed. But when night came and the boy Jesus could not be found, His mother was alarmed.

The next day Joseph and Mary left their company and hastened back to Jerusalem. They did not at first think to go to the temple. They sought Him among their friends and kindred who were living in the city, but could not find Him. On the third day they went up to the temple with heavy hearts, still looking for their boy. And there they found Him, sitting in the company of the teachers of the law, listening to their words and confounding them with His questions! Everybody who stood near was surprised to find how deep was the knowledge and understanding of this boy in the word of the Lord! His mother spoke to Him a little sharply, for she felt that her son had not been thoughtful of His duty. She said, "Child, why have you treated us this way? Do you not know that your father and I have been looking for you with fearful hearts?" "Why did you seek for me?" said Jesus. "*Did you not know* that I must be around my Father — about His business?" They did not fully understand these words, but Jesus was saying to Mary, "I know who my Father is, Mama! My father's not Joseph. My Father is God! It's time for me to learn about my inheritance, my destiny!" From twelve years to age thirty He learned. God gave Him an unveiling of Himself, *revealing Himself to Himself*.

"The revelation of Jesus Christ, *which God gave unto Him*." These words should speak to every saint of God a great truth — Jesus did not come into the world knowing who He was or what His purpose was — Jesus had to be taught of the Father just as you and I have had to be taught! God *gave* unto Him an unveiling of His identity and purpose. This unveiling came to Jesus so that Jesus could *show it unto His servants*. "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to *show unto His servants*..."

We have thought that the revelation was given on the isle of Patmos, and indeed it was given to John *for the churches* at that time and in that place. But this is the revelation that God gave to Jesus, and that was given a long time before Patmos! It is the revelation of God in Christ, the mystery of godliness, when God was manifest in the flesh. The revelation that was given to Jesus is the pattern for every son of God that is brought to His glory! The same ministry Jesus had for three and a half years is the ministry of every manifested son of God! His virgin birth prefigures the birth of the Manchild! As He grew during His years in Nazareth in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man, so we are growing up into Him in all things! His overcoming in the flesh is the guarantee of our overcoming in the flesh! His triumph over Satan foreshadows the triumph of His many brethren over every satanic thing! His wisdom, understanding, compassion, love, mercy, and power are even now being wrought out in the life of every person who has received the call to sonship! As He went to the cross so are we crucified with Him, so do we know Him in the fellowship of His sufferings, and so do we take up *our cross* and follow Him! As He died, so we love not our Adamic life unto the death! As He rose from the dead, so has He quickened us together with Him, so that we be risen with Christ; and so shall every son of God step out of the mortality of this physical realm to *put on* incorruption and immortality! "For we shall *not* all sleep, but we *shall* all be changed!" As He ascended up to His Father in heaven so has He raised us up and made us sit together with Him in the higher than all heavens!

The same teaching and learning experience God sent Jesus through, is the same thing He now brings every son through. The revelation God gave to Jesus is the revelation He is showing us! We must believe as a little child to inherit the kingdom; we must go back to the manger and begin our journey into God. We must be born of the virgin birth within ourselves, born of the incorruptible seed of the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. As Jesus

was born of a woman, Mary, so is the Manchild being born of a woman, the church. Paul said to some in the church, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again *until Christ be formed in you*" (Gal. 4:19). He said that he had come and impregnated into their virgin hearts the incorruptible seed of the word of God, and through the spoken word Christ was conceived in them. But they had allowed someone to come along and cause them to mis-carry, as they listened to a false word and began to fornicate with another spirit. Paul came and cleansed them again with a spoken word and through that cleansing he brought them to a place where they might conceive again, that the Christ-life might be formed in them. How great is the plan and mystery of God!

This is the revelation that God gave to Jesus as He walked with His Father in the earth realm, gaining from day to day and from experience to experience the understanding of who He was, why He was here, the power and glory of the Father's life in Him, and the mission and purpose He should fulfill as a Son. THIS WAS THE REVELATION GOD GAVE TO JESUS! And now on Patmos Jesus gave this revelation to John to show unto the churches the things that were to come to pass *in the lives* of all who would follow the Lamb to mount Zion! The "things which must shortly come to pass" have nothing to do with supposed events in the outer world; they have everything to do with the mighty processings and deep inworkings of God *in His elect*! They speak of the outworking of sonship life, victory, and maturity in the lives of the overcomers — **many sons brought to glory!** That is the reality that was to "come to pass," to be raised up in the earth for the blessing and deliverance of all creation!

Through His learning, His humbling, His sufferings, His disciplines, His obedience, and the revelation the Father gave Him, Jesus attained to the glory of *manifested sonship*. Now in the book of Revelation we see how *we* must be dealt with, how *we* must be humbled, purged of the beast nature, stripped of the spirit of the false prophet, chastened until the flesh is subdued, instructed in all righteousness, taught, matured, and anointed with the spirit of the Father until we find *ourselves* in the book of Revelation as the Manchild caught up to the throne! As overcomers, if we keep our works unto the end, we have wonderful promise and blessed assurance that we will be given power over the nations to rule them with a rod of iron, even as He received of His Father. There is the portion of the sons of God! Just as Jesus the Lamb is in the midst of the throne, having seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God, so shall we share in the glory of the 144,000 lambs that stand with Him on mount Zion, having His Father's name in their foreheads. The book of Revelation is the revelation of the Son of God on the face of the earth, and the works that the Father wrought in Him to bring Him to the end of His ministry and onward to death, resurrection, ascension, glorification and exaltation! THAT REVELATION IS THE PATTERN FOR ALL WHO ARE **PUTTING ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST!**

Of our Lord Jesus Christ it is written, "Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person..." (Heb. 1:3). The Amplified Bible renders this so beautifully, "He is the sole expression of the glory of God — the Light-being, the out-*raying* of the divine — and He is the perfect imprint and very image of God's nature." Christ is the DIVINE RADIANCE of the Father! You can grasp a beautiful picture of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as you consider the sun of our solar system. The sun is the Father, the essence, being, source and origin of all. But we do not see the sun! We see only the sun's *emanation*, its *out-*raying**. The light and heat and energy that flood our earth are not the sun itself, but its radiance. And yet, the radiance *is the sun!* It is the sun shedding itself, revealing itself! That is what Christ is to the Father, He is the Father's radiance, His *out-*raying**, the Father shedding Himself, revealing Himself, imparting Himself! And then there is a *mighty working* of the sun's energy in our world. One of those many processes is known as *photosynthesis*. Photosynthesis is the process by

which green plants make sugar and starch from water and carbon dioxide, by the *power of sunlight!* Can we not see by this that the sun figures the Father, the source; the Son is the radiance, the outshining of the Father; and the Holy Spirit is the mighty working or energizing effected by the light rays! The ONENESS of this is apparent, for the Father finds His expression in the son, and the Son IS because of all that the Father IS. Then the Holy Spirit is the working, energizing, creating and transforming by the power of the Father in the Son! And yet, all three are the *very same God* existing in three dimensions, for who can separate what is essentially ONE? And then Jesus prayed for us, "So that they all may be *one* just as You, Father, are in me and I in You, that they also may be one in Us" (Jn. 17:21, Amplified). The ultimate expression of the corporate man is that we might SHOW FORTH HIS GLORY! Therefore our Father is "the Father of *lights* (or heavenly luminaries)." Our destiny is to be celestial LIGHT BEARERS after His own kind! **This is the revelation of Jesus Christ!**

Let us explore a little further the things the Son received of the Father, for they are the things which the Son shows to His chosen and gives unto them. There are far too many to list them all, but as you read the Gospels you should take note of how many times the Lord used expressions such as, "Thou gavest me" and "I have received of my Father." Notice how many times, just in His wonderful prayer recorded in John 17, He speaks of receiving from the Father. "As Thou hast *given* Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast *given* Him." "I have finished the work which Thou *gavest* me to do." "I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou *gavest* me out of the world." "Now they have known that all things whatsoever Thou *hast given* me are of Thee. For I have given them the words which Thou *gavest* me." "Those Thou *hast given* me I have kept...and the glory which Thou *gavest me* I have given them." This, and more, is contained in just that one chapter! The Father gave Him power over all flesh. His followers and disciples were given to Him by the Father. The Father gave Him the word to give to those the Father had given Him. The glory He had was given Him by the Father, and He has given it unto us!

We also find that the *life* Jesus had was given Him by the Father. "As the Father has life in Himself, so hath He *given* to the Son to have life in Himself" (Jn. 5:26). The scriptures reveal that the kingdom has been given to Christ. "And there was *given* Him dominion and glory, and a kingdom" (Dan. 7:14). The Holy Spirit, the promise of the Father, was given to Him, "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and *having received* of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2:23). The love He manifested was not His own love, it was the love of the Father, "For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from *the love of God*, which is *in Christ Jesus our Lord*" (Rom. 8:38-39). The anointing He had was of the Father! "For of a truth against Thy holy child Jesus, whom *Thou hast anointed*" and "How God *anointed* Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and power..." (Acts 4:27; 10:38). The omnipotent power and universal authority which He has now was also given to Him, "All power is *given unto me* in heaven and in earth" (Mat. 28:18). Everything Jesus *had* and everything Jesus *was*, was given to Him by the Father. It is all a part of that glorious revelation of Jesus Christ, which *God gave unto Him*, to show unto His servants!

Jesus Christ, the firstborn Son of God, received everything He had from the Father! Many scriptures confirm that He received divine life from the Father. He received the living word from the Father. He received His sonship anointing from the Father. He received His glory from the Father. He received His ministry from the Father. He received His power and authority from the Father. He received His wisdom and understanding from the Father. He received His works from the Father. He received His name, His nature, from the Father. He received His mind

from the Father. He received His judgment from the Father. He received His kingship and priesthood from the Father. He received His resurrection, ascension, glorification, exaltation and enthronement from the Father!

Beyond all this, wonderful as these things are, lies an even greater truth. *All that Jesus received of the Father, He became!* How awesome are the words when Jesus declared, "*I am the life.*" He hadn't just received life, He had become the life! He had received the word from God; but He not only received it, he became the word. By receiving the word He received the truth, for "*Thy word is truth.*" So Jesus said, "*I am the truth.*" He received from the Father the great plan of redemption and restoration, to bring all men back to God. However, the Father did not just show Him the way, or make Him a "way-shower," as some say, for Jesus Himself became the way. "*I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.*"

The question came to me, "Why did the Lord Jesus say, "I am the way" first, and not, "I am the life?" Why first, the way? I will tell you why! Because HE IS THE WAY INTO EVERYTHING GOD HAS FOR US! He is the Captain of our salvation! He is the Author and the Finisher of our faith! He is the great High Priest of the priesthood! He is the Forerunner who has opened up the way into the Holiest of all! He is the Head of the body! He is Firstborn among many brethren! He is the One from whom we receive the anointing! We could never enter into truth, nor into life, nor into any other reality were He not first **the way!** There are various meanings for the word "way," but the one meant here is: "A means of getting from one place to another, as a road, street, highway, etc." Some time ago a friend asked me how to get to the courthouse in downtown El Paso. I gave him very specific instructions. "Just follow the I-10 freeway all the way in to the downtown exit. Get off on the exit and continue straight until you come to Kansas Street. Turn left on Kansas and drive into the downtown area until you come to Overland. You will see the courthouse there on the left." Now I knew the way and was able to tell him how to get to where he wanted to go. But I was not the way! There is a great difference between knowing the way, being able to show someone the way, and *being the way.*

Jesus knew the way — the Father had shown Him. Everything He knew He had heard from His Father. But He did not come to tell us about the way to salvation, or show us the way into sonship. Oh, no! He became the way! What does this mean? Let me make this as clear as I can. Jesus didn't come to tell us about the way into the fullness of God, into our inheritance. Nor did He come to show us the way! He didn't come to take us by the hand and gently lead us to the Father! It is the purpose of "the way" to bring us to God. He came to *be* the way, not to tell us or show us. He is not giving us directions! He is not drawing us a map! He is not leading us by the hand! When I want to go to the store I get in my Dodge Intrepid and get on the streets that I know will take me there. When I get on the right streets I am *in the way.* O Lord, give us eyes to see that we are only on the way to the Father when we are **in the Son!** There is something more than just believing or standing on the promises! *We do* believe, oh yes, we do! But to come into union and oneness with the Father is more than this — we have to be **IN THE SON.** He is Himself the way to the Father and we have to be *in Him* in order to get there! Surely it was with this very truth in mind that Jesus prayed, "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one *in us.*" Not one *with* us, but one *in us.*

There is tremendous depth here, my beloved, for this is the mystery above all mysteries. The revelation of Jesus Christ is the unveiling of the Christ life within us. It is not a word, a creed, a doctrine, a theology, a truth, or even *a revelation.* I pray that you would pause here to request

the mercies of heaven that God would give you the spirit of wisdom and understanding in the *knowing of Him* that you may see the glory that is our inheritance *in Christ!* The great truth is that we also *must become* what we have received if we are to be sons indeed. We can hear the truth, we can receive the truth and know the truth; but before the truth can become effective in us, we must become the truth. The truth must become our very personality, our state of being. You see, we can hear truth, receive truth, and know truth, but still not walk in the realm of truth! We may speak truth, teach truth, and preach truth, and yet walk in ways that are not according to the truth. But when we become truth, when we are truth, the truth will be manifested out of us as the Christ who is the truth! There was nothing that the Son could do that was not truth, nor could He speak any word that was not truth, for He was the truth.

The oath of God's sons is not the oath of the court room where we swear to "tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." To qualify for the great task the Father has for us in restoring the whole creation to find its one head in Christ, we have to "**BE** the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth!" Those who come to this are ready to be laborers together with God in the consummation of His great purpose to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption. We have known the revelation of Christ *to us* and *in us*, but the hour has come and now is when there shall be the revelation of the Christ *as us*. When we have become the life, as He is the life, we also will have life to give. We will no longer believe in life, speak life, teach life, or preach life, but we will have life to give to all who dwell in the valley of the shadow of death. The revelation that was given to Jesus is now given to us that *in Him* we may truly *be* the way, the truth, and the life for all creation! Oh, the wonder of it!

Let us then with a reverence born of the Spirit of God explore these celestial fields a little further. The writer to the Hebrews says of man, "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He LEFT NOTHING THAT IS NOT PUT UNDER HIM" (Heb. 2:8). Then he makes a statement that appears to be a direct contradiction to all this by saying, "BUT NOW WE SEE NOT YET ALL THINGS PUT UNDER HIM!" In the first statement he says that *all* has been put under man, and in the next tells us that this has *not yet been accomplished*. But the writer says that we do see *one man*. WE SEE JESUS! All of our hope is in Jesus, and we have no hope of attainment outside of Him. Jesus, as the first perfect man and the first perfected son of God, is the evidence and guarantee to us that we also will be perfected as sons of God and attain to the glory of His sonship.

The writer goes on to describe the One who has been through all the pathway of sonship to God. Jesus is our forerunner, our evidence and our guarantee that God will bring us through even as He brought Jesus through! So we read, "For it became 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" (Heb. 2:10). Now if all things are *for Him*, and if all things are *by Him*, does this not place Jesus in a prominent and highly exalted position? No other man has ever occupied such prominence as this! There is absolutely no other person who has **all things** either by or for them! The apostle is actually saying in these words that because of His prominence and highly exalted position of power, dominion and glory, it was necessary that He go through all the things and experiences that all the rest of the sons of God who are partakers of flesh and blood have experienced.

Let us put it this way. If Jesus did all things that He did by reason of His being in some unique or transcendent way the divine Son of God; or by reason of the fact that He Himself was the source of power and glory, then He very definitely had some *advantage* over us! If such were the case, then He had access to resources that are denied us, and He possessed attributes and qualities that are foreign to us now and always will be. He was indeed the Son of God, but

because of His heritage as a divine One and the fact that *all things* were both *for* Him and *by* Him, God put Him through just the same experiences that the children must experience and suffer. He had *no advantage* over us because of who He was or what He possessed! He was made as weak as us in that He said, "I of myself can do nothing."

A brother used the following example which I find wonderfully illustrative of the truth. "We see a man who has built a great business and financial empire. There may be thousands of employees, but only one son. Naturally this son is in the line of inheritance and is to receive all that the father has. This son could have the privilege of stepping into all the advantage and all the resources possessed by the father. It is rightfully his! Thus he could become the owner and head of all the father has built up, and be the one to run it. This could happen whether or not the son had any knowledge about the management of the business, or any experience in it. By right of the prominence of his position as son of the head of that great empire, this son could step into it and possess it.

"But this father has different ideas for his son! He makes conditions such that if the son desires the father's place, he must start from the bottom, and learn the business from the ground up. He must start at the bottom and come up through the whole business as any ordinary employee would do. He is put in a position where he cannot take advantage of the fact that he is the son of the owner or that the business is his by right of inheritance. No one could keep him from inheriting — but the father causes him to become eligible for the supreme position by taking him over the same pathway that any employee would be expected to travel in order to reach the top. This is exactly what the scripture is telling us concerning Jesus! Because Jesus was the Son of God, and because that by Him and through Him and for Him are all things; and because all things were made by Him, He would have the right of authority to step into the position of the Father unquestioned by anyone! But God chose that this firstborn Son would not attain in that way, but He would come the way of all other sons and be one of them.

"Now consider this. A man, the head of a great business, has a son, and he gives him a thorough education, and upon graduation he brings this son right into the company and makes him president of the board without any practical experience. The employees of that company would know that the son received that position merely because he was the father's son! They would also understand that they knew more about this business than the son does! But because he is the son of the president, he gets this high position, for *he is the heir*. If Jesus steps into the throne of the Father under such conditions, he would be open to many criticisms from the principalities and powers in the heavenly places! We know that He has been exalted to the Father's throne for He tells us clearly, 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also *overcame*, and am set down *with my Father in His throne*' (Rev. 3:21). We are called to sit in the throne and power of the Son, even as He sat down in the throne and power of the Father.

"If Jesus attained to this highest position without going through all that the children do, there would be the possibility of some saying that He attained to that position simply because He was the Son of the Father. He would not have done anything to give Him a right to it except the right of inheritance. And the children would know within themselves that Jesus had an advantage that they never possessed! The children could say that Jesus never did experience all the things they have, yet these children are expected to be sons of God just as Jesus is! The truth is that Jesus **never did take advantage** over any of the rest of the children because He was the Son of God. He came the same route that the rest of us have to come! We have been given the same spirit and anointing and life that indwelt Him from His birth in the hills of Judea. Because of His prominent position it was only right that he come into this death realm

and share its weakness, limitation, temptation and sorrow with every man. In bringing many sons to glory, it was only right that God make the firstborn Son or the chief Son to be perfected through the things He suffered and experienced.

"When we all stand before the Father, including the Lord Jesus Himself, there can only be one cry. There can be but one message and one song, and that will be that we have all come the same way! No flesh shall ever glory in the presence of the Father! Even Jesus will not be able to stand out and apart from the other sons and say that He got to that place by His own inherent merit as the firstborn Son. Consider the words of the apostle in Romans 1:4. 'And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, BY THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD.' Jesus had to be resurrected just like any of the rest of us! We used to have the idea that He raised Himself, but He did not. For we read, 'If the spirit of **Him that raised up Jesus** from the dead dwell in you...' (Rom. 8:11). 'Whom God hath raised up...' Many other passages, too numerous to list, bear witness to the fact that it was God, the Father, who raised Jesus from the dead. Jesus was as helpless in the hand of the Father as we are! He had to be, so that He might be made *like unto His brethren*. And then this amazing and encouraging word: 'For both He that sanctifieth (Jesus) and they who are sanctified (the many brethren) ARE ALL OUT OF ONE: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren' (Heb. 2:11). There is no denying that *we all have come out from God*. Jesus said that we all came from the same source and He testified that He came forth from the Father, so we also came from the Father. Jesus did not come from Adam, yet He was *made* in all things like unto His brethren. He came from God, but clothed in a body and life situation just like ours."

If God's people could comprehend the fathomless depths of the book of Hebrews, they would find themselves well on the road to understanding the magnificent glories that belong to the sons of God! I would draw your reverent attention to another verse in the second chapter of Hebrews wherein we read, "I will declare Thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee" (Heb. 2:12). Now I do not know what you have seen in this passage, but I know how I have understood it in the past, and to many of us, I am sure, it spoke of an expression of glory in worship and praise. We had the idea that when we gathered together and entered into the spirit of worship, singing praises unto the Father, that Jesus would come into the midst of the congregation and He, too, would lift up His voice. Many times we felt that we could actually *hear* a heavenly sound in our praises which we believed was the voice of the Son of God singing praise to the Father.

I do not deny that that can happen, and I know we have experienced supernatural dimensions of praise and worship unto God. We have sung the song of the Lord by the Spirit! The spirit of praise has caught us up into heavenly places! Yet, beyond that, I see in the verse we have quoted a definite, specific event taking place. There is something here of tremendous importance that is taking place! This phrase "in the midst" literally means in the middle. Also, we must bear in mind that the punctuation in the King James Bible or in any other version *is not inspired*. The punctuation has been put there by the translators according to *their understanding* of what the original is saying. Let us quote this verse in this way, "Saying, I will *announce* Thy name unto my brethren in the middle of the church — I will sing praise unto Thee!" Jesus is saying that He will come in and make an announcement concerning a great reality in the middle of the church. HE WILL ANNOUNCE TO HIS BRETHREN, THE NAME OF THE FATHER! Jesus had already told us in Matthew 11:27, "Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, *and He to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him*." Jesus Christ is the **only one** who knows the Father, and no one else is able to know the Father unless the Son reveals Him. "The revelation of Jesus Christ, *which God gave unto Him*, to show unto His servants..."

Do you get the connection between these profound and enlightening statements? Jesus is saying that in the middle of the church He will reveal the Father to the sons, His brethren. Not to the whole church! To His brethren *in the middle* of the church! Surely you will have noticed that John in His heavenly vision on Patmos saw the *seven churches*, representing the *whole church* throughout the church age — and what did he see "in the midst" or "in the middle" of the churches? Ah, he saw ONE LIKE UNTO THE SON OF MAN! God's people are greatly hindered from seeing the truth of what John saw, because they continually confuse the traditions of the church systems with the revelation of God. It is not the Son of man that John beheld in the midst of the churches, but *one like unto* the Son of man! This inspired statement reveals the great truth that this one is the complete Christ, the whole Christ, the many-membered body of Christ, the *corporate man*, composed of all His **many brethren** who have been **conformed to the image of the Son of God!** "We know that *we shall be like Him...*"

This company that is *like unto* the Son of man, this company that is *like Him, exactly like Him*, is the company of "His brethren" and they are *in the middle* of the seven churches. "I will announce Thy name unto my brethren *in the middle* of the church..." There has surely come a time in this church age that is now ending when Jesus, as the first begotten Son, and the one who knows the Father, who is acquainted with the Father and has the Father fully indwelling Him, has revealed or unveiled the *name*, or the *nature*, of the Father to the sons! We can repeat a thousand times the words, "I know the Father, I know the Father." But until Jesus Christ *reveals* the Father in the power of the Spirit within our hearts, we do not have any true knowledge of the Father. We say, Father, because Jesus taught the disciples to pray and to begin their prayer by saying, "Our Father..." We say, Father, because of our having been *instructed* to do so. But when the *spirit of the Son*, the *spirit of sonship*, comes upon us we cry "Father!" from the depths of our very beings because it is the call of the Son. In the middle of the church we sing praise *unto the Father!* While all the baby Christians and all the carnal Christians in all the *seven churches* are crying, "Jesus! Jesus!" the Lord Jesus stands in the midst of the church announcing His Father's *name* and *nature* unto His brethren, the *sons of God in the middle!*

Let me ask you, precious friend of mine, where were you when Jesus *first* announced the Father's name to you? At what stage of your development into Christ did the Lord Jesus begin to *reveal the Father* within your heart? Most of those who read these words *had not yet come out of the church systems of man* when the revelation of sonship burst within their hearts! The vast majority of us were right there *in the middle of the church* when Jesus announced the Father's name and nature to us! Was it not *after this* that we heard the call of the Spirit to "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4). Which church was it in the book of Revelation that had so many sins that the Lord warned again and again, "I have somewhat against you...remember therefore from whence thou art fallen...repent...or else I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candlestick...repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against you with the sword of my mouth...behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except she repent...if therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief...repent!...because thou art lukewarm *I will spew thee out of my mouth!*" Every one of these indictments is made against THE SEVEN CHURCHES! Can we not see by this that it is the *seven churches* that *become* that *great city Babylon* that is thrown down and burned with fire! Mystery of mysteries! Yet, has it not been "in the middle" of *that church* that Jesus announced the name of the Father and revealed the Father to His many brethren, the sons of God! And before we left from the middle, we sang praise unto the Father in the midst of the church! Verily, the One like unto the Son of man *stood* in the midst of the churches, just as John saw in spirit in that long ago! Oh, the wonder of it! And it is very significant that no

promise was made to any of the *seven churches* — each and every promise was given to a particular company within the church, to — him that *overcometh* — the company *in the middle!*

It should be abundantly clear that most of the seven churches were not truly walking in the *Father's name* or *nature*. The overcomer, the one like unto the Son of man, in the middle, alone had taken upon him the Father's nature. There is much contained in that one word **name**. We speak of the name of the Lord, the name of Jesus, the name of the Father, and the name of God. There has been a great rift in the Pentecostal movement over the name of Jesus. Men become enemies over the use of the name of Jesus versus the titles of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Men argue and fight over what name or formula is used in water baptism. Men dispute over the various spellings and pronunciations of the name *Yahweh*, or whether we should use the term *Lord* in referring to God. I have my own thoughts on those things, but *name* means far more than a grouping of letters of the alphabet or a sound of utterance! We know that there are literally millions of boys and men in the world today who bear the name of Jesus. Here on the border of Mexico there are many men named J-E-S-U-S. But their name Jesus has no more meaning to God than the name Harry, Sam, or Jack. If such a man came before the Father and said, "I am Jesus," the Lord would pay no more attention to him than if he had said, "I am Bob." In the scriptures the word *name* indicates NATURE, CHARACTER, HONOR AND AUTHORITY.

Does not Jesus have an honor that no one else has ever possessed? Is He not honored of the Father as none other ever was? Does He not possess an authority that no one else ever had? Does He not now possess a nature and character above all the sons of men? He has received a name, a nature, a character, an honor and an authority far above all other names! And His name is the Father's name, for the Father has bestowed on Him *the name that is above every other name in heaven and in earth*. "I will announce Thy name unto my brethren in the midst of the church..." Suppose that a number of God's people are together, and Jesus stands in their midst and says, "I am come to announce the name of my Father to you who are my brethren." Does that seem strange to you, my brother, my sister? Yet it has happened thousands of times all over the earth! He has come in our midst to *reveal* the nature, honor, and authority of His Father, that we may see and know the Father, and become like Him in all of our ways. We are sons because we have *known the Father!*

We know Jesus, we know God, we know Holy Spirit, we know Lord, and we know Master. But now we know the Father! Jesus has announced the Father's name to us! Most of the Lord's people know Jesus, or Christ, or the Lord, or God. But the sons know the Father! The announcement, the proclamation, the revelation has been given! Jesus said He would sing praises *unto the Father*. To sing praise literally means to *sing an ode*. An ode is a song or a poem concerning a marvelous and highly esteemed person and the deeds he has done. Some one sings this ode and they tell of his life and all his accomplishments. They extol all his good points and the great benefactor he was to mankind. Jesus said that He would stand up in the midst of His brethren in the middle of the church and SING AN ODE UNTO HIS FATHER! It is the sons who know the Father's nature, the Father's heart, the Father's ways, the Father's will and the Father's plan and purpose. The sons are telling of all the wonderful, glorious works of the Father! The sons are telling of all His marvelous goodness, His mercy, His grace, and His love! The sons proclaim the Father's power, authority and honor as He moves to set all creation free and restore all men and all things unto Himself. The sons declare the omnipotent love that the Father has bestowed upon His creation in Jesus Christ! Those who do not sing this ode unto the Father do not do so because *the Son has not revealed the Father unto them!* Men who cannot sing this ode do not *know the Father!*

The firstborn Son of God has announced the Father's name unto His brethren here in the close of the church age. It is a GREAT ANNOUNCEMENT! This very thing is a signal or sign that the great world-wide and universal manifestation of the sons of God is ready to begin. We have had the revelation of the Saviour, the Healer, the Blessor, the Baptizer, the Deliverer. But now it is time for the *Father* to be revealed!

"The revelation of Jesus Christ, *which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass.*"

Chapter 6

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

continued

Every man needs the *spirit of revelation from God*. I do not mean that childish spirit found among many who aspire to be sons of God that is always striving to come up with some new and far-fetched idea that they can call a revelation. As George Hawtin once said, "It is not a flurry of fantastic fancies that we need, but a great spirit of *wisdom and understanding* given by God that will unfold to us the immutable almighty omniscience of God's eternal purpose." The blessed book of Revelation is not a series of fantastic fancies, but it is the heart of the Father giving to His elect the ability to receive and understand the purpose of His divine mind which has been planned from before the foundation of the world.

THE BONDSLAVES OF JESUS CHRIST

"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His *servants* things which must shortly come to pass..." (Rev. 1:1).

During the historical period in which the King James Version of the Bible was translated, the word *servant* carried the same meaning as our word *slave* does today. The Greek word *doulos*, rendered *servant* is better translated *slave* or *bondslave*. In olden times a household servant was chattel. He was like a horse or cow in the sense that he was owned "lock, stock, and barrel" by his lord and master. He could not determine his destiny in this world any more than a Southern slave before the Civil War. *Douloi* were the property of their masters and their calling was to obey the will of the one who owned them.

It is remarkable to notice the frequency with which the New Testament writers insist on the use of that word "bondslave" as describing their relationship to Jesus Christ! It is the favorite designation of the apostle Paul who began a number of his epistles with these words, "Paul an apostle and bondslave of Jesus Christ..." He even gloried in wearing the bondmarks of the slavery of Jesus! The apostle Peter describes himself in the very same terms. And the book of Revelation rings with the word, touched by heavenly light, transfigured and glorified! This wondrous book is prepared for bondslaves — *they are the ones for whom is reserved the unveiling of Jesus Christ!* The bondslaves are the ones who are shown "the things which must shortly come to pass!" They are the ones sealed in the forehead with the Father's name! They are the ones who receive the rewards! They see God's face! Heaven takes our most dreaded terms, and makes them sparkle in its own celestial light, till what had seemed the synonym of terror becomes the goal of our fondest hopes in the kingdom of God! The bondslaves of the royal house of Christ *are the kings and priests upon God's throne!* That is what the book of Revelation reveals. Oh, the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it!

In that old Hebrew world which lies so far back in the dim twilight of the past, there is one custom given to the people by Yahweh Himself which claims our attention and scintillates

beneath the light of the Spirit's words as the snow upon the mountains when smitten by the rising sun. God made provision that if an Israelite, through the disaster of bad fortunes and disappointing harvests, were to fall into deep debt to some rich neighboring creditor — so much so that he owed him more than even the land of his inheritance was worth — he was permitted to deed his property over to his creditor until the year of Jubilee. But, in addition, if the debt were larger still, he could deliver even himself up to his creditor to be his servant, his *slave*, so as to work off his debt. In such a case he was required to serve his master for six years. He was to go free in the seventh year.

It must have been a painful and heart breaking thing for that land owner to say farewell to his cherished homestead and beloved possessions, upon which his forefathers had bestowed their diligent labor, to go away into servitude to another. Tearful and heart touching must have been the farewell walk around his beloved home, which he and his might not ever claim again during his lifetime. But yet there was blessing out of the sorrow — freedom from anxiety and foreboding, no more struggling to make ends meet and to keep their heads above water, no more fear of the creditor breathing down his neck each year, confronting his inability to pay. All responsibility for food, clothing, shelter, and the welfare of himself and his wife and children was now transferred to the shoulders of another.

So the appointed years passed away. When the debt was satisfied, the master would call the slave into his presence, to give him his release. But a wonderful provision was made if the man feared to again try to make it on his own — if he truly loved his master, if he enjoyed the labor he had done, if he was pleased with the master's provision for him and his wife and children. He could at that moment bind himself to that master's service forever! If he decided to leave, he could only take what belonged to him before he became a slave. Whatever was given to him by his master stayed behind. If he was married when he became a slave, his wife went out with him when he left. However, if his master had given him a wife and she had given birth to sons or daughters, they could not accompany him.

"But if the slave shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free..." (Ex. 21:5). And if his master was also pleased, they could call for the elders of the city, and there solemnly before the judges, his master bored his ear through with an awl to the doorpost, creating the mark upon the slave that sealed his relationship to his master forever (Ex. 21:6). From the moment that the ear of the slave was pierced he was a marked man! The ornament which was usually inserted in the hole of the lobe of his ear bore testimony that he was the slave of another by his own choice, and, furthermore, that he had a desirable master! It declared that his owner took better care of him than he could of himself. His pierced ear was a way of saying that his lord had his ear, which meant that he willingly chose to obey his master's voice! From henceforth he no longer served his master to pay off any debt — he served him willingly out of a heart of love! He had stood meekly and voluntarily at his master's door, and gave himself in love to serve him forever! And from that day forward he was no longer merely a slave — he was a *bondslave*, a *loveslave*!

These things bear faithful witness to the great truth that now we, the elect of the Lord, by such a love and commitment *have become the bondslaves of Jesus Christ!* How significant are the words *if the slave plainly says!* Alas, believers say many things with their lips which they do not really mean with their hearts. On the way to Jerusalem, a man came up to Jesus and said: "I will follow you wherever you go." But the Lord saw through the man's words and replied, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has nowhere to lay His head" (Lk. 9:57-58). On another occasion a young ruler ran up to Jesus and, falling at His feet, asked, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" But when told what to do, his

countenance fell, and he went away sad and dejected (Mk. 10:17-22). Only if the slave *plainly said*, "I love my master, my wife, and my children," was he allowed to become a slave for life. Love for his master had to supersede all other loves! The slave's giving up of his freedom had to be the result of genuine love for his master, and not of any sense of duty or obligation for favors or benefits received. The piercing of his ear against a doorpost was done before God in the presence of the witnesses and confirmed that he was now a slave of love. Those whom God has called to the Kingdom will only be confirmed in their calling if they, like the Hebrew slave, are willing to give up *all their rights* and as *bondslaves of love* are disposed to be subject to Jesus as absolute Lord and King of their lives!

Is that how you feel about the Lord? Then the book of Revelation is addressed to you! If you're a bondsman and love your Master, and you've made the choice, "I want to serve you forever. I'm not leaving your house, nothing else in the world holds any attraction for me, there is nothing for *myself* I wish to fulfill or accomplish, I want to stay in your house, hear and obey your voice, do all your will, abide there forever because I love my Master," then you have to have your ear nailed to the door! Beloved brethren, is this not what the Lord means when He admonishes time and again throughout the book of Revelation, "He that hath *an ear*, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Through the dealings of God revealed in the book of Revelation our ear is nailed to the door! Jesus said, "*I am the door*," and it is to Him that the ear of every son of God has been nailed that we might hear only His voice and serve Him forever, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of the eternal Spirit! All the voices of the world have passed away, every voice of the church systems of man have been turned aside, the voices of our own will, hopes, plans, ambitions and desires have been hushed! John himself was the one who put his ear to the door for it was he who leaned upon the breast of Jesus. He knew His heartbeat, He knew His heartthrob, He knew what He was feeling, He had heard His voice and His heart as none other had heard it, his ear was nailed to the door and he received a revelation of Jesus Christ! John represents *all of God's elect* who have had their ear pierced by the awl of Jesus! I tell you today, I love my Master! I love my Master's family! My Master takes better care of me than I could ever do for myself! I refuse to go out free! My ear has been bored through, I live only to hear my Master's voice, to do my Master's will! I am committed irrevocably, fully and eternally to the high purposes of His Kingdom!

A further exhortation along this line has been found in a writing received many years ago from our friend Connie Asbill. She wrote, "We find, then, that God has called us *out of bondage and into bondage*! The Word says, of course, that God has called us to *liberty*! And so He has. The seeming conflict between the two thoughts is cleared up when we consider Paul's explanation to the Romans. Hear it! 'Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey his servants (Greek: *slaves*) ye are to whom ye obey: whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness? ... Being then made *free from sin*, ye became the *slaves of righteousness*...for when ye were *slaves of sin*, ye were *free from righteousness*...but now being made free from sin, and become *slaves* unto God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end life everlasting' (Rom. 6:16-22).

"Did you hear it? 'Ye were slaves of sin — but *have become* the slaves of God.' Beloved, that slavery is a *nature*, and we were once slaves to a nature. Now, however, we are becoming slaves again — to a *new nature*! God has called us unto liberty, but He has said that when you are a slave to sin, you are free from God! When, on the other hand, you are a slave to God, then you *are* free — free from sin! Free from Adam! That is why Paul said, 'The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus *hath made me free* from the law (nature) of sin and death!' Are we grasping the significance of this? We must see that in order for the spirit to be free, the flesh

must be bound. There cannot be liberty for both the flesh and the spirit, for the two are enemies and will create continual warfare if both are free. If we would have a freedom of spirit, there must come a bondage to the flesh. When the flesh is free, the spirit is bound, and when the flesh is bound, the spirit is free! Oh, can we pray with the songwriter, 'Set my spirit free that I may worship Thee,' though we realize that in the asking we plead with God for a bondage to be placed upon the flesh man, Adam? There are many forms that the nature of bondage God is working into us will manifest itself. If we are to respond to Him in every circumstance, we must settle beforehand that we do not *want* to be free!

"This was the law of the Hebrew slave who had served his master for six years and the time came for his dismissal. But he loved his master and did not want to go out free! If the slave plainly said, 'I love my master...I will not go out free,' then his master brought him to the doorpost and bored his ear through with an awl; and he served him forever. Here we see a beautiful picture of our own relationship to our Master, Jesus Christ. Bought with His blood, the slave is brought into bondage for 'six years.' Six is the number of the flesh, and this time element, therefore, represents the length of time that, though bought with His blood, we live in the bondage of the flesh. As the slave allows Christ, however, to chasten, to discipline, to bind and to bring him into servitude to Himself, he is, in that *six years* being changed from glory to glory until there comes an end to the fleshly appetites, an end to the rule of the ego-man inside, an end to the 'six years.' The Lord will then declare to him, 'Now you are free! You have overcome!' The slave is free to go — to live his own life — to be his own man — but so thoroughly has the Master's way of life become his own that he finds at the end of that time he is bound by a greater bondage than the law of commandments which held him for six years, for now the slave says, 'I LOVE!' Hallelujah! Something has been worked into him. 'I LOVE MY MASTER! I LOVE MY MASTER'S FAMILY! I WILL NOT BE FREE!'

"Ah, he knows the price of such a declaration! 'Then his master shall bring him unto the judges...and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him forever!' It was of this slave that the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, 'The Lord God hath **opened mine ear**, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back' (Isa. 50:5). The true *hearing* of the word of God will work a death in a man and will bring him into the bondage of the obedience of faith. This slave was a *hearing one*, for it was the hearing that brought him to the place of such love that he would deliberately choose bondage rather than liberty. He received, then, the eternal seal of a *hearing one*, scarred for life through the wounding of the master's tool, having his ear *circumcised* to hear only that which the Father is speaking! Jesus said, 'The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself...but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things' (Jn. 14:10; 8:28). This is that final bondage to which the slave came in the piercing of his ear. Do we desire that bondage, and can we pray...

I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem,
Restrained by His holy word.
Though I'm freeborn, I'm a bondslave son,
Bound by the Spirit of the Lord!
Bind me with fetters from above,
Let Thy rod now fall on me.
Kept in chains by Father's love,
Thy slave-son I would ever be!

"Let us yield ourselves to His discipline, allow Him to work that bondage into us, lay that rod upon our flesh, for we will find, in the end, that it has been HIS OWN NATURE that we have

received! There is no place, now, for self. We must submit ourselves, yea, even seek out, the restraining influence of the Spirit and the Word. Do we love our Master?" — end quote.

Would you remind me that you are a *son* and not a *servant*? Some say this as though being a son is a *higher calling*! But I would kindly remind you that Jesus, the firstborn Son, "Being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: **but made Himself** of no reputation, and **took upon Him** the form of a *slave*, and was made in the likeness of men: and being in fashion as a man, He **humbled Himself**, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:6-7). And we are counseled in the verse just preceding these to "Let this mind be in *you*, which was *also* in Christ Jesus!" Don't think for one moment, beloved, that there is any conflict between being a *son* and being a *bondslave*! The inspired statements above show clearly that though Jesus was, as a Son, in the form of God; though He was not robbing God in any way by His own equality with God; yet, He **made Himself** of no reputation, He willingly and voluntarily **took upon Himself** the form of a *slave*, He **humbled Himself** and became obedient unto the death of the cross!

I would draw your attention to the fact that these are all things JESUS DID TO HIMSELF! Just as the Hebrew slave willingly stood at the doorpost to be made the bondslave of His master, so the Lord Jesus willingly walked this earth as the *bondslave* of His Father! A true slave lays down all self importance and recognition. He surrenders without reservation to the master's plan. Jesus of His own volition *became obedient* to all the word, way and will of His Father. Now hear me! Herein lies the difference between being a son and being a bondslave. A *son* is what **the Father makes us**! Sonship is the work of God! We have not called ourselves to sonship! The Father Himself has birthed us and laid His hand upon us! We have no other option! "According as *He* (the Father) hath chosen us in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world...having *predestinated* us unto the *placement as sons* by Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of *His will*" (Eph. 1:4-5). On the other hand, a *bondslave* is what **we make ourselves**! "Paul, a bondslave of Jesus Christ..." (Rom. 1:1). Today we may also cry with the apostle, "From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear *branded on my body* the *slave marks* of the Lord Jesus!" "Mine ear hast Thou bored!" "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God!" And the response comes resounding from the heavens of God's Spirit, "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto **His bondslaves** things which must shortly come to pass!" You want to be a son, but not a bondslave? Then forget the book of Revelation! If we are one of His servant-slaves, the secrets contained in this book are ours to understand, appropriate, and apprehend! They are our possession! They are our destiny! The revelation of Jesus Christ *belongs* to His bondslaves!

THINGS WHICH MUST SHORTLY COME TO PASS

"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants *things which must shortly come to pass*..." This passage would better be translated, "...to show unto His bondslaves things which must *occur swiftly*." The Greek term is "*en taxes*" which means "in haste — quickly or swiftly." It refers not primarily to the soonness, although it can be inclusive of that, but to the rapidity of execution once something starts. Scientists use the word as the name of a technical instrument — the tachometer — a device for measuring velocity, and is what might be called a "speed meter."

We need no greater evidence of the meaning of a word than finding where the same expression is used in other places and seeing its meaning there. Speaking of the justice the Lord measures out to those of His elect who in faith and expectation persistently cry unto Him, Jesus said, "And shall not God vindicate His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him,

though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will vindicate them *speedily (en taxes)*" (Lk. 18:7-8). When the Lord was delivering Peter from prison we read, "And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up *quickly (en taxes)*. And his chains fell off from his hands" (Acts. 12:7). The apostle Paul related his experience of when the Lord appeared to him in a vision, warning him to flee from Jerusalem, saying, "*Make haste* and get thee *quickly (en taxes)* out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me..." (Acts 22:18).

The Lord Jesus is showing to His bondslaves things which must *speedily* come to pass! It may not seem quickly to us, by man's reckoning of time, but it is quickly by the Lord's time! It means that when the Lord sets His hand to accomplish something in our lives, He will not rest until the work is finished! Nothing and no one can deter Him! The flesh cannot hinder Him, our own will cannot resist Him, the world cannot withstand Him, the devil cannot frustrate His activity — He will work ceaselessly, persistently, powerfully and *swiftly* until His purpose in us is fulfilled! When God's work begins it runs with absolute certainty and is accomplished with great rapidity. What hope and expectation this evokes in our hearts!

Many people interpret the book of Revelation in one of several ways. Some view it as a history book outlining the rise and fall of empires with all the great world events and spiritual movements of the past 2,000 years. Most evangelicals today think that it had no relevance at all to the Christians to whom John sent it 2,000 years ago, or to any believers that have lived from that day to this — it is only a prophecy that would be fulfilled in the "end time" two millenniums later! Any man or woman who has even in the least partaken of revelation should be able to see that neither theory stands up to the words of inspiration: "To show unto His servants things which must *shortly* come to pass!"

A brother gave a beautiful illustration of this truth. He said, "Suppose that Gary were to invite me to his house, saying, 'My wife is going to cook some hamburgers for us,' and I say, 'Good, let's go.' I go to his house. We sit there — half an hour, forty-five minutes. Still no hamburgers. And I say, 'Gary, check with Carol about the hamburgers.' He comes back out and says, 'She said they will be ready shortly.' We sit there another half hour — and no hamburgers. He checks on her again and comes back and says, 'She said they will be ready shortly.' Pretty soon my wife and I get up and go to McDonald's and buy us a hamburger because I don't understand that kind of word, 'shortly.'"

We may have read this beautiful passage ten thousand times, but today it holds new meaning. How it warms and strengthens my heart to read that one little word "must." "To show unto His servants things which *must* shortly come to pass." Must! The word is important. The concern of this revelation is not with things which simply *will* happen, or *may* happen, or that *depend upon* some action on our part — if we pray enough, fast enough, study enough, work enough, listen to enough tapes, read enough papers, attend enough seminars and conferences, and believe hard enough. Oh, no! These are things which *must* happen, the outworking of the Father's purpose! John is not writing about matters of chance, or the product of somebody's free will, but of glorious things that God almighty will bring to pass *because He has foreordained and predestinated them!* If the Father has truly called you to sonship, dear reader of these lines, your heart will be greatly emboldened by these words of inspiration: "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also **will do it**" (I Thes. 5:24). Sonship is as certain as the power of God! Just as surely as He created the billions of galaxies, with their trillions of stars and suns and planets and moons, so certain is it that He will manifest His sons in this great Day of the Lord!

Brother Stacy Wood shared the following word which masterfully sums up the point I am making. "Two millenniums ago God began a work in His people, and in the book of Revelation He recorded it through His servant John. 'These things,' He says, 'must shortly come to pass.' The Greek word here translated 'shortly' doesn't mean that these things would come to pass within a few days; it means that when they begin they will continue until they have been fulfilled or brought to completion. I am persuaded that we are in the fulfillment — we are in the days when things are 'shortly' coming to pass — when the purposes of God are marching forward to their fulfillment or completion. We are in the days when things are suddenly happening about us, God has set into motion events which have been progressively unfolding in His body from age to age, each age becoming brighter and brighter and better and better until finally God pulls the veil off from whom we really are and causes us to BE. God started something that He is completing, and that is where our confidence has to be!

"'Being confident of this very thing, that He which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ' (Phil. 1:6). It is GOD who began the work in you, beloved. I did not begin it, it was not a preacher that began it, it wasn't our ability to grasp hold of some light that began it. It was the Light Himself, who is the Light of our being, who dawned upon our consciousness and began a *good* work in us! Since He began it, we must trust Him to finish it! We may think we know what He has in mind for us, but the One who drew up the plan and began the work is the One who really knows what the finished product is all about. So we must rest upon, confide in, and trust that the One who began the good work in us will bring it to completion!

"I do want to define this term 'good work.' In the English language when we think of 'good' we relate it to that which feels good, tastes good — what we like. If we don't like it, it's not good. If it pleases us, it's good. But that would be an inaccurate understanding of this word 'good.' A better English rendering of the word would be WORTHWHILE. God has begun a WORTHWHILE work in you! And He will complete it! The word *worthwhile* bears wonderful significance for me because I realize that with the good there is also the bitter and difficult, but it all works together for good. I do not look at everything that comes my way as being 'good.' In fact, the vast majority of things that come my way, if I were to judge it as being good or bad, I would say is bad, not good! But you see, now I've learned that it's not a matter of good and bad — it's a matter of *worthwhile* or *worthless*. I'm learning that everything that comes my way by the hand of the Father is certainly WORTHWHILE! Sometimes it's very bitter, but it's worthwhile. So God has begun a worthwhile work, a worthwhile endeavor — in us! And He is capable of bringing it to its fullness, its completion, unto the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" — end quote.

How that word "shortly" or "speedily" contradicts everything that most of us have been taught! We were told that, at least to John, the coming of Christ, the great tribulation, the beast, the 144,000, the New Jerusalem, and myriad other things are way out in the future somewhere! But "shortly" would indicate that these things are here upon us now! In chapter five of the Revelation we see John weeping as he received his revelation. He was weeping because the revelation was sealed with seven seals — a perfect, complete sealing. Wouldn't it have been foolish for him to weep over things that were going to happen two thousand or more years in the future! Obviously, he was weeping over things that were pertinent to him then and there, just as they are pertinent to us today! These are great *spiritual principles and realities* that have been wrought out in the lives of God's people throughout the age! Spiritual realities are eternal! Oh, that all who read these words could understand the "nowness" of God and the immediacy of all things that relate to the revelation of Jesus Christ! These events are not way out in the future — nor have they ever been! God's remnant throughout the age has tasted of,

and experienced, the deep dealings of God revealed in this book. Yes, there is a culmination, a full consummation at the end of the age! That day is even now upon us as God's elect! It is at our very door! It is a present reality! The unveiling must come within each one of us as we experience the Lord Jesus Christ raised up within us from glory to glory! God is doing His strange but quick work within His chosen ones! The hour of manifestation is nigh at hand!

The book is saturated with the spirit of immediacy. Nothing is to be long deferred. The creak of the oxcart is never heard in this book! Everything moves with rapidity! Horses gallop in cavalry charge. Lightnings flash, thunders boom. Seas swallow ships at a gulp. Fire and earthquake strike suddenly. Hail crashes through the atmosphere. Pestilence flies upon the wings of the wind. Flying messengers flash their wings over earth and sea. The eonian gospel is carried swiftly through the mid-heavens by a winged angel. Everything is in rapid action. Nothing is static. Scenes are constantly shifting. The sense of rapidity is everywhere. "Delay shall be no longer." "The hour to reap is come." The "grapes are fully ripe." "In one hour thy judgment is come." "In one day her plagues shall come." "The marriage of the Lamb is come." "His wife hath made herself ready." The New Jerusalem comes down from God out of heaven. Four angels hold the four winds of the heavens until the bondslaves of God are sealed in their foreheads. Sons come up upon mount Zion. A Manchild is born and immediately is caught up to God's throne. Woes tread upon each other's heels. Seal not the words of the prophecy, for the "time is at hand." The reaper rides a cloud. The woman who birthed the Manchild escapes a pursuing dragon on the wings of an eagle. Saints, sanctuaried under God's altar, cry out, "How long?" They are told to "rest yet a little time." The mystery of God is "finished." The devil is "cast down." Merchant princes plead for rocks to "fall" upon them. A flying eagle pronounces coming woes. Stars fall like blazing torches. Horses rush to war. Islands flee. The heavens are rolled up as a scroll. Satan, sullen of anger, begotten of defeat, moves swiftly in the earth realm because he knows his time is "short." Christ is urgent. He breaks unannounced into a scene proclaiming, "Behold, I come quickly." Everything moves with rapidity. And all these things must "swiftly come to pass!"

God is moving swiftly as this new Kingdom Day comes upon us! The manifestation of the sons of God has not yet taken place. I know there are those who have grown weary with the waiting, for God's "quickly" does not always fit our perception of time. Some have watered down the revelation and have reduced the manifestation of the sons of God to the limited level of our present experience of Christ. A special outpouring of love, an abundance of grace, a sovereign moving of God in a situation becomes "the manifestation of the sons of God." If that is what it is, then the sons have been manifested for two thousand years! The early church had more power, more miracles, and more grace than most of us have witnessed in our life times. And yet Paul said in Romans chapter eight that the whole creation is waiting, groaning, *travailing* for the manifestation of the sons of God! And we ourselves are groaning within ourselves for our unveiling as God's sons! Paul goes on to say that when the sons are unveiled, the redemption of our body will signify the *adoption*, our *placement as sons*! Then the whole vast creation of God, by the superlative ministry of a glorified, transfigured, metamorphosed, incorruptible and immortal company of sons in the power and glory of Christ's resurrection, shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption and brought into the glory of the liberty (from sin and death) of the sons of God! I must tell you, my beloved, that I know of no man or woman on earth today who even remotely resembles a *manifested son of God*! But God has meticulously laid the groundwork in the hearts and lives of those He has called and chosen, and when it does spring forth, it will spring forth *speedily*!

There are the "normal" workings of God — as if anything God does could be considered "normal!" But there are the on-going, day to day activities of the Holy Spirit — all of them

supernatural happenings, but all of them that which we are accustomed to experiencing. The ongoing salvation of souls, the continual manifestations of gifts and ministries among the Lord's people, the healing of sick, answers to prayer, meeting of needs, changing of lives, the progressive revelation of truth, the processes of God to conform us to the image of the Son. Then there are the "interventions" of God! The interventions of God are *sudden happenings* of God above and beyond the norm, in which the course of human history is literally changed because God comes on the scene in an unexpected and accelerated fashion. The scriptures usually announce an intervention of God by using the word "suddenly."

In the Gospel of Luke we read the record of the events at the birth of Jesus: "...and *suddenly* there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host" (Lk. 2:13). The annunciation of the Incarnation was a divine intervention. Here's a great one: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And *suddenly* there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4). There in that upper room, united in their faith in Christ and in their holy mood of expectancy, these humble disciples received their marching orders and were empowered to carry them out. They had had a long period of teaching and preparation; they had spent many hours in prayer and holy waiting. The great day came for them on Pentecost, and they were ready to march. March they did, straight into the heart of the pagan world! The Holy Spirit guided them step by step. He told them where to go, what to say, what to do. He walked in them and worked with them, confirming their word with mighty signs, wonders, and miracles. Armed with the word of God, the love of God, and the power of God, they were unconquerable and turned the world upside down and changed the course of history!

Then there was poor Saul of Tarsus, who ran headlong into a blinding *suddenly*. "It came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, *suddenly* there shone from heaven a great light around me" (Acts 22:6). We all know how that "suddenly" impacted the world! In Malachi 3:1-3 we read of another intervention of God, involved with the preparation of the sons of God, the royal priesthood of the Kingdom. "And the Lord, whom ye seek, shall *suddenly* come to His temple...and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." This is a divine intervention — when God suddenly comes to His elect in a manner different from, and infinitely more powerful and glorious than His normal workings throughout the past age.

We stand today in an hour not unlike the days preceding the day of Pentecost. The next great feast, the feast of Tabernacles, is about to "fully come." The Christ is among us in a fresh manifestation, there is a new message and a unique dealing of God going forth, a declaration and preparation concerning the next great step and phase of the kingdom of God on earth. The greater glory to come, the manifested sons of God upon the heavenly mount Zion, the Manchild caught up to the Throne, the City Foursquare coming down from God out of heaven, the tabernacle of God among men, the new order for the new age, *will be birthed suddenly and sovereignly* BY GOD HIMSELF when the fullness of time has arrived. Let no man deceive you! The feast of Tabernacles has not yet begun! The revelation of it has come, just as the revelation of the promised Spirit came to Jesus' disciples before the day of Pentecost! The *hope* of the new order of Tabernacles has been birthed, the preparations are in progress among a people who have heard the Spirit's call. But all who currently are moving in the "church order" we have known all of our lives while at the same time proclaiming the *arrival* of

the *new order* of the feast of Tabernacles, are in very fact *still walking in the old order of Pentecost!* There *is no* new order that transcends Pentecost in manifestation today! Some will disagree with me, and I will incur the wrath of others, but it should be very evident to all that you have only to visit the church meetings, home gatherings, conferences and conventions, with their songs, praise service, announcements, teaching, preaching, pastors, elders, traveling ministries, prophets, gifts of the spirit, laying on of hands, word of knowledge, healings, and all the rest to see that *there is no new order!* Ah, there is a *new message!* There is a *new hope!* There is a *new expectancy!* There is a *new word* from the Lord! There is a *new dealing* of God! It is true, God is purging from the hearts of His true remnant every vestige and all the ways of the old order church systems of men! And He is establishing the new order of His kingdom *in our hearts!* But I declare unto you that I have neither witnessed, nor received testimony of, a truly NEW ORDER any where that is saving the world or delivering creation! And don't tell me that I am putting off into the future that which may be claimed today. Jesus could *not* come into the world until the *fullness of time* came! He could *not* die as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world until the *evening of the Passover* arrived! The Holy Spirit could *not* be poured out until the day of Pentecost had *fully come!* In the eternal realm of God's Spirit all things exist in God's *now*. But in the outworking of those things in the earth realm God has a time and a season for every work, and each will arrive right on schedule!

When the feast of Tabernacles has fully come, the Lord of Glory will *suddenly appear* in His temple of sons in the manifestation of incorruptible life and nature, of omnipotent, immortal power and glory — with no carnal efforts, advertising, programming, church meetings, song services, or any kind of soulish works to produce it! In the fullness of time God will *suddenly change and transform us* in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. He will then send forth His sons in the power of incorruption and immortality, in the sovereignty of the throne of the Father, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed before the face of all nations, tongues, tribes and peoples! The sons of God shall arise on the scene out of a *sudden*, powerful, sovereign, transcendental move of God! These are glorious things beyond the ability of my poor tongue and my faltering pen to describe! These are divine unspeakable things revealed in the mysteries of the book of Revelation — things which must *hastily, quickly, speedily, and shortly* come to pass! Whatever your stage of development, my dear brother or sister, wherever you are in the outworking of the book of Revelation, the work will be completed *swiftly!*

God's people are still prone to think with *carnal minds*. When they hear about things that will "shortly come to pass" immediately their attention is focused on *world events* rather than on the *things of God!* This fallacy-ridden practice has given rise to what has been rightly termed "newspaper eschatology" — studying current events in the arena of "this present evil world" rather than searching the mind of the Spirit for the wisdom and understanding God gives of the *true thing* He is doing in the earth by His Spirit! The *work of God* is not currently outside of us, not out there in the world of darkness with all of its plans and efforts and shamefully fleshly and wicked activities. The work of God is *within His elect!* "For it is God which *worketh in you* both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13). Sons of God do not derive their theology from the newspapers nor the television news casts. What you read and hear there is not what God is doing! That is not where God's work is seen! The Holy Spirit of God has not come to show us what the world system is up to — He has come to "take the *things of Christ* and *show them unto us!*"

When the Holy Spirit gives us revelation it is not to bless us with juicy tidbits of information about Saddam Hussein or Yassar Arafat! Let us seek to *abandon all such side issues* and seek diligently to concentrate on Christ! Those who will possess the mind of Christ will find in

Him the source of all reality and the culmination of all purpose. We hear a great deal today about many wonderful things. As we draw nearer to the manifestation of the sons of God, and the full light of God's new day sends its illuminating rays upon our waiting souls, there will be an ever-increasing flood of light and revelation. This we must certainly expect and accept, for every new day brings new things, and new dispensations are sent to flood the world with greater light and greater experience in God. But the "new things" are *God's things* — not the world's things! The things that must shortly come to pass are *spiritual things, divine things, heavenly things, supernatural things* — not the things of the world, the flesh, and the devil! "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that *God hath prepared* for them that love Him. But God *hath revealed them unto us* by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the *deep things of God*" (1 Cor. 2:9-10).

During the days of His flesh Jesus had this to say about the work of the Holy Spirit within the believer: "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will **show you things to come**" (Jn. 16:13). And just what are those **things to come** that the Spirit shows to us? The very next verse plainly tells us! "And He shall glorify me: for He shall **receive of mine**, and shall **show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and show it unto you!**" Some of God's people today are being guided into all truth, and they are *seeing things to come*, by the Spirit! It is clear that the Holy Spirit is working within us the way Jesus said He would. Others are unaware that a new Day has come to earth, and what this new Day is all about. But Father has a chosen and elect remnant in the earth today who have ears to hear Him! They are hearing His voice and receiving His word, and are getting spiritual glimpses of some wonderful things yet to come in the kingdom of their Father!

These are challenging but glorious times! The close and consummation of God's age-long purpose in the church is now upon us and it is time for the sons of God to be revealed unto creation. The great purpose of the bride-church has been to birth in the earth a many-membered son! We know that the church age is ending, not because of any time-prophecy in the Bible we can interpret, nor by any events in the outer world that herald this fact. We know that as the church age is ending the new age of manifested sonship is dawning because our Father has sovereignly and powerfully *revealed by His Spirit* to His called and chosen remnant that it is now the hour for the sons of God to be unveiled in the earth! The birth of the Manchild, the sons of God, is the *supreme purpose* and *grand finale* of God's age-long activity in the church. To love and covet sonship is to love and covet the *very purpose of God from timeless ages*. Just as the crowning achievement of a man and woman who have joined their lives together in marriage love is to bring forth sons and daughters in their own image and likeness, so the matchless outcome of Christ's eternal love for the church is the birthing of the Manchild.

Sonship is dearer to God's heart than any other thing! God the Father has carefully planned this glorious consummation of the church age from before the foundation of the world. Every detail of the process by which, when the time was ripe for it, the sons would appear on the stage of history was laid down in heaven's blueprint before there was a world, an age, or a dispensation. There has never been a people that has been so blessed as we have been, or that has come to such a high degree of maturity, by the leading of the Holy Spirit. Our Father has called us to be kings and priests after the order of Melchizedek! His Spirit is ever urging us onward and upward, that we might attain to that high calling of God in Christ for which we have been apprehended!

The firstborn Son lived, manifested the glory of His Father, and ascended to the throne of His Father on high. Now, a vast company of sons is to follow Him in His regeneration, be changed into His likeness, and conformed into His image. There is nothing static nor stagnant about our life in Christ nor in the processes by which His purpose is fulfilled in us. We must be changed! We are *being* changed! We must grow up into Him in all things! We must attain to the measure of the stature of the *fullness of Christ*! We must be filled with *all the fullness of God*! We must be fully and forever sealed in our foreheads with the *mind of Christ*! This corruptible must put on *incorruption*, and this mortal must put on *immortality*! THESE ARE THINGS WHICH MUST SHORTLY COME TO PASS!

Oh, yes! The Holy Spirit is showing us *things to come*! These things have nothing whatever to do with what is happening in Washington, D.C., London, England, Russia, China, Israel, or any other place on earth. They have everything to do with **who and what we are becoming in Christ!** HERE ARE *THINGS TO COME*: A people out of whom the Father has burned, by the holy fires of His presence, all of their old empty religious works! A people that desires to do only the will of their Father! A people who overcome all things! A people that has put on the mind of Christ! A people conformed to the image of the Son of God! A people that has grown up unto a *perfect man*, in the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! A people to whom is given *all* power and *all* authority in heaven and in earth! A people that sits down with Christ in His throne! A people that has become incorruptible and has put on immortality! A people that has put every enemy under their feet! A people qualified to reign over the earth and deliver the whole creation from all the power of sin and death ! What glorious things are these! They are *things to come*, that even now are becoming reality in God's elect. When the blessed Holy Spirit *shows us things to come*; when the mighty unveiling of Jesus Christ shows His bondslaves *things which must speedily come to pass*, **these** are the "things" spoken of! It is hard to understand how the *true intent* of the Spirit has been overlooked and missed for so many centuries. I do not know how or why Christians came to the conclusion that the "things to come" have something to do with the events of "this world" or the "end" of the world. Thank God, the Holy Spirit of truth is now taking the things of Christ, and is showing *them* unto us! What a Day!

Chapter 7

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

continued

There is an Eastern saying that goes like this: "When the sage points to the moon, all the idiot sees is the finger!" Truly we are learning that as far as the heavens are above the earth, so far does the understanding imparted by the *spirit of the Word* transcend the understanding gleaned from the *letter of the Word*. The *letter* is merely an indication or sign pointing to the reality, not the reality itself. One must go far beyond the *letter* (the finger) and experience the *reality in the spirit* (the moon) if he is to know truth! If we involve ourselves only with the *letter of the Word*, we will soon be quagmired in external applications and surface interpretations devoid of any spiritual significance in our lives. But if we are attuned to the *spirit of the Word*, then God Himself becomes known to us as the inward nature, life, power, wisdom and truth that enables us to walk as the revelation of Christ in the earth! Nowhere is this more true than when we come to the book of Revelation! The book of Revelation is written in code. If we try to *literalize* the book with the understanding of the carnal mind, we will have an incredible *horror show* on our hands! And we will miss the *reality* of what the Spirit is saying altogether.

Early in the book we meet a *lamb*. Even the literalists have enough sense to understand that the lamb is not a four-legged woolly little creature romping through the pasture squealing, "Baa...baa...baa...!" It is, in fact, *Mary's Little Lamb*, but not the one in the nursery rhyme! We could preach on the "lamb" of God in any church in America and everyone would agree that this lamb is not a barnyard animal. But what amazes me is that they use an altogether different rule of interpretation on almost everything else in the book of Revelation! They spiritualize what they like and literalize what they don't understand. Preachers have been preaching from the book of Revelation for centuries, identifying the lamb as a *symbol* for the *man* Christ Jesus who came to die for our sins, then proceed to assert that the throne of God is a seat somewhere out beyond the Milky Way that actually has a rainbow around it; the mark of the beast is an actual imprint on people's foreheads; the blood flowing up to the horse's bridles is literally going to happen over in the valley of Megiddo; and the New Jerusalem is a huge monstrosity that will one day come floating down out of the sky and land on the earth like a bump on a little boy's head!

If John was *in the Spirit* when he saw these things, it seems to me that we are going to have to get in the same Spirit John was in to see the same things that John saw! John was not ignorant of Old Testament types and shadows. Once a man is able to identify the symbol he sees in the Spirit, for the first time in his life he will understand what it is that the Lord is saying. He will no longer beat the air like a blind man in a pillow fight, spewing forth spiritual absurdities in the name of the Lord. Make no mistake about it — every *spiritual* thing that a child of God learns, he must learn by a *revelation* from the Spirit of God! Any other understanding is fleshly, carnal, and devilish.

Jesus, in the days of His flesh, spoke often in the language of *symbols*. All of His wonderful parables were given in symbolic and allegorical language. But He also used symbols in His speech on many other occasions. The disciples were showing Jesus the temple and its grandeur. The gifts of the ages were repositied there, and the whole temple was built with the greatest cost and magnificence, so that nothing was more stupendous in all the nations. It was adorned with gold and silver and the whitest of marble, some of the foundation stones were more than sixty feet long, seven and a half feet high and nine feet broad. Jesus stood taking it all in, and gazing at the temple, said, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up again!" This totally "blew" the carnal minds of those standing there who heard these words! They were incensed and were ready to kill Him. With countenances distorted by anger the Jews replied, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?"

It wasn't what Jesus said that upset them, it was what they *thought* He said! They were good "Fundamentalists," and they believed in taking the word of God *literally* unless God clearly specified that He was speaking figuratively or spiritually! Even the disciples, still concerned with the natural, were understanding with carnal minds, unenlightened by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God. They failed to *discern* that He spoke of the temple of *His body*! These men in their then unspiritual state, could not be expected to understand what Jesus spoke by the Spirit. They were more concerned about the outward edifice of stones than the living temple not made with hands! They were more concerned about the passing, than the permanent. But the Master had finished with this. The time had come for God to raise up in the earth a glorious temple of *living stones*, of which the temple of the Old Covenant was but a faint type and shadow. So He had little interest now in that which represented a fallen order, devoid of God's presence and power and majesty.

What Jesus was really saying was, "The temple of God is standing in front of you, ladies and gentlemen!" He was saying, "Here's the tabernacle of God, and if you destroy this living temple I will raise it up in three days." He was taking a literal picture from an Old Testament reality, bringing it out of the realm of shadow and enigma, into the realm of *spiritual reality*. By these words and many others Jesus was establishing His own principles of interpretation in the new order of the kingdom of God! If we were to take even half of Jesus' words in the natural by literal, carnal understanding, we would be in deep, deep trouble! So if you feel we are wrong in speaking spiritual truths from literal pictures, you are going to have to deal with Jesus, for He is our Teacher, and that is the style He preached in. Many years later He came to John on the isle of Patmos and He was still proclaiming the power and glory of the kingdom of God in the same metaphoric pattern. But the Fundamentalists just didn't get it! And they still don't, today. That's why they have a literal antichrist coming, sitting in a literal temple in Jerusalem, stamping a literal mark on literal foreheads, and fighting a literal battle in a literal valley over in the literal state of Israel in the literal Middle East. Their spiritual comprehension is no brighter today than that of the Jews who stood with Jesus that day on the temple mount before the buildings of Herod's temple!

The seemingly strange language of the Bible is, in reality, picture language. Such expressions as, "the earth melted" at God's voice, the earth reeling "to and fro as a drunkard," or the idea of those cast into "outer darkness" as "weeping and gnashing" their teeth are misleading to the carnal mind. The Bible is literally *filled* with symbolic language! Symbols or pictures are intended to clarify what the Lord wants to convey to us — but only to the one who *hears by the Spirit*! All others are confused. Some want to interpret the scriptures literally, and say that the *spiritual interpretation* is to change or "spiritualize away" the plain word of God. How can you spiritualize away that which *is spiritual*! Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they *are spirit* and they *are life*." Little wonder that years later on the isle of Patmos, among the visions

He showed to John, He should say again and again, "He that *hath an ear*, let Him *hear* what the Spirit saith unto the churches!"

Some of the most beautiful and well-known promises in the scriptures, by which the Lord assures His people of His care for them, are presented in very colorful, pictorial language. The 23rd Psalm, known and loved so widely by Christian people, is a classic example of this. When David writes, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters," none of this passage is literal! David put himself in the position of a sheep, and Yahweh as His shepherd. Certainly no one would argue that David was actually, literally a sheep! We may not care to lie down in green pastures, or be led about by a rod and a staff! But without these thoughts being illustrated for us, God's leading, God's direction, God's discipline, and God's provision of all spiritual things in our lives would not be nearly so impressive and comforting!

Another wonderful word that is deeply meaningful for every son of God is found in the 91st Psalm. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler..." This is a wonderful promise made more understandable and forceful through the use of symbols. God is likened to a "refuge" and a "fortress." He is also spoken of as having "feathers" and "wings." No one would want to say these words were to be understood literally. We have meaningful illustration in this Psalm! It is a vivid word picture of God's deliverance and protection of His sons who dwell in the secret place of the Most High, in the Most Holy Place of our spirit, where God dwells within as life, beyond the veil of flesh! None of our enemies can penetrate that high and holy realm of His blazing glory! All of the emotions of the flesh, the powers of the carnal realm, the pressures of the world, the snares of the devil, the seducing allurements of the harlot religious systems, and the very powers of sin and death themselves are neutralized here within our "refuge" and "fortress," and beneath the "feathers" and "wings" of our heavenly Father's power and nature! What a dwelling place! And all God's sons are learning to dwell there, to make the Most High within *our habitation*!

I hear about people who have visions on their death bed of mansions and golden streets in that bright glory-world above. Some have died and have come back, imagining that they have walked with Jesus on the golden streets of heaven! I will tell you what they are seeing. They are seeing a *vision*. But you see, beloved, visions require an *interpretation*. When Peter was praying on the roof-top he saw the vision of the sheet let down from heaven full of all manner of unclean beasts, birds, and creeping things. The voice of the Lord spoke to him, saying, "Rise up, Peter, kill and eat!" Peter, as a good Israelite, was repulsed! He could not understand the vision, and objected, saying, "By no means, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth!" With his natural mind he supposed the Lord was tempting him to eat meat that was unclean under the law. But in visions you usually don't see the thing the vision stands for — you see only the *representation*, the *figure*, the *type*, the *symbol* that stands for the reality being conveyed. In Peter's case, the unclean animals stood for the Gentiles who were outside of God's covenant. God was telling Peter that the Gentiles were now *cleansed* by the blood of Jesus, to be received in one body as the people of God through faith. So the vision had to be *interpreted*! Only the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God could unfold the *meaning* of the vision!

Many times visions have been given and men accept the visions as the reality (literally) rather than a picture or symbolic representation of the truth God is revealing. Millions of Christians

are expecting a mansion over the hilltops of Glory with a gold street out front, with a lawn that never grows and never needs mowing, off on some planet called Heaven. This hope is based on the visions seen by dying men, or the visions received by the apostle John on the isle of Patmos. But all these are merely *visions* and they must be interpreted! What you see is *not* what you get! What is *seen* is not what God is showing! It is merely a symbol of the reality, not the substance! There are no literal streets of gold any more than there are literal beasts rising up out of the sea, or literal horns of the head of the Lamb of God! These are all word-pictures portraying *spiritual realities*. Dying men see pictures of a physical paradise because they are unprepared for the spiritual realities themselves, so as they pass from this gross material realm the Lord presents those realities to them in a way their minds are able to comprehend — the *images* of a *vision*!

If you want to experience the true heaven of God's Spirit then you must awaken to the place where you are seated together with Christ — *now*! No word written or spoken could hold more truth in this regard than the words of Paul when he speaks of the power "which God exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named..." (Eph. 1:20-21). These terms used by Paul are figures of speech! God is *omnipresent spirit* — He doesn't physically **sit** on anything, nor does He physically have a **right hand**! It means that Christ is raised up permanently into that *highest spiritual realm* where He has all power and authority! The "throne" spoken of in other scriptures and throughout the book of Revelation refers to His *omnipotent power*. So now we know where Christ ascended! HE ASCENDED INTO THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION OF ALMIGHTY POWER AND AUTHORITY! And that is where we are raised up and seated *in Christ*! "And He raised us up together with Him and made us sit down together — giving us joint seating with Him — in the heavenly sphere by virtue of our being in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6, Amplified). It is a blessed day for us when God makes it clear to our hearts that all who are *in Christ* have been raised up and given joint seating with Christ in the *very same heavens of God's Spirit* where He sits enthroned with His Father! That is the true heaven — not visionary mansions with gold bath tubs, earth-like flowers that never fade, or a river running out of a throne. Every son of God is receiving a clear and powerful understanding by the Spirit of what it means to live in heaven, walk in heaven, and reign from heaven! Most Christians have no idea of where heaven is, what heaven is, or the realm out of which they should be living. They think they are where their natural mind tells them they are. Heaven seems a far-off place. They have missed the spirit reality altogether and understand not that they are born from above and that their citizenship *is in heaven*. That high and holy realm is not away off beyond the galaxies, but a place in our spirit where we rise up above our earthiness and learn to compare *spiritual things* with *spiritual things*. It is there that we touch *reality*! God is in heaven, and God is *in our spirit*!

In this world we live by symbols. We use either written symbols or sound symbols to express every thought or feeling, to identify every person, place, or object. Words are only symbols. Names are only symbols. Numbers are only symbols. Our alphabet is only a group of 26 small symbols that can be organized into words — then words into sentences — sentences into thoughts — and thoughts into knowledge. You read a book and you take a journey to far away lands with exotic scenes, smells, and noises. But all you have really done is sit and look at thousands of symbols on a couple hundred paper pages! But the symbols have conveyed to your mind the reality! Our Lord Jesus Christ claims the title of the "Alpha and Omega," or "A" and the "Z" of the alphabet which includes all the other letters in between and can contain and express all knowledge. In Christ are hid *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*! To be *in Christ* is to dwell in that dimension of life where *all reality lies*!

Symbols only represent the things for which they stand, not the reality itself. Money is considered the most important factor in human life by many because it represents power and security. Of itself, money has no value whatsoever more than the paper or metal it contains, though through it, it is possible to purchase the comforts and luxuries of earth. There is as much difference between the symbol and the reality as there is between the letters of the alphabet and the great thoughts that can be expressed through those tiny little letters. There is as much difference between the symbol and the reality as there is between the money in your pocket and the actual things that money can buy. The man who settles for a mansion in the sky or a stroll down the street of gold with the blue-eyed Jesus is like the man who reads a book about Arabia but never goes there. He misses the *reality*! How much greater is the reality! The reality is those things which God is now showing unto us *by His Spirit!*

When our Lord said, "Ye are the salt of the earth," He was speaking quite obviously in figurative language. He did not mean that believers were to be put into a gigantic salt shaker and shaken over the globe! Nobody would be so ridiculous as to believe that. The sons of God today are indeed the salt of the earth! God's elect is that spiritual power which gives flavor and preservation to all things. We are the guarantee of the world's glorious future! The whole race of mankind and all nations are being lifted, raised up into a new state and condition by the life that flows out of the Lord's people! And when Christ said, "Ye are the light of the world," He didn't mean we had to be lit like a candle and put up someplace where we could shine! God has chosen to speak to us through the scriptures by the use of symbols. Consider the implications if Jesus had meant it *literally* when He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you" (Jn. 6:53). If this statement had been intended literally Jesus would have become the founder of the world's most bizarre religious cult — cannibalism! But beyond these physical figures lies the glorious **reality** of which He spoke, the reality that His *flesh* means His *Word* and His *blood* means His *Spirit-life*! And yet — people have the audacity to accuse us of *spiritualizing away* the word of God! The Bible is a *spiritual book*! The words that Christ speaks into our hearts are *spirit*, and they are *life*! There is only one sure way to distort and destroy the meaning and message and power of God's eternal truth, and that is by *carnalizing it away*! To carnalize the word of God is simply to interpret it by the superficial reasoning of the carnal mind. The whole church world today has created its entire system — rituals, ceremonies, ordinances, creeds, doctrines, methods, programs and promotions — by the *carnalization* of the word of the Lord!

SIGN-I-FIED

Late into the night a schoolboy struggled over a mathematical problem given to him by his teacher. He checked and rechecked his figures. He could find nothing wrong, yet the proper answer to the problem was not forthcoming. At last, his brain weary with the effort, he decided to retire for the night. The next morning, rested, and ready to try again, the schoolboy took another look at his figures, and to his surprise discovered that he had completely overlooked a very vital factor, not taking it into consideration at all. When this factor was restored to its proper place in the solving of the problem, the correct answer at once appeared. Naturally the boy wondered why he had been so dull as not to make this discovery the night before!

This is a simple story, but it illustrates a great truth. It shows why the book of Revelation is so often misinterpreted, and why in all the ages there has been so much confusion and controversy, the reason being that an important feature of the Revelation has been overlooked by the tired, carnal mind; and without this all the efforts of man to discover its truths have failed. The one simple factor is this: REVELATION IS A SPIRITUAL BOOK COMMUNICATED IN SIGNS AND SYMBOLS!

The apostle John begins the Revelation with these words: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and *signified* it by His angel unto His servant John" (Rev. 1:1). The word "signified" is the Greek word *semaino* which is a derivative of the word *semo* meaning a mark or sign, or to indicate by signs or symbols. The English word could be written SIGN-I-FIED — demonstrating that it means to communicate by means of signs and symbols. We understand, of course, that is exactly how the Revelation was communicated to John and the whole book is a book of pictures and symbols!

You will understand a great truth when you see that a *sign* is never the reality — it merely points to the reality! The fact that the revelation of Jesus Christ was communicated to John in the form of signs and symbols shows clearly that there is no "literalness" in the book. When you read of mountains, earthquakes, beasts, horns, rivers, seas, stars, sun, moon, heads, marks, horses, wars, floods, angels, books, etc., NONE OF THESE WILL EVER BE SEEN OR FULFILLED LITERALLY OR PHYSICALLY UPON THE EARTH OR IN HEAVEN ABOVE. These, with all the other signs in the book, are communications of *spiritual realities* expressed in the form of symbols. We have entertained such carnal notions about the book of Revelation! The book of Revelation is a book of *revealing* — and we are in an hour of revealing! The Holy Spirit must teach us the first principles of this wonderful book. The first key to understanding the book is the fact that the book is, *in its entirety*, a book of symbols. Any other approach will leave you hopelessly lost in a sea of confusion, or muttering like a mad man about things utterly ridiculous. I may be mistaken, but it is my opinion that there is not one single *literal* reference in the whole book!

A stranger in a town many years ago was looking about as he walked down Main Street. Soon a gentleman accosted him and asked what he was looking for. "A Barber's Pole," came the reply. "Do you need something to lean on?" "No — I want the Barber Shop — I was merely looking *for the sign*." It was not the Barber's Pole he sought — the Pole was but the symbol pointing to the reality — the Barber Shop! Never forget as you read the book of Revelation — the sign is *never* the reality! When it says an angel flew through heaven, you will never see the angel for he never flew and never will. He is a sign! Angels are messengers, they represent a *message*! When God sends forth a message out of a heavenly realm it is portrayed as an angel flying through heaven. The literalization of the book of Revelation has given rise to all the popular myths promulgated by the preachers and teachers of the church systems. "End of the world" stories have been circulating ever since there have been human beings on earth. Tribulation, Antichrist, Armageddon, and mark of the beast theories have been spawned in practically every generation for the past two thousand years. *None has ever come to pass!* And none *will* ever come to pass! People like to be scared, and some like to scare others. Movie producers make horror pictures to scare people who love to be scared, and preachers preach their terror sermons from the book of Revelation for the very same reason! Fear is one of the most powerful tools known to humanity, and has often been as misused by religious leaders as by politicians and movie makers. Notwithstanding its mysterious nature, the book was not written to frighten or bewilder its readers, for, not *scared*, but "*Blessed* (happy) is he that readeth, and they that *hear* (with the spiritual ear) the words of this prophecy...for the time is at hand" (Rev. 1:3).

The book of Revelation is not a book of fantasy or science fiction, but of spiritual realities in the kingdom of God. The symbols are but the outer covering under which exalted mysteries are concealed. These symbols were familiar to the people to whom John was writing, for they are all rooted in the history, language, and prophecies of the Old Testament! The truth is that the book of Revelation is a gathering up, or summarizing, of the whole core message of the Bible

in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Sometimes a very crude illustration helps. This book of Revelation is like nothing so much as a big knot tied in the end of a long skein of yarn, or bundle of threads; every thread in the long skein of yarn is in the knot. And every thread in the knot is in the bundle of threads! Every principle thread in the whole Bible fabric comes into this Revelation knot, and every thread in this Revelation knot can be traced back into the rest of the Bible.

This serves as a key to the symbolism of the book. Its symbolic language has seemed like a foreign language to which we had no dictionary or grammar book, and so we have spent our time guessing and speculating about what it means. But this symbolic language, instead of being a hindrance and a puzzle, is really meant to make it an open book, able to be understood! It is a *revelation*, an *unveiling* — not a *concealing*, an *obscuring* or a *confounding*! For every bit of symbolism, and every strange allusion or phrase, can be found somewhere back in the pages of the Old Testament or in the New, in such a way as to indicate just what it means! The language of symbolism is meant to make the book more easily understood, but — there's a "but" here — *but* understood by one who is familiar with the images of the scriptures *and* anointed by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God!

What are the symbols? Numbers like three and seven always mean completeness or perfection. In the scriptures the word mountain often symbolizes a kingdom. By the *letter* of the word it can mean an external kingdom, and by the *spirit* of the word it indicates an internal stronghold or kingdom in our life. When John spoke about a mountain in the Revelation, those who knew the scriptures and were spiritual understood what he meant! "Speak to this mountain (kingdom, stronghold in our life) and it shall be removed." The disciples of Christ were familiar with the use of the trumpet to herald important proclamations and events, so when they read, "I, John, was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet," they knew that God was going to speak and reveal an important message to His people, or announce a new and significant move of His purpose in the earth. We, too, have heard that trumpet in our day! Beginning with the glorious coming of Christ as Latter Rain in 1948, the life-changing message of sonship, reconciliation and the kingdom of God began to sound in our land! A mighty change came in the earth as the Spirit of the Lord moved in the presence and power of God among His people to direct God's called out and chosen people into new paths of His leading. We began to be drawn out of the religious systems of man; the refining fires of God began to do their purifying work in our lives, transforming us into the image of Christ; we were quickened in spirit and caught up into new and unspeakable heavenly places in Christ Jesus; divine mysteries which had been lost and hidden from the Lord's people for long centuries were opened up within our raptured spirits; and we started on our march into our promised land of the fullness of Christ and onward to the heavenly mount Zion where the sons of God shall rule and reign over all things! That mighty message from the Lord that has sounded in our spiritual ears and brought great change and new direction to the elect of God, *is a voice as of a trumpet* — just as John heard in the long ago!

We must pass beyond the signs in order to get to the message of the Spirit! The Lamb has seven horns — not literal horns, of course — for the horns are mere figures representing the seven-fold spirit of power and life which emanates from the mind and nature of the Lamb. May I reverently inject another thought? The "dead" who "stand" before God and are "judged" out of the "books" are not the physically dead in the outward cemeteries, nor are the books such as you have in your library. If the "Lamb" who opens the "book" in chapter five is not a four-legged lamb, it should not be difficult for anyone to understand that the "book" is not a two-covered book! People do such sloppy thinking about such divine and exalted things! If that "book" is

one of the Revelation's wonderful symbols, does it not follow that the "books" in chapter twenty are likewise word-pictures in the form of symbols? The religious commentaries that have been written on this book will avail you nothing, for they have been written as an attempt of the natural mind to decipher the meanings of the symbols rather than discovering the language of the Spirit and understanding out of the realm of the Spirit.

"I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened," John declared. When Jesus came this world was spiritually a cemetery. ALL were *dead*! NONE were *living*! "To be carnally minded *is death*," is the Spirit's own graphic and accurate definition of what it means to be dead (Rom. 7:6). "And you hath He quickened who *were dead* in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). To the spiritually dead the apostle commands, "Awake thou that sleepest and arise from *the dead*, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph. 5:14). Let us with pure minds and an understanding quickened by the spirit of revelation consider these meaningful words: "And I saw the *dead*...stand before God." I saw the DEAD — S-T-A-N-D! And immediately the "books" were opened.

Heaven keeps a record of the deeds of men, and all the thoughts and emotions under which they act. Myriads of human beings have lived and died of whom the world knows nothing; but the lives they lived, the deeds they wrought, the thoughts and passions they indulged, still stand written where the memory of them cannot perish. Not a human being has ever breathed earth's sweet atmosphere whose career is not traced at full length in the books God has ordained. Yes, O man! O woman! Whoever you may be, your biography is written. An unerring hand has recorded every item, with every secret thing. There is not an ill thought, a mean act, a dirty transaction, a filthiness of speech, or a base feeling that ever found entertainment in your heart, but is there described in bold letters, by its true name. Thank God, all the good, and all the spiritual is recorded there too!

Where is the record? And what are these "books" where the secrets of your heart are meticulously inscribed? My words may come as a shock to some, but I do not hesitate to assert that they are nought but the BOOK OF YOUR OWN NATURE — THE GENETIC PATTERN OF YOUR VERY OWN **BEING!** In the sight of God you, and each and every man and woman on this planet, are a book; and indelibly inscribed within your mind and character is everything that **you are**. "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh" (Mat. 12:34). When your mouth speaks, the message inscribed in your inner nature is exposed and read by all who hear. Every outer action is a word, a sentence, a paragraph, a page of your book — the book which you are — known and read by all men.

And think not, O man, that should your earthly body be laid in a silent and motionless tomb, that the Almighty must then resort to some celestial scrolls wherein heavenly angels have faithfully recorded your every thought and deed. NO! All is accurately recorded in *the law of your life*, deep within the recesses of your own nature, in your spiritual condition and soulical state of being. We do not awaken on the other side a different person or in a different condition than we were in the flesh, for the record is in our very *nature*. In order to deal with you in judgment, in the flesh or out of the flesh, God has but to "stand you up" and prompt you to speak or act — and immediately you will manifest exactly what is inscribed in the constitution of your inner life. At once your "book" will "open," each line being made clear, and you will be judged by the things written in that book *which you are*. When God, either now or in ages yet unborn, lays His mighty hand upon you, my friend, and summons you to **stand** before Him, your book will open, and you will not then manifest anything other than what is written in the book of your own nature. How truly it is written, "For the word of God is living, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and

spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature (dead or alive, visible or invisible) that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:12-13).

Does this trouble you, my brother? Ah, but I have good news for you! The grand purpose for this "opening of our book" is so that all that is written therein may be exposed, revealed, uncovered, displayed, and brought to judgment, dealt with by a concentration of divine discipline and instruction, as the Father processes each individual. Someone says, "I don't believe in *processing* — I believe in the *finished work*!" Let me tell you something. Your *spirit* doesn't need any processing! Your spirit is the offspring of God. Your spirit has been quickened by His Spirit, you have been regenerated, born again of the incorruptible seed of the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. Your spirit is pure, holy, undefiled, the dwelling of the Most High God! But your *soul* does need some processing! If there were no processing, if the so-called *finished work* took care of everything, there would be no work of *sanctification*, no *cleansing* by the washing of the water of the word, no *discipline* or *chastening* of the Father, no *putting off* of the works of the flesh, no *mortifying* of our members which are upon the earth, no *purging* of the old leaven, no *refining fire* by which the sons of Levi are purified that they might offer and an offering in righteousness unto the Lord, no *washing of our robes* to make them white in the blood of the Lamb, no *pruning* of the branches that they may bear more fruit — and we could go on and on! The soul-bride must *make herself ready* for her marriage union with Christ, the spirit-bridegroom. We need to think *spiritual sense* about these things, beloved! I do not believe in eternal processing — there should come a time in our lives where *we have been conformed to the image of the Son*! Yes, God is finishing His work, a people is coming forth in the likeness and fullness of Christ in this very hour! But to maintain that there is no processing, that the "finished work of Calvary" takes care of everything, is to deny the testimony of scripture and the experience of every saint that I know. We might as well tear our Bible to pieces and send it out with the trash.

The procedure whereby God brings His judgment into our lives is simple, but very effective. The person abiding in some realm of soulish or fleshly death is caused to "stand" before God — brought directly into relation to the countenance of God who is the Judge of all! God arranges the circumstances, places him in a situation or circumstance, and his "book" is opened — the inner condition uncovered, the secrets and intents of the heart manifest in such a measure and expressed to such a degree that there need be no other record or evidence of his state appealed to. As it is written, "God shall bring *every work* into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccl. 12:14), for, "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ" (Rom. 2:16). That doesn't mean that this will happen some fearful day out in the future before a great white throne out in space somewhere! Oh, no! These are *spiritual realities*, my beloved. They speak of the dealings of God in judgment right now, today, in the life of every son of God who shall be conformed to the image of God's Son, brought unto a *perfect man*, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! The throne of God *is a white throne*. White bespeaks of righteousness, and the throne of God is a righteous throne of love, grace, salvation and power unto mankind. But you will never see this throne, for it is established in the lives of those who rule and reign with Christ!

Ah, you will despair and shrink before God's judgments until you clearly understand that God does not open your book to either embarrass or destroy you — but to *deliver you*! God brings no man to judgment apart from the opening of his book. That is the true *spiritual message* conveyed by these beautiful *symbols* in the book of Revelation! It is a divine law — God can never deliver you, or any man, until the carnality and corruption in your heart has been drawn

into outward manifestation, exposed, to be dealt with by God's stern and tender hand. When the inner nature erupts in some outward uncleanness, do not despair! Thank God for exposing the deceitfulness and wickedness, cast yourself upon the tender mercies of the Lord who judges you in unconditional love and infinite goodness, and yield yourself under His mighty hand that He may bring forth victory in *your earth*. We must never be discouraged nor feel condemned when God *reveals* the man of sin who sits in the temple of God which we are, but neither should we become complacent about it! God will send forth judgment unto victory however long it takes and however severe the dealings. He will never abdicate His throne, He will never terminate His judgments until *every man* is conformed into the image of God's glorious Son!

"And another book was opened, which is the BOOK OF LIFE" (Rev. 20:12). This must needs be opened too, for the book of life is the nature of the Lamb inscribed by the Spirit in the life of the New Creature. The book of life is called "the book of the life of the Lamb" (Rev. 13:8). If I were to give you a book entitled THE BOOK OF THE LIFE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON, you would understand at once that it a biography of the life of the first president of the United States, George Washington. That book should contain everything you always wanted to know about George Washington! Every detail of his life would be there. The portrait of his character and accomplishments would be drawn there. In the same way, THE BOOK OF THE LIFE OF THE LAMB is the autobiography of God's Lamb, the expose of who He is, what He is like, what He does. Everything you ever wanted to know about the Son of God is contained in this wonderful book of the life of the Lamb! It is not a literal book, of course, for the sons and daughters of the Most High are the LIVING RECORD AND REVELATION of the life of the indwelling Lamb! It was to the apostle Paul that the revelation was given that the book of life, the book of the life of the Lamb, the book which draws the portrait of the life, nature, character and accomplishment of the Son of God — IS A PEOPLE! "Foreasmuch as Y-E are manifestly declared to *be* THE EPISTLE OF CHRIST ministered by us, written *not with ink*, but with the *Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone*, but in *fleshy tables of the heart*" (II Cor. 3:3).

How tragic that the people of earth for the most part have never read this beautiful *epistle of Christ*, this glorious *book of the life of the Lamb*. They have poured over the books of religion, the commentaries of learned scholars who write out of carnal minds with the words of man's wisdom, the books of hypocrisy, the books of forms of godliness that deny the power thereof, the books of dead doctrines, empty rituals, lifeless ceremonies, and man-made rules and regulations of self righteousness. But precious few have ever seen the BOOK OF THE LIFE OF THE LAMB! Oh! What a wonderful gospel shall fill the earth beneath and the celestial realms above when God fully opens His holy book of Life! The book of Life is that blessed company of the sons of God in whom the life of the Lamb is fully and eternally formed! This book is being carefully written word by word, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, page by page, and chapter by chapter in the nitty-gritty of our daily experience with God until the full revelation of the Christ shall be written therein. Time's clock is striking the hour for the *manifestation* of the sons of God, the opening of God's book of life people, and what a manifestation it shall be! That book is being opened *within us* even now, for it is the *spirit* that giveth life. As Christ in our spirit is opened within ourselves, the life of the Lamb is released to swallow up all sin and death.

God has a *message* for the world — the revelation of Jesus Christ! The message is being written in flaming words of glory upon the pages of the lives and hearts and minds of men and women who are dying to that impudent and death-dealing devil of self, in order to walk and live by the spirit of HIS LIFE. I am terribly at a loss of words to express the glory of God's BOOK OF LIFE COMPANY, but I can assure you that once it is fully ready, prepared, and finished, it

shall become the world's "best seller" throughout the ages to come! As the pen is mightier than the sword, so this book, above any that has ever been written by the finger of man, shall alter the course of history, and the dark covering that has been cast over the minds and hearts of the people for ages and dispensations will be completely destroyed by the flood of transforming light and wisdom and knowledge and glory and power shining forth from the living pages of God's eternal and incorruptible BOOK OF LIFE!

The idea behind each and every word of holy writ is to convey a higher meaning than the literal words contain, the truth of which **must be seen and experienced by man spiritually, internally**. This higher, concealed, inner, spiritual meaning, cast in the words and sense-images of ordinary events, can only be grasped by the *quicken*ed spirit and the *renewed mind*, and it is exactly here that the difficulty lies in conveying the deep spiritual things of God to the natural man. A person's human level of understanding, regardless how educated or intellectual he may be, is clearly not equal to grasping *spiritual truth*. This is why Jesus, after speaking a parable, so often said, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Mat. 11:15). Let us be absolutely certain of this one momentous principle of the kingdom of God: It is not the surface meaning that has any importance, but the golden nugget of spiritual truth which lies in the mine beneath the surface is that alone which is able to enrich the inner man of the spirit.

It is written of our Lord Jesus Christ before He ascended to the Father: "Beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the scripture the things concerning Himself." "Then *opened He their mind*, that they might *understand* the scriptures" (Lk. 24:27,45). One blessed moment spent in the dazzling light of the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God will teach us this eternal truth: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are *spiritually discerned*" (I Cor. 2:14). As nuts cannot be eaten in the shell, neither do they show the sweetness of the meat within until the shells are broken, so it is with the precious truths and realities of the word of God! Unless the Lord opens up our understanding, it is impossible to know those things that pertain to the kingdom of God.

It is from man's carnal-minded interpretation of the word of God, that so many strange and hurtful doctrines have been brought forth in all ages. When man brings his human reason and wisdom to bear upon the Word, and the Word is not spiritually discerned, it can be made to prove almost anything! All the gross foolishness of the religious systems with their candles, crucifixes, incense, altars, images, robes, programs, ordinances, missals, ceremonies, and creeds are but products of carnal minds applied to the word of God. And all the stupidity of everlasting damnation, mansions over the hilltop, the rapture of the church, the removal of the Holy Spirit from the earth. the restored Roman empire, the antichrist sitting in a temple in Jerusalem, and all the supposed horrors that the great God of love, mercy, redemption and salvation is to pour out in vengeful fury upon the inhabitants of the world — all that, too, is hatched out of the perverseness of the carnal mind of religious spirits! When the blessed spirit of truth, however, who is the Teacher and the one who *leads into all truth*, reveals God's thought and purpose to the man or woman who humbly waits in God's holy presence, such treasures are uncovered as "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, *neither have entered into the heart of man*." And the heart rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory at the unfolding of divine wisdom and the Father's magnificent purpose of the ages! God reveals to those who love and fear Him, the deep and wonderful REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

Chapter 8

Blessed Is He That Reads

The beloved John begins the Revelation with these words: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and *signified* it by His angel unto His servant John." The word "signified" is the Greek word *semaino* which is a derivative of the word *semo* meaning a mark or sign, or to indicate by signs or symbols. The English word could be written SIGN-I-FIED — demonstrating that it means to communicate by means of signs or symbols. We understand, of course, that is exactly how the Revelation was communicated to John and the whole book is a book of pictures and symbols!

You will understand a great truth when you see that a *sign* is never the reality — it merely points to the reality! The fact that the revelation of Jesus Christ was communicated to John in the form of signs and symbols shows clearly that there is no "literalness" in the book. The idea behind each and every word is to convey a higher meaning than the literal words contain, the truth of which **must be seen and experienced by man spiritually, internally**. This higher, concealed, inner, spiritual meaning, cast in the words and sense-images of ordinary events, can only be grasped by the *quicken*ed spirit and the *renewed* mind, and it is exactly here that the difficulty lies in conveying the deep spiritual things of God to the natural man. A person's human level of understanding, regardless how educated or intellectual he may be, is clearly not equal to grasping *spiritual truth*. This is why Jesus, after speaking a parable, so often said, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear!" (Mat. 11:15). Let us be absolutely certain of this one momentous principle of the kingdom of God: It is not the surface meaning that has any importance, but the golden nugget of spiritual truth which lies in the mine beneath the surface is that alone which is able to enrich the inner man of the spirit!

When John stood that day on the lonely Patmos and received the revelation of Jesus Christ, He wrote that it was given to him in signs and symbols by the angel of Jesus Christ. "And He sent and signified it **by His angel** unto His servant John" (Rev. 1:1). Who is this "angel" of Jesus Christ? You will find this angel appearing all the way through in almost every chapter of the book of Revelation. "I Jesus have sent **mine angel** to testify unto you these things in the churches" (Rev. 22:16). But you will not recognize him yet, so I will tell you where you will recognize him. If we are to understand the deep mystery here, we shall have to open our hearts to a completely new understanding of God's revelation of Himself. We shall have to see that the word "angel" is itself a *symbol* of something spiritual, just as are all the other figures in the book! We are inclined to lightly pass over the fact that the book of Revelation is written in symbolic language, using elaborate figures of speech to convey spiritual truths and realities. I think this should be obvious to every spiritual mind, but some of our brothers and sisters in Christ try to use the "literal method" of interpretation (the *letter* rather than the *spirit*) — even within this book of symbols! A statement like, "The Bible means just what it says and says just what it means!" *sounds* good, perhaps even spiritual, and often brings some hearty "amens," but this cannot apply when the Holy Spirit speaks and conveys truth through symbols. The very nature of a symbol is that it means *something else*! Otherwise it would not *be* a symbol!

Can we not see by this that the *spiritual meaning* of "His angel" or "Mine Angel" is something higher and grander by far than a bright creature with wings from outer space! There is no value whatever in the *letter of the Word*. It is when a man begins to see the *spirit of the Word* that truth and reality are quickened as life within. My spirit rejoices today in thankfulness to my Father in heaven for that divine, eternal, life-giving wisdom which is the secret of His own heart! Therefore, the angel of Jesus Christ cannot be an angel as we think of angels! All the heavenly angels in the book of Revelation are representations of *messages* sent to us from God. In the Greek language the word angel means *messenger* and in the book of Revelation the angel stands for a *message*!

"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which *God gave unto Him*, to show unto *His servants* things which must shortly come to pass; and *He sent* and signified it *by His angel* unto His servant *John*: who bear record of the *word of God...*" (Rev. 1:1-2). Notice the steps of revelation — It originated with God! It was given to Jesus Christ! He gave it to His angel! His angel gave it to John! And from John it goes to His bondslaves! It comes to the servants of God that they might know what is coming to pass — their destiny in God. And that is the way it has come to you and me today!

Now let's use a little bit of *spiritual sense* in understanding who this symbolical "angel" is. The most obvious clue is found in Revelation 22:16 where we read, "I Jesus have sent **mine angel** to **testify unto you** these things **in the churches**." This should help us see that the angel is one "sent" by Jesus, and his mission is "to *testify* unto you these things *in the churches*." The question follows — Who is the One Jesus has sent to testify unto us the things that concern Himself — the revelation of Jesus Christ? The Bible interprets itself, and the answer is in the clearest of language where there is no symbol! Hear it! "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, *I will send Him* unto you. When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will *guide you into all truth*: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear (from me), that shall He speak: and He will *show you things to come*. He shall *glorify me*: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall *show it unto you*. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of *mine*, and shall *show it unto you*" (Jn. 16:7,13-15). The identity of the "angel of Jesus" should be evident to all who compare the words of this wonderful passage with the words of John in Revelation 1:1-2 and 22:16. The same John was the scribe who set down both in writing.

To these things the word of the Lord bears faithful witness again, "But when the Comforter is come, whom *I will send unto you*, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, *He shall testify of me*" (Jn. 15:26). Then Peter adds this testimony: "Unto whom...was revealed...the things...reported unto you by them which have preached the gospel unto you with the *Holy Ghost sent down from heaven...*" (I Pet. 1:12). And finally Paul confirms this same blessed truth: "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath *revealed them unto us by His Spirit*. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might *know the things that are freely given to us of God*" (I Cor. 2:9-12). And again, "How that by *revelation* He made known unto me the mystery...whereby...ye may understand my *knowledge in the mystery of Christ* which in other ages was not made known...as it is now *revealed* unto His holy apostles and prophets *by the Spirit*" (Eph. 3:3-5).

The **angel of Jesus Christ** who is sent to show us the things of Christ, to bring the revelation of Jesus Christ, to show us things to come, and to testify of Christ and these things in the

churches is none other than the Holy Spirit! Oh, the mystery of it! The world cannot receive the Spirit because it *seeth* Him not, neither *knoweth* Him. Because the world is carnal and lives in the realm of the flesh, it can accept only those things that can be analyzed by the outer senses. The world receives not the Spirit because it *sees* Him not; but he who believes God sees and knows in a realm unfamiliar to the natural man. Once you believe but the simplest things of truth, then the Holy Spirit is able to begin to open to your heart the vast storehouses of God's unsearchable riches. That is what the book of Revelation is all about!

Some may wonder, If God revealed Himself and His eternal purpose in Jesus Christ, why then is *another light, another teacher, another revealer*, after Him, needed? Why did the Holy Spirit have to be sent to teach, lead, and *reveal Christ*? If Christ within us is our life, why then does Jesus *send His angel* to testify of the things that pertain to Himself? This is a deep mystery! Look for a moment at the disciples of our Lord. They were drawn to Jesus by the Father. Their knowledge that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, came not by human nature, but came from above. They loved Jesus with all of their hearts, cleaving unto Him with all the powers of their affections. And yet, while He was here in the flesh, they understood not the scriptures, nor did they understand His mission, His death, resurrection, ascension, nor yet the nature of the kingdom He should bring into existence. Even the personal teaching and instructions of the Lord, received with their most intense interest and admiration, were not sufficient to open their understanding to the glorious and eternal realities set before them. Only their subsequent infilling with the mighty life and power of the Holy Spirit could finally cause them to comprehend this one eternal fact: THE HOLY SPIRIT ALONE CAN LEAD US INTO ALL TRUTH! God is *in* Christ; Christ *is* the truth; but the Holy Spirit alone *reveals Him* who is God manifest.

God in His great love has purposed to reveal Himself fully and perfectly to His creation. It is His gracious will that we should *know Him*! In Christ Jesus He manifests Himself perfectly. Jesus is Light, full of brightness and glory. And yet we require another Light to see the True Light! How is this? How can this be? It is simply because there is no other God but the One — who has revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These are not *three Gods* in one; these are three progressive manifestations of the ONE ETERNAL GOD by which He reveals Himself to man. **Father** speaks of God in heaven, in the invisible, unseen realm of spirit. "When you pray, say, **Our Father** which **art in heaven**, hallowed be Thy name." **Son** speaks of **God manifested**. "No man has ever **seen God** at any time; the only **unique Son**, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him — He has revealed Him, **brought Him out where He can be seen**" (Jn. 1:18, Amplified Bible). **Holy Spirit** speaks of the **energizing, quickening power of God moving and working** throughout the universe and *in the hearts and lives of His people, revealing* the invisible God who has been manifest in Jesus Christ. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in Him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the **Spirit of God**. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that *we might know* the things that are freely given to us of God" (I Cor. 2:11-12).

The Spirit has brought into the life of every son of God a *living knowledge*, the knowing and experiencing of God in Christ. It is not information, not an insight into doctrines and creeds and ideas of religion, or an appreciation of their beauty and grandeur. Men have such knowledge vast and deep, and yet are destitute of the grace of God, ignorant of the purposes of God, and untransformed by the Spirit of God. To *know God* is *life eternal*. The great truth is this: There is One that Christ has sent into the world to fully, powerfully, and profoundly *reveal the Christ* to the elect members of His body on earth! The One whom Christ has *sent* into our hearts to

reveal the Son of God within ourselves is His "angel," His "messenger," the One who teaches us all things and guides us into all truth!

Before we leave this thought, I would like to point you to another significant internal evidence within the book of Revelation which indicates with divine clarity just who the "angel" of Jesus is. Jesus sent His angel to *testify in the churches* of the things that are written in this book. Notice now exactly *who spoke* and *who testified* to the churches! "He that hath an ear, let him hear what *the Spirit saith unto the churches!*" This admonition is repeated *seven times* in chapters two and three, once to each of the seven churches! Then we read, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, *saith the Spirit*, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13). And again, "And *the Spirit* and the Bride say, Come...for *I testify* unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book..." (Rev. 22:17-18). It seems to me that to further emphasize these passages would be to do an injustice, for the plainness of their meaning transcends the argument of man. The book of Revelation interprets itself when we have *eyes to see* and *ears to hear*.

The angel that Jesus sent to John was the Holy Spirit as the **prophetic spirit**. All spirits, or all operations and manifestations of the Spirit, are not prophetic. There is the spirit of wisdom, the spirit of understanding, the spirit of counsel, the spirit of burning, the spirit of judgment, the spirit of grace, the spirit of glory, the spirit of sonship, and scores of other spirits mentioned throughout scripture. But here we read, "The Lord God of the *holy prophets* sent His *angel* to show unto His servants things shortly to be done" (Rev. 22:6). These words signify the **prophetic spirit!** Every prophet that has been sent into this world has had upon him an anointing of the spirit of prophecy or the prophetic spirit, which led him and revealed matters to him. Other men were anointed by the Holy Spirit as kings, priests, warriors, artisans, and various other callings. Each had his particular and unique area of anointing, or the moving and enablement of the Holy Spirit. But only the prophets receive the prophetic spirit and to John was sent a special dispensation of the prophetic spirit symbolically characterized by Jesus as "my angel." I truly believe that the sons of God are today receiving the *fullness of that prophetic spirit* by which the Lord is making known to us the great and mighty things that pertain to this glorious Day of the Lord! I speak not of the "gift of prophecy" of the in-part realm of the passing church order. There has been a prophetic voice in every generation and that prophetic voice proclaimed the Present Truth for that day. What the prophetic voice is saying today *is not the same* as what the prophetic voice was saying in the days of Noah, Moses, Samuel, David, Isaiah, the early church, the reformation, the Pentecostal outpouring of the 20th century, or the coming of Christ as Latter Rain in 1948. Can we not see that there was a different word from the Lord in each generation and at each stage of God's dealings with His people? We don't need to hear the same message Noah heard! The Lord is not sending a flood today! The instructions God gave David are not for us today! We don't need to drive out the Philistines or capture Jerusalem from the Jebusites! What the Lord was saying to His people a hundred years ago is not what He is doing today! To hear what the Spirit *saith (is saying)* unto the churches is a *flowing, living reality*, not a doctrinal statement set in concrete! Every church denomination has its written "Articles of Faith," but those are merely the record of what the Spirit *was saying* to the church, not what the Spirit *is saying!*

To John was revealed the magnificent glory of seeing the *fullness of Christ* as He would stand in completeness on the Lord's day. In the midst of this surpassing revelation John declares, "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth..." (Rev. 19:6). John is standing there in the desolation of Patmos, caught up into the high realm of the

Spirit, and he hears the voice of a *great multitude*, and as the voice of *many waters*, and as the voice of *mighty thunderings*. Can we not see that this is a **corporate voice!** It is this same corporate voice that John is hearing when he declares, "And HE saith unto me, Write..." (Rev. 19:9). All this multitude, all these voices as many waters, all these mighty thunderings are called "HE." The multitude of voices is HE! The Christ that we being many are, is but *one Christ*. The mystery of the many-membered Christ! What could be more solemn or sacred than that?

This Voice of the Corporate Christ is the *testimony of Jesus* which is the *spirit of prophecy!* The *spirit* of this prophecy is the *testimony of Jesus!* The Spirit testifies of HIM! Yet — does not the Spirit speak and testify *through men?* Truly *we* are the temple of the Holy Ghost! This Spirit, this Spirit which testifies of Jesus, is the voice as of many waters, and is also the "angel" of Jesus Christ! How wonderful that these tremendous and almost incredible statements concerning the body of Christ reveal that God's elect are the voice of the Christ, for we bear the prophetic anointing!

The prophetic voice speaking out of God's sons today is not speaking the same things nor in the same way as the prophetic ministry we have known in the past. The prophets of this new Day are not prophesying about the mundane things of our lives, whether we should live here, or move there; hold this job, or that job; marry this man or woman, or remain single; go to this church, or the other church; be a Sunday School teacher, deacon, pastor or apostle; fulfill this or that ministry. That is how we have known the prophetic ministry in the past and we have all been blessed out of that realm as our ministries have been confirmed and the will of the Lord made known to us. I do not say that the Spirit cannot or will not still speak in that way! But it should be evident that the voice of the Lord in the midst of His elect is concerned with *higher things* in this Day! God is doing a *deeper work* in the lives of His called out and chosen ones in this hour!

All across this great land of ours, and around the world among every tongue, people, tribe and nation, the Spirit is bearing witness to God's *ultimate purpose* as He prepares for His *master stroke* as the curtain rises on creation's greatest drama — **THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD!** Those prepared for sonship in this Day are past all the little baby steps of the church systems and are now growing up into the fullness of Christ! Praise His name, once the *finishing touch* is put on the last stone of His living temple of Kings and Priests, the firstfruits of His redemption, we shall step over into our full redemption in spirit, soul and body! In this new age and in the glorious ages yet to come, God shall put His grace and kindness and wisdom and righteousness and power on display through His sons so that the entire creation may walk across the stage of His cosmic theater and behold and see and come to *understand* and *appreciate what God has provided for all men in Christ!* That is what the Spirit *is saying* to the called out in this great Day of the Lord! Our ears have heard the sound of the trumpet and we cannot, dare not, settle for anything less, we must follow on to know the Lord in all His glorious fullness, to put on the mind of Christ, to be transformed into His image, to drink deeply of His incorruptible life, to overcome all things, so that we may in turn *be* the manifestation of Himself unto all mankind. Let us not sell creation short in these days! All creation is travailing and groaning together in pain to be delivered from the bondage of corruption. Let us not deny the Lord who has purchased us to be kings and priests to reign over the earth by settling for something less, a comfortable position in the church realm, or a mansion over the hilltop. While we seek no glory of our own, there is, nevertheless, great wealth and heavenly glory for all who fulfill the will of God in His kingdom! You never lose with God!

When I say that the "angel" of Jesus Christ is the Holy Spirit as the *prophetic spirit of this Day of the Lord*, I can hear someone say, "Now wait just a minute, brother Eby! Doesn't Revelation 22:8-9 tell us that this angel is a *man*, a *prophet*, even one who *keeps the sayings of this book*? Did not John fall down to worship this man-angel? And didn't the angel forbid him, saying, "See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God." Ah, yes, but there is a *deep mystery here*! How does the Holy Spirit speak? We cannot deny that He speaks in the depths of our being — out of the most holy place of our spirit. But have you not heard the Spirit speak *through* man? Peter said that we proclaim the good news *with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven*! Not only do spiritual men read by the Spirit, hear by the Spirit, see by the Spirit, and know by the Spirit — they also *speak* by the Spirit! "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11).

When the voice of that *one like the Son of man* rang out in the midst of the churches, it was not the voice of the lonely Galilean, not the voice of one son of God speaking by the Spirit, not the voice of a singular man-angel from heaven, but the voice as the *sound of many waters*. Many waters means many peoples, and the peoples here are the sons of God. The vision is recorded for our knowledge and inspiration that we might know that the One testifying of these things *in the midst of the churches* is *the Son in the sons*! The "angel" was sent to testify of these things in the churches, and it is the "one like unto the Son of man" who speaks in the midst of the churches! It is the voice as the sound of a *great multitude*, as the sound of *many waters*, and as the voice of *mighty thunderings* that speaks to the churches throughout chapters two and three, and to John on through the book of Revelation. Can we not see by this that the "angel" and the "one like unto the Son of man" are one and the same? Yet — it is *the Spirit*! It is the Spirit speaking through the sons of God!

The great lesson here is that God *speaks through man*. I have heard the voice of the Spirit through a great many men and women during my lifetime. The word of the Lord and the revelation of God has come to me through many chosen vessels. Almost daily I hear the voice of the Spirit through precious letters we receive from members of God's elect all across the land and around the world. I have both seen and heard great and mighty things from the Spirit of God in His people! But we are never to pay homage to the vessel, we can never fall down to *worship the person* through whom God expresses Himself! We have to watch the esteem we give to the man God uses — for many have become followers of *men* rather than *followers of God*. John fell down to worship the *man* — and that is an object lesson for us out of this book of pictures and symbols! He was straightway commanded, "See thou do it not." And I command you today — never get your eyes on me, beloved, nor on any other of the voices of God in the land today! I am but a vessel, a voice. The voice is that of the Spirit, the testimony is of Jesus Christ, it not my voice nor the testimony of myself. The sincere love and steadfast faithfulness of all those precious ones who esteem and value the ministry the Lord has been pleased to bring through us is truly appreciated on our part. But do not esteem us *too highly*, beloved! Be not followers of men, but be a follower of Christ Jesus the Lord! Do not worship at the shrine of any man, whether he calls himself an apostle, a bishop, a king-priest, or any other title. All — if indeed they are the messengers of Jesus Christ — are but your fellow servants, of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the saying of this book. Worship God! That is what the Spirit is teaching us in these things.

JOHN— THE APOSTLE OF LOVE

"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him...and He sent and signified it by His angel *unto His servant John*" (Rev. 1:1).

The apostle John was one of the "three mighties" who walked with the Lord in the days of His flesh. In his boisterous youth he was called "the son of thunder," but his experience with Jesus transformed his life. He saw Jesus raise Jairus' daughter. He saw Jesus calm the raging sea and feed the multitudes. He was with Him in the holy mount and was an eye witness of His majesty. He heard the Father's voice declaring Jesus' sonship. He lay in the Lord's bosom and heard the inmost beating of His heart. He received the distinctive title as "that disciple whom the Lord loved." He it was who penned the immortal words, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made" (Jn. 1:1-4). John beheld in spirit the deep mystery of creation. He saw Jesus in His creative power, where galaxies were formed and worlds were made. In Jesus John saw the mighty God and the everlasting Father in a form He could understand, touch and love. He was in the garden agony with Him. He and Peter prepared the last Passover. He was the *only* apostle at the crucifixion. He was the first apostle at the tomb the morn of the resurrection. He escaped martyrdom in Rome, being cast into a caldron of boiling oil and escaping untouched, so Tertullian writes. He was banished to the isle of Patmos for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. John returned to Ephesus at the death of Domitian in A.D. 96 where he wrote three epistles centered in the love of God. Was it not fitting that the man who had leaned upon the breast of God's Son and heard the inmost beating of His heart, should become the depository of His most intimate thought in respect to His divine purposes to be wrought out in His many-membered body in this age? And such is the case! This picture is found in the book of Revelation!

Christ's peculiar love for John was a *prophetic love* which had to do with John's special relation to the overcomers throughout the age. Next to love, *overcoming* was the theme of all of John's writings! John was peculiarly designated "our brother and companion in tribulation and in the patience and kingdom of Jesus Christ" because of the special message he was raised up to give the elect in the five writings which came from his pen. His was the last voice to echo across the abyss of the two millennia between the manifestation of the firstborn Son and the manifestation of the many sons brought to His glory. There is a special sense in which the beloved apostle is with us still! He never dies! "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" (Jn. 21:22). A saying arose in consequence of these mysterious words that John would not die. But John teaches us that the meaning of Jesus' words is otherwise. "Jesus said not, He shall not die, but..."

History elucidates the meaning. John is with the overcomers in a prophetic sense in all their tribulations and in the patience and power of the kingdom! On our behalf he was a prisoner in the isle of Patmos. On our behalf he received the Revelation which is the chart of the overcomer's journey through the processings of the Father to the fullness of God. On our behalf he weeps in chapter five of the Revelation till the answer to all that is sealed up in *Christ in us* is made clear. On our behalf he "ate the little book" of divine testimony, sweet in the mouth but bitter in the bowels, denoting that the experience of all that God reveals to us in our walk into sonship is sweet in our mouth as we eat the word and revelation of Christ, but leads through the bitterness of testings, purgings, strippings, chasenings, sorrows, and tribulations as it is digested, wrought out, and made flesh within us. It was the overcomer, as represented in John, whose head lay in the comfort and love of that bosom where beats the heart of the Eternal, filled with compassion, mercy and truth. We can think of John as representing *love*! This is the revelation that comes through the activity of *love*! We are blessed and happy as we *receive* the prophecy, and we are prepared at this time to *experience* in our lives the full message of the revelation. Because it is truly a revelation of love, it can begin to happen only in the very special environment of love! God *is Love*! And we are the *sons of Love*!

THE SPIRIT OF THIS PROPHECY

The book of Revelation is without doubt one of the most important and wonderful books ever written. It is, in my opinion, *the* most important book for all who are called and chosen as God's government of kings and priests! It is difficult for many people to understand because it is written in highly symbolic language, understandable only to the spiritual mind. Long millenniums ago Joseph spoke a wonderful truth when he asked the burning question, "Do not interpretations belong to God?" (Gen. 40:8). Moses said, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may *do* all the words of this teaching" (Deut. 29:29). Many preachers spend far too much time delving into future speculations about world events. Time invariably repudiates their futile predictions. God did not give us a heavenly version of NEWSWEEK magazine, but the Book of Life!

When the book of Revelation was written, John was **in the Spirit!** This is a fact of extreme importance. The realm of the Spirit is a realm beyond the reach of the natural. Spiritual things are all about us to such an extent that we live and move and have our being in them, yet the natural man can never see them until the Spirit draws aside the dusky curtains of our carnality and opens our eyes to the realities of the spiritual world. Thus it was with John, in exile on barren Patmos, a place of few inhabitants and always swarming with pirates and banished criminals of various sorts, but the record says of him, "Who bare record of the word of God, and the *testimony of Jesus Christ*, and of all things that he saw...for the *testimony of Jesus IS THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY*" (Rev. 1:2; 19:10). Preachers and teachers ought to heed this wise counsel and concentrate on the **testimony of Jesus** which is the spirit of prophecy, rather than futuristic forecasts of earthquakes, plane crashes, riots, nuclear disasters, political coups, invasions, wars, terrorist attacks, foreign policies, world government, etc. When God gave us the Holy Spirit, it was not to take soundings of uncharted depths into the future of America, Russia, China, Europe, or the Jews, but to develop a SPIRITUAL CHARACTER, to put on the mind of Christ, and follow the Lamb whithersoever HE goeth!

The ministers of God were not meant to be soothsayers but truth-sayers. We were not called to predict all the changing events in the kingdoms of *this world*, not to herald a future antichrist, but to proclaim the ETERNAL PRESENT CHRIST! The book of Revelation is not primarily intended to teach *world events*. It is intended to teach *the purposes of God* and *spiritual realities!* Men have put so much stress on outward things, so much *carnalizing* of the word of God which is *spirit and life*, that when we read the scriptures we oft times overlook the real truth the Spirit is speaking.

The world is full of people today who are prophesying about a great many things. I never cease to be amazed at those who prophesy world events that are to come to pass. So many of them have prophesied and they were not right; their prophecies failed! Some of them have never prophesied anything that has come to pass, yet they keep right on prophesying, and their followers quickly forget the things that didn't happen and continue to cling tenaciously to each new prediction. Some have called me a prophet. I don't claim to be a prophet, though I have prophesied through the years, and do believe that my voice is a very small part of the *many waters* of God's *corporate prophet* who speaks in this new kingdom Day. I know what prophecy is. I know Jesus who is the author of all *true prophecy*, and IS HIMSELF THE TRUE PROPHECY. "*The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy!*" (Rev. 1:2-3; 19:10).

In the spirit of Jesus is the real truth and it cannot be found in any other place! Jesus is alive in you, my brother, my sister, and He is alive in me. God has given us the spirit of His Son! The

testimony of Jesus within ourselves is the spirit of prophecy! The spirit of prophecy most often speaks of Christ — of that of Christ which is becoming reality *within us*. Yes, the Spirit of God can reveal things to come in the outer world of politics, economics, warfare, the rise and fall of nations, disasters, etc. God has on occasion revealed such things to me. But those things are only incidental to the great spiritual realities of the kingdom that God is raising up within His elect! THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS IS THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY! The Spirit bears witness to *God's Christ* — that is where *true prophecy* will be found! A true prophecy contains the testimony of Jesus — the word which energizes and causes the life of the Son of God to be raised up in us! It is a spiritual testimony, therefore its fulfillment does not come literally — it comes spiritually and is realized in Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ has come within us to reveal in us the unseen things of the kingdom of God!

Some people contend that the book of Revelation *cannot* be a spiritual book because the spiritual interpretation takes away from the true prophetic nature of this book. I ask, however — How in the world can spiritual understanding take away from the prophetic nature of the book when the book itself declares that "the *testimony of Jesus* IS the *spirit of prophecy*." The testimony of the antichrist is not the spirit of prophecy! The testimony of the beast is not the spirit of prophecy! The testimony of the false prophet is not the spirit of prophecy! The testimony of the dragon is not the spirit of prophecy! The testimony of Daniel's 70th Week is not the spirit of prophecy! The testimony of the rapture is not the spirit of prophecy! The testimony of what is going to happen in Israel during the tribulation is not the spirit of prophecy! The testimony of the Third World War is not the spirit of prophecy! It is the testimony of JESUS CHRIST which is the spirit of prophecy! And Jesus Christ is the glorious, risen, ascended, exalted, spiritualized, omnipresent, omnipotent, eternal GOD-MAN! We are the body of Christ, and the testimony of Jesus Christ is *within us*!

It is also important to note that John is seen to have the *testimony of Jesus* in addition to the *word of God*. "Who bare record of the *word of God*, and of the *testimony of Jesus Christ*..." (Rev. 1:2). Then in Revelation 19:10 the application of this expression is given a more specific meaning by both Rotherham and the Emphatic Diaglott when they translate the Greek as saying, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of *this prophecy*." The fact that it reads "this prophecy" instead of merely "prophecy" indicates that there is a special relationship between the *spirit* of Christ and the words of *this prophecy*. The definite article is found in all the oldest manuscripts discovered, even though it is not expressed in the King James Version. In other words, a special work would be performed in relation to *this prophecy*. The prophecy itself is the *word of God*. But the testimony of Jesus is *the spirit* of this prophecy! The *letter* of this word is a lamb with horns, beasts, elders, locusts, women, angels, cities, wars, etc. But the *spirit* of this word is JESUS! The spirit of Christ within us is that which bears witness within ourselves to the true message of this book! And the spirit of Christ within us is that which accomplishes within us all the truth and reality of this book! The end of everything you will learn or experience out of this book *is Christ*! It can only be understood, known, and experienced by the spirit of Jesus Christ within us!

Understanding the book of Revelation *spiritually* is the only view by which you can interpret the book *by the Bible*. Every other view requires one to understand history, geography, politics or world events; and to have access to Newsweek, Time, USA Today or CNN in order to compare contemporary happenings with the symbolisms of the book. I have made the necessary discovery that the book explains itself, and I do not hesitate to tell you that this is the only view that makes the book relative to our spiritual life today as well as to the spiritual life of the saints of every generation. It is the only view that makes the book relative to *anyone*,

anywhere, at anytime who reads or hears the prophecy of this book and keeps the things that are written therein (Rev. 1:3).

"The time is at hand" for all who come into an experiential revelation of Jesus Christ! When the unveiling of Jesus Christ within us becomes the power of our life, the book of Revelation becomes a NOW book! Every other view makes the Revelation either a *past* book, or a *future* book. Let every child of God know for a certainty that it is *now*, in our *today*, that we are experiencing the unveiling of Jesus Christ! We will not be helped spiritually one iota by an understanding of what Titus did to Jerusalem in A.D. 70, or what the Moslems did in the eighth century, or by what the Pope did during the middle ages, or by what some future antichrist will do after the church has gone to heaven. Those are, one and all, exercises in carnal minded foolishness that have absolutely nothing to do with THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRTIST!

BLESSED IS HE THAT READETH

"Blessed is he that *readeth*, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand" (Rev. 1:3).

There are seven "beatitudes" in the book of Revelation. There are also seven great "songs" and seven "overcomeths," and I often think that the seven *blesseds* of the Lord are to start us into the seven *songs* — the perfect *becoming of praise* in our lives — and that will bring us out as a perfect *overcomer*! Let us now meditate upon this thought, "Blessed is he that *readeth*." Until I heard the story in which a self-educated man told of what his life was like before he learned to read, I had never thought much about how illiteracy affects one's perception of the world. He knew very little about life in his own neighborhood. Although he had occasionally met people from other cities, he had little idea where those cities were in relation to his own little world. Knowing only how to live by crime, he ended up in prison, where he finally learned to read. This opened up a whole new view of the world — a world he'd never known before, even though it had existed about him all his life. He discovered new options and began to make better choices about how to live. Crime was no longer his occupation, and he turned to productive pursuits. Learning to read words redefines our understanding of the world around us.

There is another kind of illiteracy that has an even more profound impact on our comprehension of *reality*. This could be called SPIRITUAL ILLITERACY — that is, the inability to read — to perceive and understand the language of the Spirit, the realities of the spiritual world! When we lack this ability to make sense of the broad vistas of spiritual truth, we are left trying to interpret spiritual realities from the ignorant, limited, and distorted perspective of the carnal mind — natural reasoning and human understanding. It is like an ant trying to understand the world of men! And I tell you that the world and the church today are literally filled and overflowing with SPIRITUAL ILLITERATES! Oh, they can *read* with their human ability. They *understand* with the carnal mind, the Adamic intellect. But when the beloved John says, "Blessed is he that *readeth*," he doesn't mean that every unregenerated sinner and every carnal baby Christian who picks up the book of Revelation and peruses its pages is blessed thereby! Not at all!

Rather, blessed is he that *readeth* with the understanding of the Spirit! Blessed is he that *readeth* the divine language of heaven! You may have that beatitude of God as a continual vision before your eyes, as the constant voice of the Spirit in your ears, and as an everlasting inspiration in your heart, if you will diligently seek the Lord in the pages of this book. May God

flash this "blessed" promise before your eyes, sound it in your ears, and cause your heart to swell with the inspiration of it until Jesus Christ is fully revealed in your life!

We must now prepare to launch out into deeper waters. The word "read" is a special word in the Greek, it is *anaginosko*. *Ana* is "re" or "again" and *ginosko* means "to know." The meaning is simply this: Happy is the one who *remembers* or *by reading knows again* the message of this prophecy! You will not be able to hear with natural ears nor understand with natural minds what I am now going to say. It is my deep conviction that the book of Revelation is already recorded *within you* in the Christ! It is not enough to say that we are called to sonship and that God is today giving us great and wonderful revelations of His purposes. We must also recognize by the wisdom of the eternal Spirit that we were *chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world* (Eph. 1:4). Then we are told also in verse four, "...having PREVIOUSLY *marked us out* for sonship through Jesus Christ for Himself according to the good pleasure of His will."

Not only were we chosen *in Christ* before the foundation of the world, but God put a mark upon us *then*, that secured us for our role as sons of God, that we should be separated and blameless in this world. Paul adds another dimension to this beautiful truth in his words to Titus, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, *promised before the world began*" (Tit. 1:2). Thus we have a ray of insight into the fact that we were *chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, previously marked out* for sonship, and *promised eternal life before the world began!* We were chosen in Christ in that long ago beginning and known by the Father in a way that goes far beyond a mere "twinkle in the eye" or a "thought in God's purpose." We did not exist simply "in the mind" of God. Oh, no — we were there — a *reality!* Chosen — marked out — promised! Before! In due time we were made subject to vanity, lowered out of our pure spirit existence, into this world of limitation and testing, for Father's wise purpose.

Each and every son of God had his beginning in God and existed in Christ before time began, before ever we came to this earth to be perfected by the knowledge of good and evil, knowing both by experience and suffering. Our coming into this dark realm was with the purpose that through the desperate furnace of trials, suffering, and experience in this shadowy land of sin and death, we should come to the knowledge of good and evil, fully overcoming in it, to stand at last before our Father in a perfection and power like unto His own. God did not desire robots or untested children who were like Him apart from the wisdom, understanding, righteousness and nobility of character that come by **experience**. There is no other way! We were sons of God even then, but nothing of the dimension we shall be when our salvation is complete, for we are being transformed into the image and likeness of the firstborn Son who is the Prince and Captain of our salvation. Of Him it is written that He was *made perfect through suffering*, and being made perfect, He *became* the author of eternal salvation, *called of God an high priest after the order of Melchizedek*.

In the long, long ago, before the earth was graced with light or ever stars twinkled in the night sky, there was a day when God revealed His glorious plan of creation and redemption to His spirit-children who were chosen in Christ and predestinated to sonship as part of that marvelous purpose. On that holy occasion the morning stars broke forth in rapturous chorus and all the sons of God shouted for joy at the revelation of the Father's will! We do not shout unless there is something to shout about, and those young sons of God lifted their voices with the morning stars in contemplation of the marvelous purpose they would fulfill. I do not doubt that they understood that the sufferings of this world would work in them an eternal weight of glory that would redound to the honor of the Father and be the firstfruits of deliverance for all God's vast creation to be born in this universe of sin and salvation. So shall it be for each of

us, my beloved, when the purpose of God is complete, for we came out of the loins of our *heavenly Father* a very little son at first, to suffer the humiliation of temptation, sin and death, to be at last fully redeemed and matured into the character, wisdom, and power of our heavenly Father, *presented faultless* before the throne of His glory with exceeding joy!

The time of our birth, who our parents would be, what life experiences we would pass through, were all foreordained by the Father. And those sons who have entered upon the stage of action in this present generation stand at a special and significant juncture in God's great purpose of the ages! Truly this is the *Christ generation*, we are the *firstfruits people*, that we may enter our promised land of God's fullness even as we stand upon our two feet! It is my conviction that the mental-spiritual faculty which was present with God before the ages began, became a dormant portion of our being when we were born into this realm of the flesh. Ray Prinzing wrote so eloquently of this great truth that I am compelled to share his words here.

"The Psalmist knew what it was to have the Spirit of God breathe upon him betimes, and with that Breath came new understanding, such as when he wrote, 'Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction: and sayest, RETURN, ye children of men' (Ps. 90:1-3). Past, present, future, HE alone has been our HOME, our dwelling place. Outside of a CONSCIOUSNESS OF HIS PRESENCE we are but homeless wanderers, seeking to return into Him. This, too, has been expressed in verse:

In Thy holy habitation did my spirit once reside,
In my first primeval childhood was I nurtured by Thy side.
For a wise and glorious purpose Thou hast made me here on earth,
And withheld the recollection of my former friends and birth.
Yet at times a secret something whispers, You're a stranger here!
And I feel that I have wandered from a more exalted sphere.

"In *Intimations of Immortality* William Wordsworth also writes:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting, and cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness, and not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come FROM GOD WHO IS OUR HOME.

"A meaningful incident was once related by a Radio Commentator, reporting on how a young couple brought a new baby brother home to his four-year-old sister. The little girl kept begging to be allowed to be left alone with him. Finally the parents gave permission. There was an intercom in the baby's room, so they listened closely so if necessary they could rush in. The little girl walked quietly to the crib where her baby brother slept, and her parents heard her plead, 'Tell me about God. I'm forgetting.'

"Ah, how quickly we have forgotten our Father, and home! Being conscious of the world around us causes us to **forget** — yet do we not hear the Spirit calling? And in the words of Paul, 'Now it is high time to **awake out of sleep**: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed' (Rom. 13:11). It's time to awaken to the realm from whence we came, that we might return. And as the song expressed it so beautifully, 'The Spirit is drawing us upward and onward to the place from whence we came.' Praise the Lord!

"He has made everything beautiful in its time; He also hath planted eternity in men's heart and mind (a divinely implanted sense of a purpose working through the ages which nothing under the sun, but only God, can satisfy), yet so that men cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end' (Eccl. 3:11, Amplified). Ah, that sense of a destiny that nothing under the sun, but only **God** can satisfy! Having come from Him, once shouting for joy at the purpose to be wrought out, in our spirit there lies buried a sense, a knowing that we do belong to another realm, and nothing of this earth realm can satisfy. Men may try to fill their lives with the pursuit of fame and fortune, or just settle for the proverbial 'wine, women, and song,' but none of it satisfies for God has linked us to a higher realm. And when finally He awakens us to heavenly things, immediately there is a response, 'This is it! This is what I have been searching for!' Or again, to borrow the words of a hymn, 'ALL that I want is in Jesus, He satisfies, joy He supplies, life would be worthless without Him, ALL that I want is *in Christ*.'

"In every generation there have been those who 'confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country' (Heb. 11:13-14). A country — the Greek word is *patris* meaning: a father-land. They sought for the land of their Father, the land of their begetting, their home-land. IF you were of this earth-realm only, you would not desire another land for your roots would hold you to the fleshly, earthy. But because you have *come from afar*, there is that deep (though perhaps unrecognized) desire to return. For when HE turned you to destruction, He also implanted the command deep within your being, 'RETURN, ye children of men.' 'For whom He did **foreknow**, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren' (Rom. 8:29). The word "foreknow" is from the Greek word *proginosko* meaning 'to know by experience beforehand.' HE KNEW US BY EXPERIENCE, and PLACED HIS MARK UPON US, a sure word that we would ultimately return to be conformed to the image of His Son" — end quote.

Now our Father is calling us to a *remembrance!* We do not remember the former glory of our existence in the presence of the Father in spirit, but we do have fleeting glimpses of it! Our elder brother fully came to this remembrance and said, "And now, Father, glorify Thou me with the glory which *I had with Thee before the world was.*" In our longing for the Father's love, in our yearning for His presence, and the ecstasy of it, as we put on the mind of Christ, we are able to see our beginning in God before the ages began, and having this vision, we are awakened more and more to *reality!*

When each of God's sons is born into this world there is encoded in the depths of our spirit the *secret knowledge* of why we are here and what path the Father has marked out for us in our journey through this realm. Only by the quickening and enlightenment of the blessed spirit of truth within us is this dark veil of the conscious mind pulled apart that the hidden understanding of the deep things of God may spring out of the most holy place of our spirit. We think of it as a new and glorious *revelation* — but all divine revelation is but a REMEMBERING! That secret knowledge of heavenly things, which were given us *in Christ* before the foundation of the world, is called **THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!** It is the same divine knowledge that is written in code in the visions of John on Patmos! And this information, this sacred secret, is also encoded *within our spirit* — we are "knowing again" the revelation of God's Christ! "Blessed is he that *readeth*, blessed is he that by reading *knows again* (*anaginosko*) the words of this prophecy!"

Let the reality and power of this prophecy open within you, beloved, for it is already recorded there! Once the understanding of this prophecy comes to you *by the Spirit* you will know what you knew before the ages, and what is hidden in the depth of your spirit! Don't look to me to

understand the words of this prophecy, look within yourself! On bended knee, and with a broken and contrite spirit, seek the face of your heavenly Father for the light that the Spirit brings. It is there that the book will be revealed, and it is there that it will be experienced! Our awakening to these holy things is but a *remembering*, a *knowing again* of mysteries we once heard in Christ before the foundation of the world!

Chapter 9

Blessed Are They That Hear

"Blessed — happy — to be envied — are they that *hear* the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand" (Rev. 1:3). These opening words of the Revelation, following the salutation of the writer, set forth the clear objective of the book. What words are these! What spirit do they breathe — fear and anxiety, doubt and uncertainty, patient resignation, or understanding, hope and confidence? One might expect an exhortation such as this: "Beloved brethren, the end is at hand! Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people. Judgment and destruction await the world. The beast government is rising up in the earth and the antichrist is at hand. The dragon stalks across the earth's valleys and over the mountains. Resign yourselves to the inevitable! Defeat and martyrdom await us. We may have to flee to wilderness areas and hide ourselves from the fury of the dragon. The will of the Lord be done. Wherefore comfort one another with these words!" But when we turn to the book of Revelation, we find nothing of the kind! It is not a call to resignation or escape — it is a proclamation of victory! Its tone is joyful! Its prayer is thanksgiving! Its song is heavenly! Its spirit is praise and worship! Its cry is Hallelujah!

The book of Revelation is a prophecy. Prophecy is a Voice — in this case, the voice of God's Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is three things — Prophet, Priest and King. Prophets *speaking*, priests *reconcile*, and kings *rule*. Prophecy is the word of God — not merely a *foretelling*, but a *forth-telling*. The book of Revelation is undoubtedly the hardest book in the New Testament to understand. However, I also believe that once you grasp by the spirit of wisdom and revelation what it's talking about, it is the most thrilling book of all! Even though the book is puzzling to the natural man and bewildering to the carnal mind, yet the apostle John wrote with blessed assurance to the inChristed these words of divine surety, "*Blessed — happy — to be envied — is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand!*" (Rev. 1:3).

That is one of the most amazing things about this wonderful book — it is the only book in the Bible that promises a unique *blessing* or *happiness* to all those who read it, to all who truly *hear* what it is saying, and to those who *keep* or have fulfilled *within themselves* the things that the book has to say. There are many other books of the scriptures that are easier to understand, but they don't contain that beautiful *promise*! This book promises you, before you begin, that if you *read, hear, and keep* the things written therein YOU WILL BE BLESSED! Immediately that gives me a clue to what this book is about. Obviously the book is written to a people who will "keep" its sayings, who will have *fulfilled within themselves* its message, who will be enabled to *experience* in their very own lives the things it proclaims! How else could those who read and hear be said to "keep" all the things that are written in the book? If the panorama of events that unfold within these pages are merely *external* events, *historical* events, or future literal *world* events, then how can those who read "keep" or "fulfill within themselves" all those things?

It should be clear even to a child that the events of the Revelation happen *within God's people*! Some people's interpretation of Revelation says that the church disappears from the earth at

the beginning of chapter four, and that after the church is out of the way — raptured — the rest of the book happens to the world of unbelievers left on the earth. If that be the case, then I'm not interested! I'm not concerned with events that transpire on earth when I'm gone, after I'm out of here forever! The knowledge of those things would be of no benefit to me, nor would they serve any purpose. I wouldn't even be here to find out if it was a true prophecy! Therefore, the message of the book of Revelation cannot be limited to events at the end of the age, nor can it concern events that are to transpire after the saints have flown away to that bright glory world above. It cannot have to do with events in the outer world with its masses of unregenerated humanity. It can only concern a special class of saints who are able to *read* what it says, *hear* with the spiritual ear, and become glad *partakers* of those blessed realities it proclaims! This book is speaking to *me* if only I can *hear* what it says!

Now honestly, if this book is primarily about an age that hasn't yet dawned, do you think that the poor persecuted believers in Asia in John's day (A.D. 90) would be the least bit interested in it? Come with me to the churches in that long ago. We come into their midst as ambassadors of the apostle John who has been banished to the desolate slopes of the isle of Patmos, and we are going to share with them the message of this fantastic Book, which promises them a blessing in the midst of their trials and pain. When you get there where all the persecuted people are meeting together, and who will lose their lives, and you with them, if you are caught meeting together, and you get out a long chart and begin to lecture about the antichrist and his covenant with the Jews in Israel in the last days — do you think that is going to be a *blessing* to those dear saints? Are they going to somehow be able in some mystical way to "keep" or have *fulfilled within themselves* the things you are telling them about? NO WAY! You see, my beloved, when I come to this book the first key to understanding it is the great truth that it is addressed to **me**. And it is addressed to **you**! It is not a book to be just read and heard, but a book to be EXPERIENCED! Its reality is being fulfilled in those elect saints who are the *bondslaves* of Jesus Christ, who are becoming *overcomers*, who are being made *kings and priests* unto God, and who *read, hear, and keep* the things written in the book! These are also the *sons of God*!

It is instructive to note that the word "keep" means "to guard or tend," as Adam was commanded to dress the garden of Eden and to "keep" it. When the Lord declares in various places throughout the scriptures that His people are His *vineyard* and His *garden*, we should understand that His purposes are the same now as they were in the beginning when He placed man in the garden of Eden *to dress it and to keep it*. The Garden of God always represents the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. The thought is not only of the Lord's great Garden; but the life of every child of God is a garden within God's Garden! In the beginning Adam failed to dress and keep the garden of his own soul, and what a pitiful thing it is to see that men through the long millenniums since that day have also wretchedly failed and the world has endured a long night of sorrow and pain. The Shulamite, in the Song of Solomon, at the outset of her relationship with the King confessed her own neglect, saying, "They made me keeper of the vineyards; but *my own vineyard have I not kept*" (S. of S. 1:6). Though the Lord may let us tend a portion of His great Vineyard, though He may let us minister to other souls in different ways, there is a part of the Vineyard of the Lord which He actually gives to each one of us; and that is the vineyards of our own lives.

He would have us care for and guard our hearts above all that we treasure and protect, for out of them are the issues of life. It is this hidden place of our innermost being that must be watched and tended more than all that appears on the outside! Those who are following on to know the Lord in this new kingdom Day are learning to guard and protect the roots and hidden fibers of our beings, our thoughts, our impulses, our desires. Adam was a son of God (Lk.

3:38) and was placed in the garden of Eden to dress and to keep it. Can we not see by this that all who would be sons of God must put away everything that is not of God that is hidden and unseen, as zealously as we put away the defects that appear on the outside, which humble us when they are seen by others?

My brethren, if we cannot tend the gardens of our own souls and lives, we must not think the Lord will entrust us with greater gardens! How can a man rule over other men's souls, how can he judge angels, how can he rule the nations with a rod of iron, how can he exercise dominion over the vastnesses of the universe, yea, how can he rule over ALL THINGS as God hath spoken — if he cannot rule his own spirit? "He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city," said the wise man. There are literally thousands of men and women running about over the face of the earth doing what they call *the work of the Lord*, but it is distressing to see that the vast majority of them were never called nor commissioned by the Lord of the Vineyard in the first place. They are busy doing a great many things *for* God, but they are not *becoming overcomers* that they might truly reign! **I am convinced that the first work of the Lord's Vineyard, which He entrusts to us and calls us to do, is to care for our own spiritual lives and to first partake of the fruit.** We will understand the Father's priorities when we see that Jesus gave *no promise* to any of the seven churches of Asia — but He made great and glorious promises of life and glory and power to *him that overcometh!*

The blessed age of God's kingdom over the nations which is now dawning shall be governed by those saints who have become overcomers, who have sanctified the Lord God in their hearts, who have put away all carnality, foolishness, and evil, who have put on the mind of Christ, having the Father's name written in their foreheads, who have arrived at maturity of sonship, who have come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Not those who tend the Father's Vineyard negligently, shall be in this company; not those who pamper their flesh and let it overrun their lives, shall be in this company; not those who examine their vineyards only now and then shall appear with the Lamb on the holy mount Zion; it is those who dwell in their gardens and tend them day and night, those who ever keep them before their eyes, that shall be well-pleasing to the Owner of the Vineyard and shall be given dominion over all things. You can count on it!

As I mentioned earlier, the gardens and vineyards of the scriptures are synonymous, meaning THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN ON EARTH. That is the meaning of the garden of Eden! In this very hour the hand of God is planting the plants He chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, each a tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that *He might be glorified* (Isa. 61:3). Consider now how great are the words of the prophet: "And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and thou shalt be like a **watered garden**...for the Lord shall comfort Zion...and He shall make her wilderness like **Eden**, and her desert like the **garden of the Lord**; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody" (Isa. 58:11; 51:3).

Ah, yes, the whole earth has been sown with men of various kinds, but in the blessed revelation of the book of Genesis we see that "the LORD GOD PLANTED A GARDEN eastward in Eden" and this Garden bespeaks a special and most favored "planting" of the Lord — the *sons of the kingdom!* The soil of this blest Garden of God is neither uncultivated, stony, nor thorny, for it has come under the hand of the Husbandman, being dealt with that life may spring forth abundantly. Thus the prophet by inspiration wrote, "Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made smooth the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the seed...this cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working" (Isa. 28:24-25,29).

Truly this explains much of the processing through which God's elect has been passing, for the Lord purposes to bring forth a crop, full fruitage, even to an hundredfold, therefore there have been these tremendous crushing experiences which have broken up the hard clods of our pre-conceived ideas and opinion, the rocks of our stubborn self-will, and the inbedded roots of our own fleshly desires and ways, and the carnal traditions of religion which resisted the inworking of truth. Deeper and deeper have dug the plowshares of the Spirit, breaking up the fallow ground, grinding, smashing, tearing, loosening, breaking up the self-life until all is subdued before Him, until nothing remains but the fine soil for the seed to grow in. The plowman has not been plowing in us all this time just for the sake of plowing, but the preparation is that there might be the sowing of HIS LIFE, that there might be brought forth a harvest of the same kind. That's what the Garden of God is all about! The Christ-life is being sown, and this means the growing up of a *whole new species*, a new creation which shall ultimately come forth in the image and likeness of God, to the praise of His glory. Many of the Lord's precious apprehended ones have wondered why we were plowed so deeply, why God allows us to be broken up to the deepest recesses of our beings, until every way within us has been tried, but it is that HIS LIFE MIGHT FASTEN ITS ROOTS DEEP WITHIN US, so that from deep within, from our very nature, would spring forth the fruitage of Himself.

In order that we may be able to "keep" the words of this prophecy, to guard and tend and have fulfilled within us all that it teaches, we have first been enabled to "hear" what it says! I am reminded of the story of two old Dutchmen, sitting on a park bench. The night had come and the moon started to shine. Not far from the bench where they sat, a river flowed, and from the river came the chorus of the crickets. Pete, the first old gentleman, listened to the crickets and said, "Crickets sure do sing." John, sitting next to him agreed, saying, "Yep, they sure know how to sing." Just then he heard the voices of the choir coming from the nearby church and remarked, "Beautiful music, isn't it?" Pete said, "Yeah, and to think they do it just by rubbing their legs together!"

Each heard a different music — one was listening to the crickets and one was listening to the choir. What you hear depends on where you're coming from and what you're tuned in to. When the disciples asked Jesus why He spoke to the multitudes in parables, He answered by saying, "This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand." He then reminded them of Isaiah's prophecy wherein he said, "You shall indeed hear, but never understand, and you shall indeed see but never perceive." It almost seems that Jesus was acting vindictively, but He was not, for He also explains why those who saw Him failed to understand. "For this nation's *heart* has grown gross — fat and dull; and their ears heavy and difficult of hearing, and their eyes *they* have tightly closed, lest they see and perceive with their eyes, and hear and comprehend the sense with their ears, and grasp and understand with their heart, and turn and I should heal them" (Mat. 13:15, Amplified). Had they *wanted* to hear, they could have, but they chose not to see or understand. Eight times in the book of Revelation the Lord Jesus says, "He that hath an ear, *let him hear!*"

In our day Bibles can be bought at Wal-Mart and almost any department store, and sermons can be heard any hour of the day or night, but practically no one, the preachers in particular, is *hearing* the word of God! Multitudes read the words of the Bible and do not *hear* them! Intellect may grasp what is written there...but that is not a *hearing*. Hearing the word of God will work transformation in a man! A true hearing of the word will reveal the Father's heart and uncover His ways and give understanding of His purposes. Hearing the word by the Spirit will bring obedience to the word — the obedience of faith — and things will begin to happen! Taken by the Spirit to the valley of dry bones, Ezekiel was asked, "Son of man, can these bones live?"

"O Lord God," was the prophet's response, "Thou knowest." He was then told to prophesy to them: "O dry bones, HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD!" The prophet obeyed, and as he declared to them the word of the Lord, they came together, bone to its bone. Covered first with sinews, then with flesh, these lifeless bodies were also quickened by the breath of divine life which entered into them (Eze. 37:1-10). The quickening of the dry bones was effected by their response to the Lord's word! As they **kept hearing** what He was saying to them, the Holy Spirit kept working within them until they were made alive by His breath and stood up, an exceeding great army. In like manner, as we *keep hearing* and *keep responding* to the kingdom word the Spirit is speaking today, the army of the Lord shall stand up in the earth to bring deliverance to all creation! Oh, ye sons of God — HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD!

Shortly after becoming king in Israel, Solomon traveled to Gibeon to offer a sacrifice to the Lord. Here the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Ask what I shall give you." Though grateful to the Lord for having chosen him to succeed his father David, Solomon was keenly aware of his inadequacy to govern the people without divine help. "Give Thy servant therefore," he implored, "an *understanding heart* to govern Thy people, that I may discern between good and evil." Pleased by such a request, the Lord replied, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for long life, or for riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to recognize what is just and right, behold...I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor; so that there shall not be any among the kings equal to you all your days" (I Kings 3:11-13). The expression "an understanding heart" is in the Hebrew text A HEARING HEART. And in Isaiah 50:4-5 we read of the inner discipline which Jesus and all the elect sons experience. "Morning by morning He (the Father) wakens, HE WAKENS MY EAR TO HEAR as those that are willing to be taught. The Lord has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I turned not backward."

A. B. Simpson was a man of deep spiritual experience. I quote the following from his article *Listening*. "A score of years ago a friend placed in my hand a book called *True Peace*. It was an old medieval message and it had but one thought — THAT GOD WAS WAITING IN THE DEPTHS OF MY BEING TO TALK TO ME IF I WOULD ONLY GET STILL ENOUGH TO HEAR HIS VOICE. I thought this would be a very easy matter and so began to get still. I had no sooner commenced than a perfect pandemonium of voices reached my ears, a thousand clamoring notes from without and within, until I could hear nothing but their noise and din. Some were my own voices, my own questions; some were my very prayers. Others were suggestions of the tempter and the voices from the world of turmoil. In every direction I was pulled and pushed and greeted with noisy acclamations and unspeakable unrest. It seemed necessary for me to listen to some of them and to answer some of them; but God said, 'BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD!'

"Then came the conflict of thoughts for tomorrow and its duties and cares; but God said, 'BE STILL.' And as I listened and slowly learned to obey and shut my ears to every sound, I found after a while that, when other voices ceased, (or I ceased to hear them), there was a still small voice in the depths of my being that began to speak with an inexpressible tenderness and power and comfort. As I listened, it became to me the voice of prayer, the voice of wisdom, the voice of duty, and I did not need to think so hard or pray so hard or trust so hard. That still, small voice of the Holy Spirit in my heart was God speaking in my secret soul; was God's answer to all knowledge and all prayer and all blessings, for it was the living God Himself as my life, my all.

"It is thus that our spirits drink of the life of the risen Lord and we go forth to life's conflicts and duties like a flower that has drunk in through the shades of night the cool and crystal drops of

dew. But, as dew never falls on a stormy night, so the dew of His grace never comes to a restless soul. Oh, the calm! The rest! The peace which comes as we wait in His presence until we HEAR FROM HIM!" — end quote.

Hearing by the Spirit. This is the revelation of Jesus Christ in you! The glory of this revelation was passed from Jesus to John. John wrote down the wonder of what he saw so that we could hear the same thing that Jesus spoke to him. One can only understand this prophecy as he becomes still enough to hear the voice of the Son of God within himself! If we do not *hear* by the Spirit the true spiritual message of the book of Revelation we are like the man I read about who went to see a play one time and recommended it to a friend. It was a play in three acts. He said to his friend, "It was a marvelous play. You will love it. It is so uplifting and exhilarating. You will be greatly encouraged." He was astonished when his friend later reported: "I hated that play. I thought it was terrible. Why, the child was kidnapped, the father lost his job, and the mother was in the hospital. It was so depressing. How could you have thought that a play like that was good?" The man said, "But that's not the way it ended!" He said, "Oh, I don't know how it ended. I got so depressed I left after the second act."

Well, my friend, if you mistake the literal *letter of the word* understanding to guide your thinking you will leave the book of Revelation in deep depression after the second act! You will never pass through the veil to the *spirit of the word* understanding that leads to eternal glory! The "end" of this drama is not in chapter twenty-two. The "end" is in the *spiritual reality* that all the signs and symbols are pointing us to! I have found that even among good men, even among spiritual men, there is a tendency to miss the deep inference of the Holy Spirit's words repeated again and again in the Revelation, "He that hath an ear, let him *hear* what the Spirit saith!" Those words always accompany statements of profound *spiritual* significance. The Spirit is here admonishing us that the astonishing visions described in the Revelation are the unfolding of *spiritual mysteries*. Those who interpret these beautiful visions according to the literal, surface appearance, do not have "an ear to hear," nor are they able to perceive the spiritual concealed in the external. If the events portrayed in the Revelation are to be fulfilled *literally* and *outwardly*, then we must read the words with *natural eyes*, hear them with *natural ears*, and understand them with a *natural mind*. But if the message is deeply *spiritual*, it will be understood only by "He that *hath an ear* to hear!"

The overcoming sons of God are not distinguished by their much speaking, nor by their great works, but by their *hearing*. The book of Revelation is the unveiling of God's Christ, the complete Christ, both Head and body. The purpose of God that was first expressed in Genesis is fulfilled in the unveiled Christ of the Revelation. The anointed prophecy given us through John, when wrought out in our lives, will take us to the fullness of the image and likeness of God! It tells of that which shall take place in each of our lives to transform us into the fullness of Christ to manifest the power and glory of the kingdom of God in the earth! It reveals the exact process of our change from natural to spiritual, from corruptible to incorruptible, and from mortal to immortal! It is the book of our overcoming! It is the book of our metamorphosis! It is the book of our completion! It is the book of our maturity! It is the book of our full stature! It is the book of our destiny! It is the book of our manifestation! It is the book of our exaltation! It is the book of our enthronement! It is the book of our sonship!

Blessed — happy — to be envied is he that *reads* (understands the symbols), and they that *hear* (get the deep spiritual message the symbols represent) the words of this prophecy, and *keep* (have fulfilled experientially in their lives) the things that are written therein: for the time is at hand! Those who read, hear, and keep these things are prepared to rule and reign with Christ in His kingdom!

TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

The risen and ascended Lord descended in a vision of glory on the isle called Patmos, and there meeting His startled disciple, John, gave him a communication concerning the church, the called out, commanding him to write it in a scroll and send it to the seven churches in Asia. The book of Revelation is addressed to Christ's "servants" and to "the seven churches." This great truth is emphasized, it is stated in the plainest of language, both at the opening and the close of the book. "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace..." (Rev. 1:4). "What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia" (Rev. 1:11). "The Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done" (Rev. 22:6). "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches" (Rev. 22:16).

On reading these distinct declarations it should be clear to every discerning mind that the outward nations and the unregenerated people of the world have no more to do with this prophecy than they have with the epistle to the Ephesians. They may possibly be alluded to in the one, as in the other, but it is not *for them*, and it is not mainly *concerned with them*. IT IS FOR US, the people of God! The prophecy is for the *bondslaves* of Jesus Christ, and for those who are called out and separated unto Him, and to apply it to anything other than God's dealings with His elect saints is to take the children's bread and give it to dogs. It is no use to say, "Yes! But though given to the church, it might still be a revelation of the counsels of God about the kingdoms of *this world*." **It might**. The epistle to the Ephesians **might** have been a letter about the lost tribes of Israel in the British Isles, but it was not! The visions of Daniel **might** have been visions of the seven churches of Asia, but they were not! Jesus **could** have sent a message to His servants about the final judgments on the world, from which they were already delivered, but He did not! Jesus **might** have communicated to His elect how He, who is the saviour of all men and the reconciler of the world, would one day turn on the world He so loved and cast them all into eternal damnation, but He did not!

We should notice carefully and reverently the words of the angel to John: "*Seal not* the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is *at hand*" (Rev. 22:10). The angel's statement stands in stark contrast to the command Daniel received at the end of his book: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and *seal the book*, even to the time of the end" (Dan. 12:4). Daniel was specifically ordered to seal up his prophecy, because it referred to "the end," in the distant future. But John was told *not* to seal up his prophecy, because the time of which it speaks is *at hand*! To have sealed those precious sayings would have been to hide them, to pull a veil over them, to shut them up as if they stood for some kind of hidden wisdom or impenetrable mystery. But they are not! The message of the Revelation is concerned with great spiritual principles and divine dealings which have been operative in the lives of God's elect throughout the age, and are today. The time is **now**! The place is **here**! The people is **us**! The revelation of Jesus Christ is an on-going unfolding until HE is formed and revealed in all the glorious and eternal fullness of Himself in His body on earth! The totality of the mighty workings and processings of God portrayed by sign and symbol within this wonderful book must be fulfilled within the life of each son of God!

The book of Revelation is not concerned with worldly kingdoms and empires except as they become linked with the affairs of God's people. The book of Daniel, written under the Old Covenant, addressed to a natural people living in a natural land, ruled by outward laws, with a natural worship in a physical temple with external rituals and ceremonies, is therefore a natural book dealing with outward earthly events, the rise and fall of empires, rulers, with literal wars and fleshly conflicts. For example, the eighth chapter of Daniel contains one of Daniel's

visions. His vision there is of a ram and a he-goat. The ram and the he-goat represented empires and kings that came on the scene not long before the birth of Jesus. There is no question that this prophecy is speaking of literal nations and kings, for those nations are actually mentioned in the text. And so it is throughout the book of Daniel! I wonder sometimes that if it were possible for Daniel to be here listening to the "end-times" prophecy teachers in the church systems today, if he would recognize his own prophecies, because of the grotesque way they have been distorted in their interpretation. Most teachers of Daniel can't even get the "literal" right! The book of Daniel was *not a revelation* or *unveiling*. It was a SEALED BOOK!

The book of Revelation, contrary to common thought, is not the sequel to the book of Daniel, nor is it a parallel revelation! In fact, it has almost nothing in common with the book of Daniel! The book of Revelation was written under the New Covenant, the administration of the Spirit, and is therefore a spiritual book, addressed to spiritual people, born of the heavenly Jerusalem, who live and walk in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, are ruled by the indwelling spirit of Life, who worship in the true tabernacle not made with hands, and offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God by Jesus Christ! The book of Revelation is *not*, nor has it ever been a SEALED BOOK. Nor does it speak of natural, fleshly, physical, literal, outward things of this world. It is the *unveiling* of **Jesus Christ!**

I have no desire to contend with any man about these things, for we can safely leave this in the hands of the Lord. However, just as the book of Revelation is not the sequel to Daniel, neither does its message parallel the Olivet Discourse — Matthew 24! With true spiritual perception we must understand the great *difference* between these prophecies! Whereas the prophecies of Matthew 24 were directed to the Jews and concerned the Jews and pointed to the end of the Jewish kingdom of the house of Judah, the book of Revelation is written to the church, the called out, and concerns the church, and points to God's ultimate purpose in and through His elect body. Matthew 24 is natural and earthly, the book of Revelation is spiritual and heavenly! Matthew 24 sets forth literal, carnal, outward, earthly conflicts that occurred in all their horrible fury with the destruction of Jerusalem, the temple, the priesthood, the sacrificial system, and the entire Old Testament economy. All these horrendous events took place in A.D. 70 when the Roman general Titus besieged Jerusalem and brought it to total desolation.

There is neither time nor space to go into detail concerning those matters in this writing, but in our Lord's words in Matthew 24 we have one of the most explicit and unusual forecasts of events to be found anywhere in the scriptures. It is unusual in its simplicity and in the exactness of its detail. Every word of it has already been fulfilled and is now history! It was fulfilled with absolute precision right down to the last jot and tittle. The Jewish historian, Josephus, records a great deal of this history in his writings. It is remarkable to note that Jesus told His disciples, while standing before the temple in Jerusalem, "Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Mat. 24:2). Josephus records how the desolation of Jerusalem was so complete that the site *looked like a plowed field*, and those who later passed by wondered that it had ever been inhabited by man! Those who study the history of these things know that the "end time" of Daniel's prophecy, and of Jesus' Olivet Discourse, was in fact the "end time" of the Old Covenant with its outward nation, temple, priesthood, sacrifices, laws, rituals, and ceremonies. That "end time" came in A.D. 70! It had nothing whatever to do with the present "end" of the church age! And contrary to the teachings of religious Babylon, there is not one word of Matthew 24 that remains to be fulfilled! Years later the glorified Lord Jesus appeared to John on Patmos and gave him the greater, higher, more glorious *spiritual revelation* for His *heavenly people!* This revelation concerns those who are citizens of the NEW JERUSALEM, who eat of the hidden manna and the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God, who are clothed, not in the garments of

Aaron's priesthood, but in the white robes of Christ's righteousness, who are called to sonship on the heavenly mount Zion, destined to reign in the kingdom of Jesus Christ upon His throne in the heavenlies, and are becoming kings and priests after the order of Melchizedek!

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom dwelleth wisdom and knowledge, flood Thou our souls with understanding from above! Open now our eyes that we may behold the depths of truth that can be known only by the quickening of Thy Spirit! Remove the dark veil from our hearts, the veil of natural understanding and religious tradition cast over our minds by the carnal church systems of men, that light divine may shine upon us! Grant to our spirits the breath of inspiration that we may know as Thou knowest, and see as Thou seest! Amen! The book of Revelation was not sent to Israel nor to the nations. It was sent to the church, the *called out elect of God*. The only "end" referred to in this book is JESUS! "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and *the end*, the first and the last" (Rev. 22:13). The Revelation is not about "the end times;" it is about a NEW DAY, it is the REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

If by the grace of God the truth of this holy vision can burst upon you, you will see that the book of Revelation is a *spiritual book*! The Revelation cannot be understood in any natural way. It's a spiritual book and requires spiritual understanding! It's a book of spiritual events, spiritual experiences, spiritual conflicts and triumphs, and spiritual principles — not events you will read in USA Today! Some people say, "You *spiritualize* everything!" Do you not know that *God is Spirit*? If the Holy Spirit, sent forth from the resurrected, ascended, glorified Jesus wrote a book, what kind of book do you suppose it would be? Why, bless your heart, it would be a spiritual book! "The words that I speak unto you, they *are spirit* and they are life," declared the Son of God. What kind of mind do you think it would take to understand a spiritual book? Ah, a *spiritual mind*! "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might *know* the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing *spiritual things* with *spiritual*. But the natural man *receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God*: for they are foolishness unto him: neither *can* he know them, because they are *spiritually discerned*" (I Cor. 2:12-14). The very plain teaching of these words of Paul is that we are not to try and understand the revelation of God in a literal, outward sense. All divine truth *is spiritual* and must be *spiritually discerned*.

Well did a precious brother write: "If the book cannot be taken literally, then we must spiritualize it by the Holy Spirit. Trying to spiritualize with your natural mind is worse than logic and reason. Spiritualizing with your natural mind is just plain fantasizing! Real spiritualizing is done by the Holy Spirit and when He does it, it is real and it is true! It is sad and a tragedy, but most so-called teachers of prophecy have very little of the Holy Spirit working in them. And, some of them are down-right scoundrels! They wax eloquent and write many books to explain Revelation by their natural minds. Without the Holy Spirit, what they say is a pile of nonsense and fantasy. There are very, very few sermons or books on prophecy that do not fall into this category! The pastors, the teachers, the bishops, the apostles, the presidents of universities, the chancellors of theological seminaries, or whoever they may be, without the Holy Spirit, are *spiritually ignorant*. It seems the higher an individual ranks in the hierarchy of today's churches, the less he knows of spiritual things. **God does not reveal spiritual things to the wise and prudent**, but unto babes. We have listened to the highly esteemed prophetic teachers, but we hear only fantasies and traditions that are spawned in the womb of natural minds. Such ones have little or no truth.

"Years ago I read the writings of a woman who had trouble spelling her words and mimeographing her copies. Her workmanship was very inferior, but her message was a

tremendous revelation of *The Voice Of God Who Speaks In Me!* Probably this woman could not preach a homiletical sermon or explain one Greek tense from another, but she knew the voice of God and she walked in a glorious light of divine revelation. On the other hand, the learned leaders who take the Revelation literally, grope in the darkness of their own natural minds. This simple woman — humble saint of God — knew more about God, His will and purpose than the pompous chancellor of a theological seminary who recently was introduced on a TV network as probably the greatest theologian on earth. This woman knew more about the things of the Spirit than the learned ministers who wrote books out of their natural minds. She knew because she walked and talked with God! He lived in her and He talked to her from His abode in her. The learned chancellor wrote books, preached sermons, and conducted schools that turned out literate ministers of prophecy who knew little or nothing of the spiritual meaning of the prophecy. The chancellor tried to explain prophecy. He informed us Jesus was far off in heaven. We could get to meet Him some day if we made 'The Rapture.' This man knew little about spiritually interpreting God's word. He misquoted and misapplied scriptures like a novice. He insisted on taking the Bible literally in every place possible and he spoke against spiritualizing it as if spiritualizing it were an evil thing! He looked and acted as if he knew many things, but I will take the simple woman's position in preference to the highly esteemed theologian. This learned man knew a lot of things, but this woman *knew God!*" — end quote.

If you will allow the Holy Spirit of truth to draw you away from the mish-mash of human theology as taught by the messengers of Babylon, you will discover that they have mismatched the prophecies of the Revelation with other prophecies in the Bible and created a hybrid, confused, misshapen, deformed, distorted, grotesque monster called "eschatology." I do not like the word "eschatology" because it is chiefly a theological term of the carnal church system. The so-called "end time events" taught out of the book of Revelation are contorted theories pieced together by carnal minds. Pieces are taken from Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah, Matthew 24, and other scriptures and put together in order to create a particular "spin" of it. Oh that men would awaken to the truth that they might see the Revelation as a sovereign revelation to the sons of God that is not mixed up to be revealed in a puzzle of other prophets. It *stands alone!* True, it uses Old Testament language and employs Old Testament illustrations, but it raises them up to new levels and transcendent heights of spiritual experience in the celestial world of the kingdom of God within. You don't go back into the Old Testament and piece things together in order to give the Revelation validity and meaning. Let it stand alone — and when you do it becomes, not the revelation of mere chaotic outer world events, but truly and preeminently THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST! It becomes a book you want to read with every wink because you want to remind yourself who you are, *who* is working in you, and *how* He is working in you to bring forth the unveiling of Jesus Christ in your own experience.

Many who study this glorious Revelation are more interested in finding possible references to space travel and nuclear weapons than in discovering the deep inworkings and mighty dealings of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those who are becoming God's Christ. The testimony of *Jesus* is the spirit of *this prophecy!* To ignore Jesus in favor of atomic blasts is a perversion of the spirit of truth. It is a *prophecy* to the *church* — God's called out elect! As a prophecy, it's to the Lord's *spiritual people*, the *body of Christ*, the *ransomed of the Lord!* There is not a chance that the apostle John, standing in the blinding glory of Christ's majestic presence, would have thought it important to prophesy about Cobra helicopters, space shuttles, computers or laser tattoos. Nor would he have been interested in foretelling the future of the United States of America, Russia, China, Iraq or the European Community. Not that these things are not important, or that the sons of God should not be concerned with the destiny of

nations in God's great plan of the ages, but the book of Revelation is about God's purposes in His redeemed, called, and chosen people! It is concerned with matters of far greater importance and consequence than satisfying our curiosity about the Common Market or the secret, sinister schemes of Saddam Hussein or the Illuminati. **It was written to show what the Father has done to save and transform His people and to glorify Himself through His sons!**

You will not read the fulfillments of its prophecies on the pages of *Time* magazine, but you will see them manifest in the lives of men and women! The word of the Lord in its spiritual meaning does not describe for us the carnal warfare between nations. For what have wars between nations to do with the kingdom of God? The weapons of our warfare are *not carnal*, but are *mighty through God!* The kingdom of God comes not by the sword, so of what importance in the outworking of God's kingdom on earth are the conflicts between nations and empires? These have no meaning whatsoever! The battles beheld in spirit by the eagle-eyed seer of Patmos signify spiritual combats, combats between light and darkness, between spirit and flesh, between truth and error, between righteousness and unrighteousness, between the precious mind of Christ and the carnal mind, between life and death. A man must experience this combat within himself to become a spiritual conqueror and gain the crown of life! A war in the Middle East has absolutely *nothing* to do with this! Our Lord, in the days of His flesh, carried on such spiritual warfare in an infinitely greater way than others, overcoming the compounded powers of the world, the flesh and the devil — and finally *death itself!* What a warfare! What a victory! How the mighty battles of the Roman empire pale in contrast with this! The first and second World Wars accomplished almost nothing for humanity compared with what Jesus won! He has opened up the way to victory and triumph over every enemy of sin, sorrow, limitation and death for all who are willing to follow Him into the power of the kingdom of God! Our Lord is a **spiritual conqueror!** And the book of Revelation is addressed to **him that overcometh!** That should reveal within every heart what kind of warfare the book presents!

I have often been encouraged by the messages from brother Paul Mueller, and nowhere more than by the following words: "The book of Revelation is clearly declared to be *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*. It is a book of symbolic truths revealing the Christ, both Head and body. And the revelation of the Christ has nothing whatever to do with literal nations involved in literal wars. But the revelation of Jesus Christ has everything to do with the manifestation of Christ in His corporate body of sons, and their spiritual growth. Therefore, we must understand the message of the book of Revelation to be spiritual. We are engaged in a war in the realm of the spirit, where all evil and carnality is being dealt with. This war is about our coming to perfection and dealing with the carnal, Adamic nature within us. I have said that this battle is a war to end all wars for the age, and I believe it! When we, as the firstfruits, are free of our carnality, a pattern will be established for the deliverance and freedom of many others! And when the carnal nature is removed from all mankind, the cause of all wars and violence in the world will also end.

"What wonderful spiritual truth is revealed when we understand and interpret this book in the Spirit of the word rather than with the dead letter of the word inspired by the carnal mind! The carnal nature has enclosed itself behind all manner of high-sounding religious doctrines, where 'HE' has found refuge during the previous six days of man. Old Adam would like us all to believe that this prophetic word is referring to a literal war and not to a spiritual war that will destroy 'HIM'. All during the six days of man, old Adam has been hiding behind 'HIS' false doctrines. And this is the way God ordained it to be for a time. The wisdom and anointing of God is sadly lacking in man's carnal interpretations of the God-given and God-anointed

prophecies of the book of Revelation. What good would another literal war do for the world? Is there any real, divine purpose in another literal war that would destroy multitudes? None whatsoever! If the majority of literal, sinful human beings were destroyed in another violent world war, as some suggest, the old, corrupt, Adamic nature would still plague mankind. And so would the devil!

"The truth is, the carnal, Adamic nature is responsible for all the wars from the beginning of time. What the creation needs is not another literal war, but a spiritual war that will end all wars! God knows this better than we do! His omniscient wisdom is far superior to the ideas and opinions of the religious theologians. And He has set forth a plan by which the present warfare, which we are now engaged in, shall destroy the man of sin and bind Satan for the age. This is indeed a war that shall end all wars and violence in the world for the duration of the kingdom of God on earth!

"Then the firstfruits, which we are, shall be holy, resulting in a world that shall become holy also. The principle of the kingdom of God is: **'For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy'** (Rom. 11:16). Also, the kingdom of God *'is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened'* (Mat. 13:33). As the firstfruits of the kingdom of God, we are becoming holy. We are mixed into the lump of the world, and shall change the world even as we have been changed! Therefore, the entire lump, the whole world, shall become holy, just as we have been made holy, not by our own works of righteousness of which we might boast, but by the abundant and transforming grace of our God!" — end quote.

As I mentioned earlier in our series on *The Kingdom of God*, I was once among those who believed the negative predictions of men. But through the years of walking with God something wonderful has happened to me! I spent several years of my early life and ministry with what I call an "apocalyptic mentality." By that term I mean that mind-set that is always looking for the "end" of the age with great cataclysmic upheavals and tremendous earth-shaking events — kingdoms falling, economies crashing, nuclear warfare erupting, and all those violent, catastrophic happenings that are supposed to take place in the world at the end of time. I was expecting that! We watched the Soviet Union, we watched events in the Middle East, we watched the stock market, because if crashed, we felt the "end" was certainly upon us! We were concerned about a one world government, invasion of the United States, the Illuminati, and a thousand other *earthly things*.

God delivered me from that apocalyptic mentality! He showed me clearly and powerfully that it was founded upon a *web of lies*! It was rooted in the *spirit of fear*! Its origin was right in the hallways of *Mystery Babylon*! It takes the same power of God to deliver one from that spirit of delusion that it takes to deliver one from any other demon. You see, every nation on earth has already experienced economic collapse at some time, including ours. Every nation has had war and destruction. The terrorist attack on the United States last year was indeed horrible, but not even to be compared to the horrors visited upon Europe and Japan in the Second World War. Great empires have risen and fallen throughout history, and none of them heralded the end of time. Plagues, pestilence, earthquakes, storms, and disasters of many kinds have killed millions of people in hundreds of nations and devastated whole civilizations, but none ever brought the end of the world. All of those things have been happening out there in the external world since the beginning of time, but let me tell you, none of them have anything whatever to do with the coming of the kingdom of God! Only the nature of the Father formed in His elect, only the full measure of the stature of Christ formed in God's New Creation Man, only the power of God upon His people, only the glory of God in His manifested sons, will signal the hour of transition into the greater glory of the kingdom of God upon the nations of earth!

The mind of Christ is now being imparted to God's elect in greater fullness. By the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the glorious mind of Christ we are beginning to see all things as they really are. We are now seeing new things, a new heaven and a new earth! This holy knowledge comes not by any outward observation, but by the mighty working of God in our lives. This is a mighty transition for me and for the body of Christ, as I trust it is the reality of all who read these lines. Christ is revealing Himself, His mind, His heart, His glory and His purpose in the midst of His chosen ones. I hear the witness of this from thousands of saints all over the world! There are many groups with whom we have no direct connection that are now speaking these same things! None of us were taught by man, we held no council to agree on doctrine or formulate a teaching, nor did we receive it by reading one another's writings or attending gatherings, meetings or conventions. It is the sovereign work of God among those who have been called and separated unto God in this new kingdom Day!

The hope and promise and power and glory of the kingdom of God is more clear and focused in my spirit today than at any time in the past! The earnest expectation of the manifestation of the sons of God burns more brightly in my heart now than it ever has! I rejoice that this is the DAY of the manifestation when Christ with His body shall see the triumph of His life within, bringing blessing, life, light, love and full and complete deliverance to all mankind! This is the Present Truth. This is what the Spirit *is saying* to the overcomers in this great hour! Great and glorious things are at hand! THIS IS THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

Chapter 10

He Who Is, And Was, And Is To Come

John was exiled to the isle of Patmos. While on that island he had a marvelous experience with God! He wrote down the revelation that came to him in that experience. After his encounter with the resurrected, ascended, and glorified Christ on Patmos he was released from his island prison and carried this message back to the church. This wonderful message has been going forth to the church for two thousand years! Not only has it been going forth, but it has been working, accomplishing, fulfilling itself within a people gathered out of this age. This revelation is not an ancient history, nor is it something to take place in the future — it has been *happening* ever since the time that God gave it! The book is a *prophecy*, and this fact is stated again at the end of the book (Rev. 22:19). Prophecy for the church, the called out, is for *edification, exhortation, and comfort* (I Cor. 14:3).

Many people want to make the book of Revelation correspond to, and be parallel with, the book of Daniel. The book of Daniel, however, was an *Old Testament* prophecy. It was a book prophesying of literal, physical, outward, earthly events transpiring in the world of literal, physical, natural peoples and nations, the chief of which was God's own nation of Israel. Under the Old Covenant God's people was a natural people, with natural, physical, outward, earthly laws, rituals, ceremonies, customs, priesthood, temple, and government. They fought physical wars with material weapons against natural armies. Under the *New Testament*, however, God's people is a spiritual people, born from above, walking after the Spirit and living in the Spirit. The law of God is an internal law, written in the heart and inscribed upon the mind by the Spirit of the living God. The book of Revelation was not sent to God's natural people, Israel after the flesh. It was sent to God's spiritual people, His called out who are born from above, citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem!

The book of Revelation is, therefore, a spiritual book sent to a spiritual people, involving spiritual events and experiences in the spiritual kingdom of Jesus Christ! The book of Daniel ended when Jesus Christ came into the world proclaiming the kingdom of God. It reached its final consummation at the end of Daniel's Seventieth Week, when the Lord turned from the natural Israel nation to build His spiritual house and temple made of living stones. Jesus brought a new order into the earth, the spiritual order of the kingdom of God! Therefore, the battles, upheavals, judgments, dealings, and everything else written in the book of Revelation are *spiritual*, for under the new order of the kingdom of God "the weapons of *our warfare* are *not carnal*, but *mighty through God* to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:4-5).

GRACE AND PEACE FROM HIM...

John begins the salutation of his letter to the churches by saying, "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: *Grace* be unto you, and *peace*, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come" (Rev. 1:4). Of the many truths God has made known to His people none shine more brightly or more frequently from the pages of God's Word than the truth that our

salvation and calling, from start to finish, are totally and fully products of the *Grace of God*. This word grace is translated from the Greek word *charis* which not only means "unmerited favor," but really carries the deeper meaning of "an influence that produces a result." Thus, grace is not merely the kindness of God in doing something for us which we have not deserved, but it is the essence, the energy, the power and working wrought within as HE DOES for us, to us, in us, and through us! God's grace, divine grace, then, is DIVINE ENABLEMENT!

In grace God does something more for us than just showing mercy or unmerited favor — He works by His mighty power within to do in and through us WHAT WE OURSELVES CANNOT DO! What a blessed truth this is, and how wonderfully it reveals the graciousness of God! Ah, yes, weak carnal men need mercy — but do you not see, my beloved, that men need something *more than mercy*. They need HELP! Mercy covers my weakness — but divine enablement overcomes it! Mercy forgives my sin — divine enablement conquers it and supersedes it with righteousness! Mercy overlooks my faults — divine enablement causes me to rise above them! Mercy means that God will do for me in spite of myself — divine enablement means that what He does changes me and makes me something more than I was!

Can we not see that when Paul said, "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But **by the grace of God I am what I am**: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the **grace of God** which was with me" (I Cor. 15:9-10), he pointed us to the fact that his apostolic ministry was entirely the result of DIVINE ENABLEMENT! It wasn't just "unmerited favor" that made Paul a great apostle, it was something more, it was a *mighty power* working within him, and that power was *grace*! To ever be anything in God Paul needed more than mercy — he needed *enablement*, **divine enablement**! I pray that the truth and force of these things may grip your heart! Have you ever wondered, in the light of your own apparent weakness, whether you could ever really, truly attain to the high calling of sonship? Let me tell you, my brother, my sister, not only has the Father saved you by His kindness, and called you by His own sovereign choosing, He now giveth *more grace*, more and more and more of His DIVINE ENABLEMENT to bring you unto His purpose! As we consider the tremendous challenges, battles, prunings, purgings, processings, victories, glories and spiritual heights of attainment outlined in the book of Revelation, how fitting that John should preface this great revelation with these words: "**Grace** be unto you!"

And then follows *peace*. To be filled with God's peace, to be fully at peace with God, with ourselves and others, to have peace in every situation and circumstance of life, and with everything else in this world and throughout the unbounded heavens is the goal of sonship! You will never get through the experiences of the book of Revelation without peace! So John begins, "**Peace** be unto you!" That is what the kingdom of God is all about in our lives! If there is any one thing, within or without, that troubles us and denies us His peace, then the kingdom of God is not fully established within us. The Lord is now establishing peace among His elect in Zion. He is now publishing peace and salvation in Zion, and is bringing good tidings of great things to us, by His Spirit. "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem...how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth *peace*; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" (Isa. 52:1,7).

In Hebrews 12:22 we read that we are now come unto mount Zion. To correctly unlock the great revelation and reality of this mount Zion we need to go back and look at the shadow.

Israel was God's land, the whole nation of His people. In Israel there was the city of Jerusalem, the capital city, the seat of government comprising all the ruling class. Yet in Jerusalem there was only one who, with his household, dwelt on mount Zion. He was the king! Mount Zion is the highest mount in Jerusalem, and David the king established his throne there. His was the highest pinnacle of glory attainable. But that Zion was only a shadow of the true mount Zion to which we are come in the Spirit. David was king over natural Israel. Christ is king over spiritual Israel. David dwelt on the natural mount Zion. Therefore Christ dwells on the spiritual mount Zion. And this spiritual Zion is composed of those who in union with Christ the Head have reached the very highest pinnacle attainable in the heavenly Jerusalem, those who have followed the Lord all the way to His throne. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21).

In Revelation 14:1-5 we find a company of 144,000 standing with the Lamb upon mount Zion. By the grammatical structure of the Greek we are assured that not only is Jesus the Lamb, but the 144,000 are lambs! There are 144,000 *lambs* standing with *the Lamb* on mount Zion! This company standing with their Lord can represent nothing other than those who have followed the Lamb all the way from death on mount Calvary to the glory and exaltation of mount Zion! They are lambs, and if there is any characteristic that identifies a lamb, it is *peace*! That is the lamb nature! "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened He not His mouth" (Acts 8:32).

God has but one throne, and those who share that throne share it in the heights of the spiritual mount Zion! All who are dwelling in the high and holy realm of Zion, are hearing the voice of the Son of God! Good tidings of great things, of full salvation, of perfection of holiness and power, the reign of Christ, and the peace of the kingdom of God are now being declared in Zion. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. There will I make the horn (kingship) of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed. His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon Himself shall His crown flourish" (Ps. 132:13-14,17-18). When that word becomes life to us by the Spirit, the Lord then fills us with the joy, peace, holiness and power of mount Zion. Then those qualities, including His peace, shall flow out of us to fill, first, the city of God, then the whole land of God's own people, and finally the whole earth and all nations. Haggai prophesied, saying of the glory of the latter house, the spiritual temple of living stones, each stone a quickened, living son of God, "And in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts" (Hag. 2:9). When the peace of God has filled the house of the Lord, His peace shall then flow out of the house, bringing true and lasting peace to all the peoples and nations of the world!

The peace of God can only be ministered to the inhabitants of earth by the authority of Christ in the glory and power of His kingdom of sons and daughters. Another prophet prophesied, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, THY KING COMETH unto thee...and He shall speak peace unto the nations, and His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth" (Zech. 9:9-10). Christ our King rules from the top down, from the height of His throne in the heavenlies down to the lowest valley and the deepest hell. Our King comes first to mount Zion, the sons of God; then to Jerusalem, the whole church, the bride of Christ; next to the land of Israel, that is, all the people of God on whatever spiritual level they may be; and finally to the rest of mankind in the ends of the earth. To all realms His word is *peace*! "Peace from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come..."

HE WHO IS, AND WAS, AND IS TO COME

"Grace be unto you, and peace, from *Him which is, and which was, and which is to come*" (Rev. 1:4).

In the realm of the Spirit the past, present, and future co-exist. It is high and lifted up in the throne realm that we are given the ability to see the past, the present, and the future all at once. Again and again in the book of Revelation, where our Lord is mentioned, He is spoken of as He who is, He who was, and He who is to come — meaning that when we leave the earth realm we transcend time as we know it. Planet earth is but a tiny speck in the eye of God's infinite greatness. We live out our natural lives on a virtual reality machine called Earth. The five senses manipulate us into believing that what we see, hear, feel, taste, and touch are real — but what you see and touch and feel are not real, they are not objective, they are not abiding realities at all! They are merely a passing phenomenon. People often say, "I want something *solid*, I need to see the *facts*, I need something that's real — I'm a *realist!*" In our journey from the natural to the spiritual realm we learn, however, that were it not for a power *beyond* the things we see, none of them would exist. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things *not seen*. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which *are seen* were *not made of things which do appear*" (Heb. 11:1-3). That which we perceive as reality is temporary and passing and has been established out of something eternal that your eye cannot see! If we want to walk with God we must be willing to jump out of the boat of the five senses and learn how to let our spirit gravitate into what God is, and then bring it back down into this earth until it takes on manifestation.

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Rev. 1:8). That is awesome! You see, every time Jesus is mentioned in this book He is never mentioned in the past, or just the present, or in the future. Every time we meet Jesus in the book of Revelation it is the Jesus who *is*, and who *was*, and who *is to come*. The reason is that the book of Revelation gives us a view of the kingdom of God from the divine perspective — as God views it — and the past, the present, and the future encompass the outworking of God's purpose in the earth through His wonderful **plan of the ages**. That is what is so powerful — in the Spirit you can see the whole plan of God from beginning to end! The purposes of God in the earth embrace *past history*, *present awareness*, and *future consummation*. Everything in the universe, and everything in your life, precious friend of mine, exists in the past, the present, and the future. Jesus was doing something two thousand years ago, Jesus was doing something five hundred years ago, Jesus was doing something fifty years ago, Jesus was doing something yesterday, Jesus is doing something right now, and He will be working His great work in all of our tomorrows!

The Lord which is, and which was, and which is to come is God expressed in the dimension of time. This is not talking about the *eternal* Lord who is without beginning or end. Certainly God is the eternal One! But the verb "to be" relates to *time*. *Was*, *is*, and *is to come* are all time expressions. You will not find this Lord who is, and was, and is to come, in eternity! This is the God of *the ages* revealed in a unique Lordship within those ages. A concept we must immediately grasp in order to understand God's plan of the ages is that *time is a created phenomenon* consisting of past, present, and future just as man is a created phenomenon having youth, middle age, and old age. No, you cannot smell, touch, or feel time, but it is there, ever-present, always marching into the future. Time was created; it had a beginning, it shall have an end. This Lord who is, and who was, and who is to come, is *the beginning and the end*. He is God working out His purpose and revelation in time. Time is only one thing among

countless other things that are part of the entire created universe. It is as much a "species" of creation as, for example, rocks, elephants, trees, and water are species of creation. Before the creation of the universe, there was no time; at the end of the ages when the present material universe is dissolved and replaced by a new, spiritual universe, time as we know it shall cease to exist. It will be swallowed up into eternity just as all death will be swallowed up into victory, and there shall be no more death! No more *time* and no more *death*! Time was created in the beginning, and will be dissolved at the end of the ages. This Lord who is, and who was, and who is to come, is the Lord we meet in time, in His purpose of the ages!

I am compelled to state that the Bible says very little by way of a definition of eternity, because the Bible is essentially a book of time and for time. It was written for man who lives in a temporal state and who is not yet a totally eternal being. Only as we enter that *state of being* called eternity...only as HE who IS ETERNITY becomes "All-in-all" within us...only as we are spiritually metamorphosed into our eternal condition...only as eternity becomes an absolute reality to us...only then will formerly temporal beings such as we now are, truly comprehend and understand eternity and things of an eternal nature. This marvelous work has now begun within our spirit as *our spirit* has been quickened by *His Spirit*! I stated that the Bible is relatively silent about what eternity is; that is not to say that human teachings and theology haven't taught us a great deal about eternity, but, alas! much of it over the past centuries has come from the carnal minds of Babylonish theologians and not from the mind of the Eternal One via the Holy Spirit.

Eternity is a state of absolute *timelessness*, not of *unending time*. Eternity is a *state of being* without change, fluctuation or progression, resident in the very nature and person of God in which such concepts as past, present, future, before, after, change, transition, growth, birth, death, beginning, end, etc., do not exist. Do you see? Time is not part of eternity. Eternity is not composed of segments of time. Eternity is not time standing still. It is simply not time at all! Eternity doesn't go on and on and on, *ad infinitum*. Eternity doesn't go anywhere, nor does it do anything. Eternity simply IS. It is just a glorious experience of BEING! Eternity simply IS, just as God simply IS. Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I AM" (Jn. 5:58) — not "Before Abraham was, I WAS." There are no past or future tenses in eternity. There is only one eternal NOW!

Now the eternal God has injected Himself into time. "In the *beginning* God created..." Since that wonderful dawn God has been the God of His creation, the God of heaven and earth, the God of the ages, the God of history, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of His people, the God of our salvation. The great revelation of the scriptures is that this universe and this world is governed by a throne, and that throne is not in London, it's not in Rome, it's not in Washington — it's in heaven, the eternal dimension. Time is being governed by eternity! Ultimate reality sits upon a throne and governs galaxies, solar systems, planets, creatures, time, and history. Generation after generation, through the rise and fall of empires, and the shifting sands of history, God remains. He works all His purposes in all things, but HE changes not! Yet — God in Christ became a man! God as man has tenses to His being: the yesterday of the past, the today of the present, the tomorrow of the future. This is not the *eternal* God, but the God who has dispensed His eternity into time. "Jesus Christ the same — *yesterday, today, and for the ages*" (Heb. 13:8, literal). "And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not *day and night*, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which *was, and is, and is to come*" (Rev. 4:8). Day and night do not exist in eternity nor in the heavenly realm of God's Spirit! Is it not clear that this scene is not set in some far-off heaven somewhere. In the heaven the preachers preach about there *is no day and night*! There is no sun or moon or stars, and there is *no night* there! This scene is set in

time! HE is praised and extolled both DAY AND NIGHT, this God who WAS, and IS, and IS TO COME! HE is worshipped and adored both DAY AND NIGHT, this God of the ages, this Architect of history, this Lord of time, this King of the universe, this Most High who "liveth for the ages, whose dominion is an age during dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" (Dan. 4:34-35, Literal & KJV).

Oh, take me not back through the long ages to a Christ that walked the shores of Galilee, to a Christ that *was!* He *is!* He lives! He is here! In my *today!* I can never be alone, never grope in the dark for a hand, never be forsaken, never lack in the hour of need, never fail in His ongoing purposes, never need a Saviour, a Guide, a Brother, a Head, a Leader, a Captain, a Father. I have Him, He who was everything in the yesterday of the past, and who will be everything in the tomorrow of the future, is mine today; and in each conscious moment of my existence here, and throughout all the ages, He is my life, my all! He is not a far-off, untouchable God, "inhabiting eternity," as the King James Bible erroneously states, but a God made nigh, INHABITING THE AGES, involved in His creation, working tirelessly and unceasingly and unfailingly until His wonderful plan is brought to a successful conclusion and HE becomes gloriously ALL IN ALL!

The life we now have is a progressing, growing, conquering life — the **life of the ages**. It is life that has come through the quickening of our spirit by His Spirit, giving a new beginning, and the potential to become, in due time, all He is. I am sure my readers, with myself, must confess that there is some progress still to be made, growth still to be experienced, transformation yet to be wrought before we stand in Him in the fullness of that life that needs no change, no further development, no additional experience, no fuller stature, no added triumph, no increase of wisdom, knowledge, or power — that state of being as unchangeable as He is unchangeable, *eternal as He is eternal!* Only faintly now do our eyes behold the splendor of that *eternal realm* which lies before us, but as we approach reverently and with godly fear, not disrespectfully and thoughtlessly as nosy children prying into some sacred thing, the Lord of glory is meeting us and is becoming a Father unto us and we are the sons of God in whom the Father shall unfold the fullness of His life, mind, will, and glory. Thus are we coming into *that same image* and we shall share with Christ the glory He had with the Father **before time was** — **ETERNAL GLORY!**

What Christians for centuries have called "eternal life" is in the Greek "life *aiônios*" — the life of the ages! How I thank God that my present state of being is *not eternal!* There is *more!* The new man in me is changing, growing, increasing, maturing unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! Some entertain the notion that once they have received Christ within them they have the whole Christ in all His fullness and that's all there is. But in the scriptures there is the *growth* and the *formation* of Christ in us, and the *increase* of God! To those in whom the Christ life is but a *babe* within them, Peter writes, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may *grow* thereby" (I Pet. 2:2). To those pressing on to maturity Paul wrote, "But speaking the truth in love, may *grow up* into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:15). Some would rather ignore this growing, changing, increasing *life of the ages*, somehow projecting themselves into that life which is eternal, claiming "by faith" the finished product, while by-passing the tedious processing that develops and matures that life. Ah, dear ones, it doesn't work that way! Christ is being *formed in us* and it will take "the ages," my friend, to unfold it all. As long as there is need for growth, change, and advancement, there is need for time. Until redemption is complete its work will proceed in time, but the finished work of redemption stands at time's end. Thank God! There is an **end** —

then eternity, God all-in-all! "I am the *beginning* and the *ending*, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come."

As God's plan of the ages has progressed there has been a level of life, a spiritual vitality, for each age. Each age has been different. Men in antediluvian times knew God in a certain way and received life of a particular order. Israel, under the law, and the ministry of the prophets, entered into another degree of spiritual life. Perhaps I can give you a simple illustration in this way. There is a difference between "fetus" life, "baby" life, "child" life, "adolescent" life, and "mature" life. There is a difference between "youthful" life, "middle age" life, and "old age" life. Can we not see by this that there is a continuing development of *God's life within us*, until HIS FULLNESS is attained, and there shall be a continuing development of His life in the whole human family throughout the age and the ages to come until God becomes all-in-all!

God is cultivating within His sons an *eternal nature*! The thoughts of God's people are becoming boundless and eternal, no longer controlled and motivated purely by carnal memories of the past, by present events, or by dim hopes for an endless future in "mansions over the hilltop." The fledgling spirits of God's sons are fast growing up into the limitless expanses of God's own changeless, eternal spiritual state of being. Yes, the whole man is becoming a new, eternal creation, no longer limited by the space-time-continuum. Even our present vile bodies shall be *changed*, fashioned like unto His body of glory! God's maturing sons see the reality of a state of being called eternity, and their hearts strain and leap upward toward that "plane" in God!

Now let us consider for a moment the Lord which IS. Who is this Lord which IS? In what way does He differ from the Lord which *was*, or the Lord which *is to come*? Someone says, "There is no difference — it is all the same Lord!" Ah, yes, it is the same Lord, but there is a *difference* in His *administration* and *manifestation*! As startling as it may seem, this Lord which *is* — is YOU! If He is not *you*, who are you? The Lord which *is*, is the same Lord which *was*, but with a difference. Let us look at the Lord who *was*! "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God **was** manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (I Tim. 3:16). Let us look closely at what Paul is saying! Great is the mystery of godliness or God-like-ness. God was...God was...God **was**...MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH! Who is it that *was* God manifested in the flesh? Why, Jesus, of course! This is the great *mystery of God-like-ness*! Was Jesus like God? "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father." Why was Jesus like God? Because He *was God*! "In the beginning *was* the Word, and the Word *was* with God, and the Word *was* God" (Jn. 1:1). Who is the God that *was*? You couldn't answer it any better than that if you tried! And scripture could be piled upon scripture to show that God manifested in the flesh of Jesus is the Lord *which was*! "God *was* in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." Great is the mystery of God-like-ness...Jesus *was* God manifested in the flesh! Hallelujah!

The Lord which *was* is also the Lord which *is*! The present tense of God's manifestation in Christ is expressed by the apostle Paul when he said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ *liveth in me*" (Gal. 2:20). Jesus Himself prophesied of this manifestation of God in His people, saying, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and *make our abode with (in) him*" (Jn. 14:23). "God is in you." "God dwelleth in you." When we think of God manifested in the flesh we think of the man walking by the shores of blue Galilee, walking among humanity, in His humanity, demonstrating what humanity was intended to be. But God has raised our vision beyond **He who was** and is causing us to see **Him who is**! "Now *ye are* the body of Christ." Christ is no longer walking in that body that tread the sands of Galilee! He is walking in another body

today, in your body, in my body, in all those sons whom He is bringing to His glory! In the realm of **Him who is** we find a glory beyond the **was** which enables us to press into and participate in the **is**. While many still look for the coming of the **was** in the clouds, we have now experienced the One who **IS COMING TO BE GLORIFIED IN HIS SAINTS!**

Would God that Christians could be awakened to the glory of Him who is! The same John who in spirit beheld the glory of the many-membered Son of man on Patmos, penned these significant words to the children of God: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? *He is antichrist*, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (I Jn. 2:22-23). Now what does John mean when he speaks of denying the Father and the Son? Let us make no mistake about this! A little further on John enlarges on this statement so that we need not be left in the dark. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: EVERY SPIRIT THAT CONFESSETH THAT JESUS CHRIST IS COME IN THE FLESH IS OF GOD:* and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ **is come** in the flesh is not of God: and *this is that spirit of antichrist*, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and now already is in the world" (I Jn. 4:1-3).

Now let us get these statements clear in our minds! We have heard many wild speculations about who the antichrist will be, but John declares the antichrist to be one who denies that Jesus is the Christ, which is denying the Father and the Son. But how does he do this? BY NOT CONFESSING JESUS CHRIST HAVING COME IN THE FLESH! But what does this mean? It states that we know the Spirit of God by His confessing Jesus Christ having come in the flesh. Does this mean that Roman Catholicism is the Spirit of God? It confesses that Jesus Christ was a man, born of a virgin. It confesses that He *came* in the flesh as a babe in Bethlehem. They even parade Him before the world hanging upon a cross, crucified. Millions of others around the world, representing every kind of religion and false cult existing admit the same historical facts. Do all of these represent the Spirit of God?

These verses have a deeper meaning! They are not speaking of the fact of Jesus Christ having lived on earth as a man. Almost anyone will admit that! But the profound truth which all of popular religion has missed, is the fact of the Christ actually coming into this flesh, *my flesh, your flesh*, and becoming an eternal and inseparable part of us! Millions confess **Him who was**, but very few in this dark age confess **Him who is!** "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ IS (NOW) COME in the flesh is not of God: and *this is that spirit of antichrist...ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them (the antichrists): because GREATER IS HE THAT I-S IN YOU* (your flesh), THAN HE THAT I-S IN THE WORLD" (I Jn. 4:3-4). Every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ **IS** come in *your flesh* and in *my flesh*, beloved, — is antichrist! Why? Because **Greater is He (Jesus Christ) that IS IN YOUR FLESH than he (the spirit of antichrist) that IS IN THE ADAMIC FLESH OF THE WORLD!** Our very own natural, human consciousness would deny that the Almighty God of the universe dwells, and lives, and in all things triumphs in us! So don't worry about poor old Mussolini or Henry Kissinger being the antichrist — truly he is enthroned in our own carnal minds!

He that is in you will never leave you nor forsake you! This is the Christ from whose love no power nor creature in heaven or earth can separate us! Paul preached not himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord. After stating this himself, he follows on to say, "But this treasure (Christ) *we have in earthen vessels*" (II Cor. 4:7). Christ is now being *formed* in our earthen vessels! Just as God was formed in Jesus within the womb of Mary, so is Christ being formed in the womb of our mortal flesh! Only the complete, mature formation of Christ within us will bring us to

manifestation as sons of God. Sonship is the actual quickening of the Christ life who has become the new man within. *Great* is the mystery of God-like-ness! Christ in us is both ageless and deathless, the actual Son of the God of heaven. He is being formed in all His nature, wisdom, glory and power in this human frame, even as He was formed in the firstborn Son, Jesus, to perform His mighty works.

By personal application, if my spirit does not confess that Christ is come in my flesh, I am antichrist. The confession of my *spirit* is a much stronger confession than might be made by my mouth. With the *mouth* confession is made unto *salvation*, but with the *spirit* confession is made unto *sonship*. The confession of one's *spirit* bespeaks an expression arising from an **inner state of being**, not merely a belief of the mind. If my *spirit* is confessing that Christ is come in my flesh, it is confessing it by a **living manifestation!** As I live out Christ in the nitty-gritty of every day experience, in every situation and circumstance, doing all the will of my heavenly Father upon this earth, I am confessing with my spirit that Christ is come in my flesh! Ah, I might say with my mouth that Christ is come in my flesh, that I am a son of God, ready to walk on water and glow in the dark, but my spirit speak just the opposite, as the fountain of my life sends forth polluted waters. Multitudes have a mouth confession of the presence of Christ within whose "*spirit* confesseth *not* that Christ is come" in their flesh!

Oh, that men might believe it! Truly, Christ in us is our only hope of glory! HE IS the glory! But antichrist will hear of no such hope of glory. His hope does not rest wholly in the Christ within, but in his own ability and works, his own faithfulness or endurance. He is cluttered about with laws, regulations, creeds, ordinances, observances, rituals, ceremonies, programs, traditions, and religious exercises of this order and that, all of which are designed to assure his right standing with God. He is thus denying the Father and the Son, for the *living Christ alone* is not his life! Anything that *adds something* to the Christ life within, to fill some place or function in our lives that is not filled by THE LIFE OF CHRIST ALONE, — **is antichrist!** The word "antichrist" is made up of the Greek preposition *anti* and the word for Christ. *Anti* bears the meaning of that which is "opposed to" by "supplanting" or being "instead of." During the Middle Ages, a man who was considered a hostile, self-substituted, usurping Pope — one occupying the Pope's place and receiving his honors and exercising his functions — was called an "antipope." This term is commonly used in history in this connection. Such a "Pope" was not merely a person who was *against* the Pope. Martin Luther was *against* the Pope, but he was not an antipope because he never went to Rome and usurped the Pope's seat, making himself the Pope! An antipope was a person who was against the Pope by attempting to take the Pope's place. This happened on occasion in previous centuries. In like manner, the antichrist is that spirit, mind, nature, personality, consciousness, activity, enterprise, work, function, method, program or any other thing that comes TO TAKE THE PLACE OF CHRIST in our lives — and *by so doing* opposes Christ!

Therefore we find that most of the candidates for antichrist promoted by the preachers haven't even come close to *being* antichrists! Antichrist signifies one who sets himself up in the place of Christ, by appropriating some of the prerogatives and attributes of Christ. That is, antichrist appears **as** Christ and by so doing is actually **against** Christ — *usurping the place that rightly belongs to Christ alone!* Anything that is placed *instead of* Christ, is literally antichrist. The very moment the love of God, the truth of God, the glory of God, and the power of God wanes from the spirits of the Lord's people, flying out the windows of their souls, a whole host of attitudes, ideas, beliefs, doctrines, rules, regulations, rituals, ceremonies, sacraments, ordinances, forms, methods, organization, and traditions stalk boldly through the door to *take the place of reality and life in the Spirit*. Any little form of *substitution* that supplants the ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF THE INDWELLING CHRIST LIFE — is **ANTICHRIST!**

Those who have truly received the call to sonship have now learned, and learned well, that there is no need for these or myriad other religious trappings in the walk of sonship, for CHRIST WITHIN abundantly supplies everything they can possibly ever need! In order for Christ to be "all in all" He must first become ALL! God was in Christ, and God in Christ is in us! From the moment that the Father declared Christ's sonship the spirit of sonship moved in and through Him and His whole life became the revelation of His Father. The nature, mind, will and power of His Father manifested through Him, and it was the same power of the Father in Him that raised Him from the dead! And now a vast family of His "many brethren" have received that same spirit of sonship, even the same spirit that raised Christ from the dead dwells within us and shall also quicken *our mortal bodies* by that spirit that *dwells in us!*

Beloved, if **He that was** is now **He that is** within you, what, under all God's heavens, could be added to you *from without*? Let us bow in holy reverence to worship and adore, and to live and walk in the blessed reality of such an high and holy calling! Stop seeking anything at all from or through the myriad *substitutes* pawned by the countless modern day antichrists of the church systems of man. These external religious observances will not suffice for those destined for the throne! CHRIST HIMSELF IS SUFFICIENT! In the name of Jesus Christ, divorce yourself completely and forever from all the substitutes, the realm of the **instead of**. You will find absolutely nothing in any of it that will satisfy the deepest cravings of your heart after God. CHRIST WITHIN IS ALL YOU NEED! This is the Lord who *was* Jesus of Nazareth, but who now *is* the many sons of God in the earth! God is bringing many sons to glory and we are being conformed to the image of God's firstborn Son. The eternal God never changes, but this Lord who was, and is, and is to come does change from glory to glory!

The reality of Christ in us is not a beautiful analogy nor a clever facsimile — it is truly HIM! Bennie Skinner once gave the following illustration. "When they crank up that mint in Washington D.C. with the special engraving machine, and start printing twenty dollar bills on that special paper with the special ink, they then cut them into singles, bundle them together, and put a band around them. You wouldn't take a bundle of these, hold them up, and say, 'Why, that *looks like* twenty dollar bills!' No, you wouldn't say that because you can see, you *know*, that they *are* twenty dollar bills!" In like manner, no one will need to say of the sons of God, "These sons *look like* Jesus Christ," for all shall surely see and know that the Lord who **was IS THE LORD WHICH IS!**

What, then, does it mean when it says, "...and the Lord which *is to come*"? The expression "which is to come" is from the Greek *erchomai*, meaning "the coming one." Now, how is the Lord which was, and the Lord which is, also the coming One? What does it mean? It means that in our consciousness, in our experience, He is yet coming to be all that He is! That's what the processing is all about! "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven...when He *shall come* to be *glorified in His saints*, and to be *admired in* all them that believe in that Day" (II Thes. 1:7,10). In the New Testament it was a great revelation that Christ was a many-membered body and that Christ was in them in mighty spirit power. This great truth became a glorious reality as each member of the Christ body found his or her place within that corporate expression of the Lord. But they also spoke of the coming Day of Christ and the coming and revelation of the Lord in a surpassing glory. They anticipated a full-orbed manifestation of this Lord in the glory of *manifested sonship*. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which *shall be* revealed in us. For the earnest expectation *waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God*" (Rom. 8:18-19).

Jesus Christ is coming again, and He is coming to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all those holy sons of God who by His grace have come into His image through the ages. This is the fullness of the Christ! Not for the world nor all that is in it would I for one moment miss the glory which is yet to come! To reign with Christ and with Him usher all creation into the glory of God, which has been the vision of the prophets, the dream of the sages, the cry of the sons, the unrelenting purpose of God, and the longing and expectation of *all creation* is a prize of far vaster worth than all the power and glory and wealth of all the nations of earth combined. Though God's Christ is one, it will take the ages to come to reveal His manifold beauties and graces. He is the one Christ, yet His body is made up of many redeemed souls. He is the true Vine, yet there are many branches. He is the uniquely begotten Son of God, yet He is leading many sons to His own glory. He is the only Saviour, yet He is bringing a whole company of saviours up on mount Zion.

I bring you good news! YOU ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST — not the "mystical body" as the theologians of Babylon are wont to define it, but you are **THE BODY** of Christ, making you the Lord which is to come! Christ is *in you* of a truth, precious one, to manifest the fullness of Himself. Christ *is your life*. Christ is being formed in you, and you are being conformed to His image. In looking at a piece of petrified wood we can see this. One time it was wood, NOW IT IS ROCK. For something has happened to it! Certain minerals entered into every cell of that piece of wood and wrought a complete change in it. This process continued until that piece of wood had become rock. Same shape, same size, and it has exactly the same cell structure. But what a great change has taken place! THIS IS WHAT GOD IS DOING IN US! Something is happening to us! We do not understand all about it, but we know that there is a change going on in our innermost beings. It is God permeating us with Himself! God is impregnating us with Himself! God is taking over, filling even our very cells with all He is. This change is taking place in our inner selves, in our spirits, in our minds, and ultimately in our bodies. This process shall continue until we arrive at the condition of being saturated with God. God shall so fill us, so overwhelm us, so change us that we take on the very characteristics of God!

I think the highest privilege that scripture puts before us is surely that Christ will be *glorified in us* — that He will be *admired in us*. Think of it, my brethren, so completely has the image of the earthly passed away — so completely is the image of the heavenly gained that CHRIST is seen, CHRIST is admired in us! It is not the believer that is admired, glorified though he be. It is Christ who is admired in him! All that the saints are radiates HIS glory. It is in HIS beauty they are arrayed — in HIS glory they shine. The image they bear is HIS — HIS blood has bought them, HIS spirit has transformed them, HIS hand has formed them. They shine as the sun in that heavenly glory, but only as HIS light, and for HIS praise. This is not the hour for any self-exaltation, nor for the promotion of "my ministry," nor for the building of "my kingdom," for it is HE who is coming to be GLORIFIED IN US! Many think that the call to sonship is for their glorification — but it is not so. Little wonder that He is purging, pruning, breaking, sifting, melting, bringing us to such absolute nothingness, so that the only one left to be revealed is THE CHRIST. It is Christ glorified in us who is HE WHICH IS TO COME!

God will not allow us to refuse to see the Christ in each other and then look upon Him in some other form. Look not for the Christ who *was*, and do not cling to the Christ who *is*, yet know of a surety that Christ in us is HIM all the way! We will have to recognize Him in our brethren. God will not satisfy our carnal nature by allowing us to see Jesus descending from heaven in clouds of glory, alone in that glory. We shall be *glorified together*, the scripture says. Why would I look for Jesus in clouds of glory while I pass by His body on earth and refuse to *see Him in them*! It is this message that is coming to us today! If I want to see Christ I look at you, because that is where He is forming Himself, manifesting Himself, and glorifying Himself! The body of Christ is

not something apart from Christ, not just something that Christ has formed as a separate entity. The body of Christ IS CHRIST in the earth! Until I see, *recognize, love* and *honor* Christ in you, my brother, my sister, I would not see, recognize, love or honor one I would see riding upon a cloud! When this precious knowledge becomes sweet to our soul, we begin to look at one another and BEHOLD HIM! I now see **Him who is** and I shall look, and look, and look until in His temple which we are I see **Him who is to come!**

Chapter 11

The Prince Of The Kings Of The Earth

"From Jesus Christ who is the *faithful witness*..." (Rev. 1:5). "These things saith He that is holy, He that is *true*...these things saith the Amen, the faithful and *true witness*..." (Rev. 3:7,14).

This word "true" is a very wonderful word! In the Greek it does not mean true merely as opposed to that which is false. The root means "that which is not concealed" or "that which is not withheld," that is, the *whole truth* as opposed to a *partial truth*, as distinguished from all shadows of, and approximations to, the truth. It expresses the *perfect realization* of an idea as contrasted with its *partial realization*. It indicates *fullness* as against that which is *fragmentary* or *in-part*. For example, we recall that Jesus said, "Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the *true* bread from heaven" (Jn. 6:32). "I am the *true* vine" (Jn. 15:1). "The *true* light now shineth" (I Jn. 2:8). "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the *true*; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24).

The manna that fell in the wilderness was not false bread from heaven. God sent down angel bread from heaven for Israel! But that bread did not satisfy. It was only good for a day. If it was left over to the next day it became contaminated, bred worms, and stank. It was wonderful bread from the hand of God, but *not the fullness* of what God had in mind! Christ is the fullness! He is bread like no other bread! When a man eats of this bread he will never hunger again. He does not need to come back and eat again. He that eats this bread from heaven, which is Christ as life, receives a dimension of life that is heavenly and eternal! Here indeed is *reality*! This is the *true* — whole, complete, full, all-inclusive, illimitable, boundless — bread of incorruptible life!

The light of the Old Testament law and the words of the prophets were not a false word, they were just not the *full revelation* of reality that came in Jesus Christ. No one could deny that Israel had light! They were the only people that had light as a nation. The rest of the nations were as when Egypt was so dark that one could feel it, but in the homes of the Israelites there was light! That was wonderful light indeed, but now the *true* light is come! The light of the world is Christ! Moses and the prophets brought the light of God within the law and the scriptures, but what was but *glowing word* has now broken forth in the *brightness of God* in the midst of His people! As the pillar of fire gave a natural light at night, and that was wonderful, now incorruptible life and heavenly light are manifested as *living personality* in the person of Jesus Christ and those holy sons who come into His glory! The law and the prophets were a fragment, but Christ is the fullness! The law was truth. "Thy law is the truth...and all Thy commandments are truth" (Ps. 119:142,151). So while the law with all its outward observances of types and shadows is indeed truth, Christ is the *whole truth* and *nothing but the truth*! "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and *truth* came by Jesus Christ" (Jn. 1:17). The law was a glimmer of light in the darkness, but the *true* (full) light now shineth!

Since this word "true" indeed expresses *perfect realization* as against the idea of *partial realization* as illustrated in these examples, we can now understand that Jesus Christ, the

firstborn Son of God, is the FAITHFUL AND TRUE WITNESS! The revelation of Jesus Christ is the revelation of the FULLNESS OF TRUTH AND REALITY. That's what the book of Revelation is all about! It is not merely the last book of the Bible, or a book about the end of the world. It is the revelation of Jesus Christ — the unveiling of the full intent, the ultimate purpose, and the very fullness of God in His called and chosen elect body of Christ! It is the revelation of the Third Day, of the Most Holy Place, of the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Manifestation of the Sons of God!

God has been using His people everywhere to whatever degree He has prepared the vessel for that revelation of the Christ. There has come a beautiful unfolding of His purpose, the outflow of His life, and the manifestation of Himself throughout the church age, right up to the present time. But Jesus sent a revelation to the church to declare that there shall yet come the ultimate, the total, and complete revelation of Jesus Christ — not a narrow, limited thing, not to get a number of people saved and filled with the Spirit, and healed and blessed and used — but the kingdom of God coming with power and with glory, as an expression and manifestation of God in His total capacity with no limitations, with all the power, with all the glory, all the might, all the majesty, all the authority, so that nations will be swept into the kingdom of God, all humanity transformed, creation delivered, and the last enemy, even death, destroyed from off the face of the earth for evermore. That is what you see in Christ's promises to the overcomers, in the Manchild ruling upon the throne, in the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, in a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, in the judgments of God complete in all men, and there shall be no more death. What bright and glorious prospects loom before the vision of all who press on into the FULL REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST! How do we know that the sons of God will be manifested in the glory of Christ? How do we know that all men will be delivered and made alive in Christ? How do we know that all sin and death will be swallowed up in the whole human race as creation is delivered from the bondage of corruption? How do we know? Because Christ Jesus Himself is THE FAITHFUL AND TRUE WITNESS!

In this order of fullness our Lord Jesus Christ is the firstborn, the first *manifested son of God*, and He is therefore the faithful and *true witness*. He is Himself the firstfruit, the sample, the demonstration, the proto-type, and the pattern of God's fullness in His sons and ultimately in all men! The message revealed in the book of Revelation, and the message I proclaim to you today, is just this: Jesus is coming again! He will never come again in the body of His humiliation, never again walk to rest upon the well, or sleep in the storm tossed boat, never to again be smitten in the face and spit upon and crucified. Can we not all thank God that that part is finished? "In like manner as ye have seen Him go away," so will be the manner of His coming. It was an hour of His kingdom glory and the holy rapture of His translation. And so will He return. So He has returned. So He does return. His return on the day of Pentecost was in a mighty rushing sound, in tongues of flame, in prophetic ecstasy, in gifts of apostles and prophets and miracles. He came to fill His body, the church, with this power. But that was not the end! It was merely a *means* to the end!

Can we even begin to comprehend the greater glory of His coming in many sons brought to glory? All this will be reproduced *on a larger, fuller scale*. It will be the FULL HARVEST of His life! He will come with the keys of death and the grave in His hands for His elect sons. He will come in power as the Judge of the living and the dead. He will come as King of kings and Lord of lords in sovereign grace to carry out the great work of *restoring all things*. "Behold, I make *all things new!*" Some presume that they have already entered in to this full revelation of Jesus Christ, they are now walking in the Third Day, dwelling on mount Zion, living in the Feast of Tabernacles, and already reign as kings in the kingdom. Their lives and their ministries give

the lie to their claims. I have not witnessed a power and a glory *greater than Pentecost* in any place, nor in any person, nor through any ministry anywhere on this planet. Have you? But it is coming! You can count on it! Having now accomplished His purpose of forming His elect body through the church age, the Lord is now also ready to use the *finished product* from this age, sons in His own image and likeness, to be the deliverers of creation. To this we are called, beloved, and for this our hearts cry out with groanings that cannot be uttered! Will it really happen? Ah, yes, my friend, JESUS CHRIST IS THE FAITHFUL AND TRUE WITNESS!

THE FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD

"And from Jesus Christ, who is...the *firstbegotten of the dead*" (Rev. 1:5).

For three and a half years the disciples walked with Jesus. They saw Him feed the multitudes, calm the violent sea with a word, heal the sick and oppressed, and raise the dead even from the tomb of foul corruption. Three of them had been with Jesus on the holy mount and had seen the transcendent glory of His transfiguration. They fell down afraid, dumbfounded by the glory that was manifest, as they beheld the face of Christ shining with a brightness exceeding the noon day sun, and heard the voice of God out of the glory saying, "This is my beloved Son!" But at last the day came when the hideous monster approached, and death moved in and reaches out its bony hands and takes this Jesus, the Nazarene, and lifts him up from the earth and impales Him upon a cross. He then takes his diabolical dart and plunges it into His heart. Jesus, with a loud cry, gives up the ghost and dies! Blackness and death cover the land and as His lifeless body is laid reverently in the tomb the hopes of all who trusted in God in Christ had been dashed to a thousand pieces.

The hours dragged slowly by. The sun set in the west and darkness covered the earth. At last the eastern sky was reddened and grew bright with a morning hope. People arose and went about their business. Again the light faded and disappeared. Once more darkness threatened. All of this was unseen and unfelt in the coldness and perpetual darkness of the tomb. There no light came nor went. There the air did not move nor was it disturbed by breathing. The most delicate instrument would have picked up no sound of a beating heart. There was but stillness and coldness and death in the tomb where Jesus lay. Those eyes that had wept over Jerusalem and had looked with compassion on so many, now had passed into the land of eternal darkness; those hands that had gone about doing good, which had touched the leper and opened the blind eyes, now were cold and clammy and still. Death reigned supreme in that tomb.

But on that morning of the first day of the week, when there was but the slightest shimmering of dawn on the horizon, unseen by human eyes, there descended the omnipotent and supernatural hand of God, right through that stone, and touched the body of the beloved Son. Life poured into that body and it was quickened by the immeasurable and illimitable power of God. In the silent darkness of that tomb a mighty metamorphosis took place — the body that rose was no longer a natural body — it was a *spiritual body*! It was a body pulsating with incorruptible power and immortal vitality! It shimmered with a splendiferous glow and vibrated at a frequency thousands of times higher than the body that was laid there three days before. Suddenly out of the blackness of the tomb, the first human body in the history of the world that *could not die*, nor be affected by any earthly power, stood and quietly passed through the rock walls like sunshine through a window pane, disappearing into the morning mist. Christ came out, not to the roar of hundreds of thousands, not to great parades or waiting hands, but He came out alone, having conquered death itself within Himself. There was only One who was good enough, wise enough, strong enough — Jesus the Christ, the *first begotten*, the *firstborn*

from the dead! It is *His voice that speaks* in the vision of Patmos, it is His voice that beckons us onward to the glory of sonship!

But hark! this voice that speaks is not of this world. It does not sound from somewhere among the deep death-shadows in which here we grope and find no way out. It is the resurrection voice! He that speaks stands at the other side of death and the grave as the *risen One!* That means that He was dead and is alive again and lives forevermore! He is alive with a new life, a victorious life. He was in death, and went through death, and He now lives as never one lived before. And what is more, as He passed through death, He *left the way open!* In the Spirit we behold Him there, on the other side of death; and looking at His glory from our present travail, we know by that very token that there is a way out! As a man groping in the black and fearful darkness of a deep cave beholds in the distance the glimmer of glorious sunlight and takes courage to continue his way in the one direction of that light spot, assured that there lies his deliverance, so the sons of God groping in the darkness of the shadow of this mortal realm, beholding in the Spirit the glory of the risen firstborn Son, know that there is a way out of death into the glorious liberty of the sons of God! For, mark you well, He is not merely risen: He is the *firstborn from the dead!* And the firstborn is He that "openeth the womb" and prepares the way for all His brethren. Thus Christ was in the womb of death, was born from death, opening the womb of death for all those whom the Father hath given Him. And it is He, standing in that spot of glorious light, whom you see from your present darkness, who calls to you, "Because I live, *ye shall live also!*" "To him that overcometh will I give the *crown of life.*" It is true, wonderfully and gloriously true — "We shall *not* all sleep, but we *shall* all be changed!"

This beautiful message was sent to the churches from the resurrected, living Christ because He was lost from their minds, because He was vague in their consciousness, because time had eroded their fresh experience, because persecutions and troubles had weakened their hopes, because confusing teachers had disturbed their faith, and they had lost the real essence of His indwelling power of life. So He reminded them, truly reminded *us*, that He is the *first one born from the dead.* He is alive from the dead! Not just in spirit, but in spirit, soul *and* body! Precious friend of mine, are you lacking Him? Are you missing Him? Are you weak and troubled and doubting within your heart? Are you frustrated by pressures from without? Then hear the word of the Lord — this message is from Jesus who is speaking to you alive from the dead! This is a *living word*, it's an *incorruptible life*, touch it and you will be strengthened by it, quickened by it, empowered by it, transformed by it, for it is the life of the resurrected Son of God within you! The book of Revelation is a word of life from the dead, it doesn't come from any mortal man, it's not about darkness, death, destruction, and hopelessness, but it's the value of a treasure from heaven. I have this life in me, you have this life in you, and this life within is the revelation of Jesus Christ, the appearing of Jesus Christ. This word *will prevail!*

Multitudes of Christians do not believe that Jesus is the "firstborn from the dead." They believe that Enoch was the first man to overcome death! They believe that Enoch was raised out of this death realm to a celestial, immortal existence in spirit, soul and body. Furthermore, they are convinced that both Enoch and Elijah *preceded* Jesus in His triumph over death, being caught up to heaven, changed and glorified, escaping physical death! That is the story told by the preachers. But I do not believe it! The problem is that the believers in the church systems have become literally filled with traditions and stuffy old theories formed in the minds of men who imagine they are students of the word of God. I am a great lover of the scriptures, but I am always afraid of any man who superficially interprets them out of a carnal mind. That man is spiritually illiterate and has closed his eyes to the shining light of the revelation of the Holy Spirit as it illumines His word. He may be a scholar and have a great intellect filled with dead

head knowledge, but is unable to compare spiritual things with spiritual and thereby discern the wisdom that is from above.

Many people claim that Enoch and Elijah never died, yet in Hebrews chapter eleven Enoch is listed among the heroes of faith, and then verse thirteen plainly says, "These ALL DIED in faith, not having received the promises..." Enoch is named and Elijah is referred to in chapter eleven, and yet verse thirty-nine states, "And these ALL having obtained a good report through faith, **received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.**" In John 2:13 we read an emphatic statement by Jesus which cannot be contradicted. We would have to say that either Jesus is wrong, or our understanding of a couple other passages is wrong, and Jesus is right! Jesus states, "And *no man hath ascended up to heaven*, but He that *came down from heaven*, even the Son of man which is in heaven." Did Jesus forget about Enoch and Elijah when He made that statement? I think not!

It is not my intent to go into detail about this subject in this writing, but let us look briefly at Enoch's experience as recorded in the scriptures. Let us examine some of the clues that will aid our understanding. Genesis 5:23 states, "ALL the days of Enoch were 365 years." When this expression is used of other patriarchs, including Methuselah, it is followed by, "...*and he died.*" However, Enoch is unique because instead of "and he died," the record states, "And Enoch walked with God, and he *was not*; for God *took him.*" What does it mean when it says that God "took him"? According to Hebrews 11:5 it means *translation* and this word occurs three times in one verse! Translation, however, in the Greek means "to change sides," "transfer," or "transport." When we think of translation we think of going *up*. But that is not the meaning of the Greek word! "Transferred" would be a better translation. Let us look at another place where "translated" appears in the King James Bible. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath *translated* us into the kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. 1:13). Now, while it is true there is an upward motion presented in many passages, such as, "If ye then be *risen* with Christ," and "He hath *raised us up* together," and many others, these are different words and different analogies. The words used in those passages are not the same word rendered "translated." The word rendered translated simply means to transfer or transport, to move from one place, realm, or state to another — in any direction! Have we not "changed sides" to follow Jesus? Have we not been "transported" from one kingdom to another? Have we not been "transferred" from a human, earthly, natural consciousness, realm, and state of being to a divine and spiritual consciousness, realm, and state of being? Has our allegiance not been "transferred" from our own selfish rights to the will of our Father? This is a very real spiritual experience! And though we have truly been "translated" into a new kingdom, and have "risen" and been "raised up" and "caught up" together with Christ in the heavenlies, **have we gone anywhere physically?** Did we disappear off the earth? Did our bodies become changed, metamorphosed, spiritualized and immortalized? NO! If we have been "translated" into the kingdom of God's dear Son, and yet haven't gone one inch off of planet earth, nor yet been changed into a body like unto HIS glorious body, by what authority do we contend that Enoch and Elijah left planet earth and have, for the past several thousand years, been living in some far-off heaven somewhere in immortal bodies that escaped death! Nowhere does the scripture say that Elijah never died. It only says he was "taken," and he was seen being caught into a whirlwind. I have seen many things caught up in whirlwinds, my friend, including buildings and trees, and they were surely *transferred* some place, some of them never seen again. But they did *not* go to heaven! Ah, beloved, we do such superficial thinking!

I do not for one moment doubt that Enoch had a great and glorious *spiritual experience* that raised him up into a new dimension of *spiritual life*, for that is the outcome in any age of

walking with God! He "was not" any more the same old Enoch, nor was He "found" any more in the old realm of sin and death consciousness and existence. But the scripture *plainly states* that HE DIED! Oh, how we need to let go of all the old religious traditions and believe what God has said! Our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, who came out of the tomb in a glorious body of divine life and power has told us from that state of resurrection life and immortality that HE HIMSELF IS THE **FIRST BEGOTTEN, THE FIRST BORN FROM THE DEAD!** The question follows — if Enoch and Elijah were able to attain this apart from the resurrection of Jesus Christ, then why would any of us have needed Jesus to open the way for us? Jesus would not have been the first man to overcome death — Enoch would have been first! This strikes at the very root of the redemption accomplished through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our hope of full and complete redemption, including the redemption of our bodies, lies not with Enoch and Elijah, great as those men were, for only Jesus has the *experience*, and therefore the *power*, to change our vile bodies that they may be fashioned like unto His body of glory! Blessed be the firstborn Son!

"And from Jesus Christ, who is...the Prince of the kings of the earth" (Rev. 1:5).

Let us look at the kingdom of God as it is described and emphasized in the New Testament. It should be natural, first of all, for us to take a look at the King of this kingdom! Unfortunately, the average church member does not think of Jesus as being a King on this earth. They see Him in heaven as a Saviour, a great High Priest, a Healer, Blessor, Baptizer, and then — the "soon coming" King! In thinking so loosely, we rob Jesus of one of the main phases of His ministry, that of being King on this earth — the King of the kingdom of God! Mind you, He is not GOING to be King; He is King now, for He has already ascended the throne of the majesty on high and been given ALL POWER AND ALL AUTHORITY IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH. This is why He can say to all His younger brothers, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and *am set down* with my Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21).

Jesus Christ has been chosen by heaven to the high office of Universal King! The Father of glory has appointed and anointed Jesus Christ to be King over this earth and all things! "A crown was given Him" (Rev. 6:2). "We see Jesus...crowned" (Heb. 2:9). "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns" (Rev. 19:11-12). God says to the earth, "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my Spirit upon Him, and He shall show judgment to the nations" (Isa. 42:1). Addressing His chosen, even His beloved Son, the Almighty says, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Heb. 1:8). Heaven has declared, "Of the increase of His government and peace and there shall be no end" (Isa. 9:7). The voice of omnipotence proclaims, "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of me, and I shall give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron...be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth" (Ps. 1:6-10).

The choice of heaven, praise God! is ultimately to be the choice of the whole earth! He whom the Almighty Father has selected to be King over this earth, is enthroned and crowned in the realm of the Spirit, and every knee in the whole earth, yea, in the entire universe is going to bow in ratification of heaven's choice. This glorious One, who is the well-beloved of heaven, in whom the Great Godhood is well pleased, about whose feet the swelling feelings of the innumerable celestial throngs roll in great billows of delight, is the Person we are to crown in

this earth as its supreme Sovereign. Blessed be His glorious name forever, and let the whole earth be filled with His glory! Amen and Amen.

Consider for a moment, what the heavenly messenger said to Mary, the virgin of Nazareth. "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. And He shall be great...and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Lk. 1:31-33). Jesus was *born to rule!* He was born to *reign* over the house of Jacob and over all the nations of the earth! Remember what He said to Pontius Pilate! "Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art thou a *king* then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a *king*. *To this end I was born*, and for this *cause* came I into the world" (Jn. 18:37).

Christ is the supreme Ruler of the universe! Christ has always ruled. He always will. The Father has given "*all things* into His hand" (Jn. 3:35). "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool" (Isa. 66:1). So God's "heaven" is His throne from which He reigns over the earth! The earth is physical and natural; God, on the other hand, is *Spirit*. God rules out of the heaven of His Spirit *by His Spirit*, as the prophet declared, "Not by (human) might, nor by (outward, natural) power, but **by my Spirit**, saith the Lord of hosts (armies)" (Zech. 4:6). The reality of omnipotent power within God's Spirit IS GOD'S THRONE! It means just this — God rules out of Spirit. His power is spiritual power, His authority is spiritual authority. The natural realm must always be acted upon by the higher spiritual realm. First of all, every son of God has come to understand that God dwells in our spirit and rules our lives out of His throne within our spirit! He is the Lord of hosts, that is, the Lord of *armies*, and His *military hosts* are composed of those blessed ones who have been joined to the Lord as one spirit, raised up and made to sit together with Christ in the heavenly places, who also live and walk in the Spirit and reign with Him out of the heavens of God's Spirit!

The heavens are the realms of Spirit from which the Lord now rules with absolute authority and dominion. How do we know this to be true? Because of the words of Jesus when He taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done *in earth, as it is in heaven*." Jesus also said, "All power is given unto me in heaven *and* in earth." The Lord Jesus Christ rules and Christ speaks from heaven, even the heaven of God's Spirit. If you will but listen, you can hear the Lord speaking from heaven, even the heaven of His Spirit which is in your spirit! There is a secret to hearing His voice. It will not be heard above the excited babble of the multitude. He will not boom and thunder to drown out other voices that clamor to be heard. He waits till all other voices are hushed and you have put away from your heart and mind all your own striving, and the uproar of the throng that shouts for your attention has completely died away. You must become insensible to the demands of all other voices and hear only the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking out of the most holy place of your spirit. "Be still and know that I am God." When your soul is agitated to a turmoil and your flesh demands with insatiable desire that its claims be met, and the outer world evokes utter confusion and despair with its myriad exasperating problems, it is time for silence, repenting, and listening to the voice of Christ.

Christ is always speaking, and Christ is always reigning — over all! In the February, 1990 issue of THE LIVING WORD, shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Paul Mueller wrote the following words which carry this truth home powerfully to the heart. "The heavens declare the glory of God because God speaks from that realm and sends forth His word which is heard through all the earth, and to the ends of the world. Within the last few months, God spoke words of freedom, liberty and deliverance from His heavenly sanctuary. Those words of liberty and freedom were sent into the hearts of millions of East Europeans, causing them to send up a shout and demand for freedom that is bringing down the whole communistic system. And

what did God do to bring an end to the oppressive governments of Soviet domination? He simply sent a word out of His heavenly sanctuary, and the work was done. The Lord accomplished this unbelievable task without the help of man and with the simplicity of the power of His Spirit.

"When God speaks from His heavenly sanctuary, that message goes out to find lodging in the hearts of those to whom the message was directed. Thus, when the Psalmist described this heavenly, spiritual activity, he said, 'Day unto day pours forth speech, and night unto night declares knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard; yet their voice goes forth through all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world' (Ps. 19:2-4, Smith-Goodspeed). The Lord's message of liberty and freedom shall accomplish the will of God, according to His omnipotent purpose. There is no speech, nor words, nor voice of man, yet His message is received to the ends of the world. The Lord thus bypasses all human instruments to fulfill His word. Just as His word cannot fail, so the heavens cannot fail to send forth that word with all the life and energy of the realm of the Spirit.

"God's word, sent forth from His heavenly sanctuary, cannot fail to accomplish His purpose. If He wants to eliminate the whole communistic society, He will do so by simply sending a word of liberty into the hearts of the multitudes, just as He has done. Mighty armies of hundreds and thousands could not have accomplished what the Lord has done in a few months, though they might have fought for many years in constant struggle and intense warfare. The blood of multiplied thousands of men has been spilled over the world in two bitter world wars for far less than this. The very fact that the communistic empire is falling should cause every child of God to renew their faith and trust in God, and to believe for the fulfillment of the remainder of all His holy word of truth.

"These are truly exciting days! This is a day like no other in the history of the world. God has taken to Himself His great power and is reigning in all the universe. This is the day of the Lord! Just as the Lord spoke a word of liberty and freedom from His heavenly sanctuary, and sent that word to the oppressed peoples of Eastern Europe, so He will speak a word from His heavenly sanctuary that will impart new life to His elect, thus raising us up in resurrection life to be transformed thereby. All He needs to do is speak a word, and it will be done! This truth is being demonstrated now before our very eyes as He dismantles the communist system. And when He speaks that word of Life to His elect that word will not fail to accomplish the divine purpose, so that all of us shall be changed.

"I hereby charge all who read these lines to *remember* what our omnipotent Lord has already done in Eastern Europe! Remember that He has sent a word out of His heavenly temple that has reverberated throughout the world, and has brought down the Soviet empire! The fact that the Lord has begun to dismantle man's kingdoms should encourage us to believe for His complete dominion over all things everywhere in the fullness of time, including His dominion over death. 'The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. HE SHALL CALL TO THE HEAVENS FROM ABOVE, AND TO THE EARTH, that He may judge His people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. AND THE HEAVENS SHALL DECLARE HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS: for God is judge Himself. Selah' (Ps. 50:1-6).

"We will learn a great truth when we learn, with full understanding, that the Lord accomplishes His purposes by speaking a word from His heavenly temple. He spoke from heaven, 'and

called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.' The Lord shall shine out of Zion. How shall He shine out of Zion? By the effulgent glory of the manifestation of His Spirit! When the Lord chooses to judge His people, He sends forth the spirit of judgment by calling 'to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people.' When He has concluded His purpose in the judgment of His saints, 'the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is judge Himself.' Thus, we are righteous, not because of our good works, but because the Lord spoke forth His righteousness into our hearts to make us righteous. Just a word from His heavenly sanctuary is all it takes to make us righteous, or to accomplish anything else" — end quote.

When heaven was opened to the blessed apostle banished to the wilds of Patmos, and the white horse Rider appeared in the bright skies above, the glory and eternal triumph of God's Christ was magnificently expressed in these meaningful words: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were *many crowns*; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. And He was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron...and He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev. 19:11-16).

Can we not see, my beloved, that this remarkable vision, blazing and shining with its scintillating glory of power and truth, points directly to our Lord Jesus Christ who is King of kings and Lord of lords, ruling the universe and guiding the spheres. The reference to the Rider on the white horse is clearly not to the entire Christ body, but to the Head of that body. The body of which He is the Head is characterized by the "armies which are in heaven" that "followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." But the One on the *lead horse* is the *Head*, the KING OF KINGS AND THE LORD OF LORDS! He is King of kings because He is King of all those who rule with Him as kings! This same book of Revelation, as I have previously pointed out, distinctly and markedly identifies our Lord Jesus Christ as the King of kings. "And from *Jesus Christ*, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten from the dead, and THE PRINCE OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH" (Rev. 1:5). The word "prince" in this verse is translated from the Greek *archon* which means "a *first in rank* or power; prince; ruler." So Jesus is the FIRST IN RANK of the kings of the earth! He is the PRINCE of the kings of the earth! He is the RULER of the kings of the earth! Yes! He is the KING of the kings of the earth! I would solemnly admonish all who read these lines, DON'T TRY TO PULL RANK ON JESUS! Ah, "HE is the Head of the body...who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things HE MIGHT HAVE THE PREEMINENCE" (Col. 1:18).

Jesus is Lord of lords because all others who rule with Him as lords have completely and lovingly submitted themselves to His supreme Lordship. No one can rule with Christ in the kingdom of God who has not, first of all, subjected himself to the Lordship of Jesus Christ — for the whole objective of the kingdom of God is to ultimately bring to pass this wonderful end: "Wherefore God hath also highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of JESUS *every knee should bow*, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that *every tongue should confess that JESUS CHRIST IS LORD*, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). Jesus is the great King of kings and Lord of lords! He is not the *soon coming king* as the citizens of religious Babylon are trained to say, denying by the very words that Christ has any kingdom on earth at this present time. Such ignorant statements always leave me cold! What could be further from the truth, which teaches

us that Christ now sits with His Father in His throne in the heavens of God's Spirit and that all power *is given* unto Him in heaven *and* in earth! We are already citizens of that kingdom and have already been translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. *Already* it has taken place, already Christ has a kingdom and is its King! From the barrenness of Patmos John wrote that he was our brother, and companion in tribulation, and *in the kingdom* and patience of Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:9).

Christ is the great King right now, ruling all things for the well-being of His subjects and bringing absolute perfection and completion to His plans which He ordained before the foundation of the world. He is the King of the ages and invincible! Through the ages He has revealed His Kingship on different levels and through various instruments, and He shall yet arise in power and glory in a new and marvelous expression of His Kingship through the MANIFESTED SONS OF GOD, revealing Himself as the great conquering King, bringing deliverance to every man and all creation, reconciling all things unto Himself, on earth and throughout all the unbounded heavens. Every son of God is finding his place in this Day of the Lord and the hour of manifestation is nigh at hand!

The kingdom of God is the only hope of the world! He has reigned, is reigning, and shall reign! May God give us all a vision of Christ the King and Lord of all! He is high and lifted up, far above all other powers! His train, the skirts of His royal robe, the very majesty and power of His Kingship, fills this temple *which we are*! His train, His royal robe, covers, protects, enables and empowers us with His omnipotent, heavenly authority. His royal robe, the train of which fills the temple which we are, invests us with His own nobility and dominion. He rules from His throne in the realm of Spirit. God grant that we shall see Christ in His ascended glory, seated on His throne and ruling in all the earth, and we with Him! When we see Him, we shall indeed cease from all our petty human dreams, ambitions, desires, hopes, works and aims. And we shall stop regarding men, political parties and philosophies, presidents, prime ministers, legislators, economists, or military leaders as the hope of the world. The truth is, we are the hope of the world, for we are hidden in Christ, who is the King and Lord of all! We are becoming one with Him and are being made kings and priests unto God who shall reign upon the earth (Rev. 5:10). A vision of this Christ and His glorious, all encompassing kingdom, and our calling in Him, will deliver us from looking to man. Then we will put all our hope and trust in Him who reigns in life forevermore! It is a marvelous thing to be a member of the family of God! There is no greater joy or vocation than belonging to the God family, knowing God as our Father, and that we, the sons of God, have such a wonderful elder brother. But just because He is one of the family, and we are one in Him, doesn't mean that we should esteem Him as an equal with us. Let us never forget that He is the Lord, even *our* Lord, and that our Father is God! Jesus is our brother, yet in all things HE has the preeminence! We honor Him and adore Him, for we are kings, but HE is the King of the kings! We are lords, but HE is the Lord of the lords! He is the **PRINCE OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH!**

George Wylie wrote a precious word about the reverence of the sons for the Son, the esteem of the kings for the King, and the devotion of the lords to the Lord. "When the last king of England died, the family was gathered around his bedside waiting. As soon as the king had breathed his last breath, and it was evident he was gone, the first thing the Queen did was to turn to her eldest son, bow before him, and say, 'Your Majesty.' He was her son, but he was now more than that; he was her king! And as her king she gave him the reverence and respect due to his position. She didn't say, 'My son Edward, you are now king.' No, she addressed him with respect in reverence to his position, bowed in submission to him, and said, 'Your Majesty.' What she was really meaning was, 'My King.' The rest of the family did the same; they bowed to their brother, as Joseph's brothers bowed to him in Egypt, and also said, 'Your Majesty.' I

suppose up until this time they treated him as a brother; they likely played with him, argued with him, and perhaps sometimes fought with him. No longer! From now on he would not be treated as just a brother, but as a king — *their* king! We have a wonderful Father and He is God and Creator of the universe, the upholder of all things; we have a wonderful brother, and He is the Head of all principalities and powers, the King of kings and Lord of lords. He has all power in heaven and in earth. His name is above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the ages to come. Before His majesty every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. All realms and all worlds and all dominions and all nations and all men shall worship and adore Him and pledge their eternal allegiance to Him. He is Lord of all! Behold His majesty! He holds the highest position in the universe; so let us reverence Him and His name in humility and undying devotion and exaltation!" — end quote.

Not only is Jesus the Prince or Ruler or Chief of those kings who reign with Him upon the Father's throne in the heavens of God's Spirit, He is also the Prince and Ruler and Chief of all those kings, presidents, prime ministers, and dictators who rule over the nations of earth on the lower plane of human government. When John describes Jesus as *the ruler of the kings of the earth* he uses a concept that had been often emphasized in the Old Testament. There the rulership had been applied to Yahweh. Abraham had called the Lord the "Judge of all the earth." Jeremiah had referred to Him as the "King of the nations," and the Psalmist declared, "God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne." God's rulership in the kingdoms of men had been one of the chief claims of the prophet Daniel. "The most High liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation. The most High *ruleth in the kingdom of men*, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the basest of men...and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" (Dan. 4:17,34,35). Isaiah warned Israel that the Lord was using Assyria as the "rod" of His anger. During the period of the Babylonian empire both Jeremiah and Ezekiel taught that God was ruling among the nations of earth. But now it is said that JESUS IS THE RULER OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH! Often in the book of Revelation we see titles applied to Jesus that in the Old Testament were applied to Yahweh. That is because Jesus is YAH-SHUA, Yahweh-Salvation! He is Yahweh come in the flesh to *save us*! That is why Yahshua (Jesus) is THE NAME that is above *every other name* (including Yahweh) in heaven and in earth! Yahshua (Jesus) is God's *latest name*, His own *new name* given among all men and there *is no other name* whereby we must be saved! Yahweh is an Old Testament name of God, given to Israel under the Old Covenant, that forever passed away with the law and the prophets, with the sacrifices, the priesthood, and the temple. Jesus now has the *highest name* in the universe! Behold His majesty!

The lower kings and rulers of human governments do not, for the most part, know that Jesus is the King of all kings and the Lord of all lords, that it is He alone who exalts whomsoever He will and abases whom He will, and that they perform His will on that level — but it is true nonetheless! They do not realize that He is the mighty Lord over them even as Pharaoh did not know that it was Yahweh who raised Him up that *His glory* might be shown in him! The puny kings of earth do not understand that Christ is the Ruler of the kings of the earth because He rules and reigns from a higher and more glorious throne in the higher than all heavens. Our great King of kings is the true King and Lord of all and is seated upon His heavenly throne of all power and authority! It would help us greatly if we would see that no ruler on earth is where he is by his own choice, ability or power. We are no longer bothered by men like Adolph Hitler, Saddam Hussein or Osama bin Laden, for they would never have been where they were except by divine appointment! We no longer get upset and want to smash the television screen

when we hear reports of what our earthly rulers, kings, presidents, prime ministers and other government leaders are doing, for we have seen the King of glory! He is seated on His throne of all power and authority, and is reigning over the affairs of men and nations! All of earth's rulers are where they are by God's purpose, some for judgment, others for blessing, and many other purposes, but when He is through with them He brings them down by sending forth a word which sets in motion the circumstances of their demise. His reign is just, invincible, triumphant and righteous!

Because Christ reigns out of the high realm of Spirit, we must look at things unseen and behold our mighty King. All the sons of God are called to reign with Him! But we are not called to reign on that *lower level* of human government, and institutions. Those are but the "errand boys" of God's great kingdom! They are of inferior quality, lacking in wisdom, knowledge, and understanding of the mind of Christ and the ways of the Lord. They are poor performers. We are not being prepared to live in the White House or Buckingham Palace. Never entertain the carnal notion, beloved, that either the Lord Jesus or His many brethren, the sons of God, will ever sit in an office behind a desk, with a hot-line telephone at hand! Only as we behold Him in the Spirit can we see our reigning King and Lord of all! Paul saw Him in the Spirit, and then described what he saw. "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, *invisible*, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen" (I Tim. 1:17). Christ the King is *eternal, immortal, and invisible!* Therefore, look not for Him seated somewhere on an earthly throne now or throughout all ages. The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom. So also is the King of that kingdom a spiritual King! He is seen in the Spirit seated upon the throne of His Father in heaven! On another occasion Paul described our King as "the blessed and *only Potentate*, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which *no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see:* to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen" (I Tim. 6:15). "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast *made us unto our God kings and priests:* and we shall *reign on the earth*" (Rev. 5:9-10).

When we see in the Spirit our all-glorious King of kings, who reigns from the heavenly throne of His Father, we will then see how we are called and prepared to reign with Him by the power of His Spirit. We will then see and know that the Ruler of the kings of the earth reigns by *spiritual power* and we will also see and know that our King moves upon the face of the earth, as the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep in that long ago beginning, to bring forth victory over every enemy. *He is moving first in us*, the firstfruits of His kingdom. As we are changed into His likeness, filled with His fullness, endowed with His mind, conquering every enemy within and without, overcoming all carnality, sin, limitation and death, and ascending up within ourselves to the heavenly places in Christ Jesus where He sits upon His throne of glory and power, we then see all things as they really are in the Spirit. We then see that within us and through us the kingdom of God is coming to earth in a greater way to begin to change all things! To see anything less than this in this great Day of the Lord is not to see our King at all. He is the Prince of the kings of the earth, and we are called to be *the kings of the earth!*

The true kings of the earth are the manifested sons of God! The true kings of the earth reign with Christ at the right hand of the Father in the realm of the Spirit! Only as we are experientially seated (enthroned) with Christ in the higher than all heavens of His life, power, and glory are we able to begin to *reign with Him* over the earth. This is a glorious *spiritual ministry!* Christ is a King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek. He dwells in the light to which no earthly man can approach. Only those who are truly spiritual can see Him as He is, to become what He is. They are the elect who are chosen of the Father to approach unto the

Light that He is, and they shall manifest Him as Light to the waiting, groaning, and travailing creation. This is the order of God's kingdom: Only as *we* are *first* changed and transformed from carnal to spiritual, from earthly to heavenly, from human to divine, shall creation be changed!

Chapter 12

Loosed From Our Sins

"Unto Him that *loved us*, and washed us from our sins in His own blood" (Rev. 1:5).

I know nothing deeper in God than love, nor believe there is anything deeper than love, nay, there can be nothing deeper than love! The being of God *is love*, and love demands an object — the beloved. That is the whole meaning of creation! And it is the greatest proof that God has always, eternally been a Creator — this present creation is not the first, nor will it be the last. If God never brought forth or created anything until six thousand years ago or twenty billion years ago, then He could not have been love before that event, for there was no object of love, therefore no expression of love. God would have been throughout eternity — before creation — *loveless*. Our existence is not accidental — it *had to be*! God must love, for God is love; therefore God must bring forth and create. "For God so *loved the world*." The reality of love is a property inherent in the essence of the lover. The Divine Lover, God, cannot love in a limited way because in His nature and being He is limitless, so He loves to the furthest limits of possibility. That is the meaning of the cross! That is the meaning of God's plan of the ages for the reconciliation of all things! Creation and redemption are therefore intrinsic to God's very life, they are the outer landscape of His own being, God making Himself visible to Himself and simultaneously making Himself visible to us. Creation is in some sense God's very self, as Eve was Adam's self. And in this relationship with His creation God's love is revealed through blessing and redemption in the interchange of giving and receiving!

The message which beams from the cross of Christ like the blazing rays of the noon-day sun is one of SACRIFICIAL LOVE — REDEEMING LOVE. The truth of love in Jesus Christ was that He loved without retaliation for evil, a love that suffered long, even to the agonies of the cross, and then was kind enough to pray, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And I declare to you that regardless of what other sins those wicked men may come into judgment for, they will never stand in the judgment condemned for killing the Son of God, for HE AND HIS FATHER FORGAVE THEM! This truth of the love of God in Jesus Christ must also be true in us, the younger sons of God. Jesus did not love people because He loved Himself, as it was under the law. It was the Father's unconditional and all-surpassing love flowing through Him, surging as a mighty river out to humanity, overflowing redemptively, so that He could say, "Let your love for others not be based on love for yourself, but on what is true in Me: If the Father could love Judas through me, and love Peter through Me, and the people that crucified Me, then let the Father's love so find expression through you!"

Through many years we have sung a beautiful chorus that goes like this: "His love has no limit, His grace has no measure, His power has no boundaries known unto man; for out of His infinite riches in Jesus, He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again." This is a lovely chorus and I love to sing it and I say it is true. In Jesus Christ, there is *no limit* to His love, *no measure* to His grace, and *no boundaries* to His power, for He is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and His infinite mercy endures throughout all generations and ages. If I say there is one sin, one condition, one creature, one place, one age or group of ages unto which His love and His grace and His power shall not reach and *triumph*, then I **lie** and know not the truth. Jesus loved

His friends, He loved His enemies, the man who betrayed Him, the man who denied Him, the mob that cried, "Crucify Him!" and the men who nailed Him to the cross. If His love does not triumph over every one of them, then the cross was a farce! There just is no limit to His love! You can never find a place where you can say, "So far He will love, but no farther." Is that love true in us? Or do we say, "Well, I will only stand so much, I will only forgive so long, I will only trust so far, and that is the end of it." God is teaching and training every son that His love should find no limit in us, His grace no measure in us, and His power no boundary in us. This is the first mark of sonship!

Oh, that all men might learn God's one and only everlasting Gospel, the Gospel of love — and then preach it! And **be it!** Love alone can draw A-L-L MEN to Calvary's crimson fountain. Only a Calvary love can transform a world gone mad, and revive a sleeping church obsessed with her deliriums into a thing of beauty and praise and usefulness. And anyone who is lifting up to a lost and dying world anything or anyone other than Jesus and His wonderful love is simply living a wasted life. The love of God must be lifted up IN US! The sons of God are the Sons of Love, for GOD IS LOVE!

Although God "so loved the *world*," still there is a special sense in which Christ "loved *us*" and gave Himself for us — those He is making kings and priests unto God that we might reign over the earth. The book of Revelation is written to kings and priests! Some time ago, in Bill and Elaine Cook's paper, Monty Williamson shared the following beautiful testimony which speaks so powerfully of Christ's love for His called and chosen elect. "A while ago I had an experience with the Lord Jesus Christ that I would like to share. As I was waiting on the Lord in prayer, I was part of a scene that I will try to describe. I was with the Lord's army traveling across the sky, headed for earth. We were all riding on beautiful white horses flying toward the Lord's enemies to do battle. As I took in the scene, I realized I was in the front line of the Lord's army. I took in the view and felt honored that I was allowed to be at the front where I could see the vistas of the earth beneath and know that I would be one of the *first* to join in this great battle.

"As my eyes moved to the left, I realized that I was riding *beside Jesus*. He smiled at me and I felt so loved and understood. I was overwhelmed that I was at His right hand as He rode into battle. I felt so loved and honored. I was shocked that I was beside Him, and questioned in my mind why I was allowed to ride there. In return, He just loved me and let me know that it was *right* that I was beside Him. I felt humbled and greatly loved. I savored the moment and it was one of the greatest feelings I have ever had — to be riding on a white horse with Jesus heading into the battle! After a bit I began to wonder about the others who were riding with us and I felt a little sad that I was at the front with Jesus and that others were not. I was thinking that maybe I should rotate my place with others so that my brothers and sisters could share the joy of riding beside Jesus. I felt Him whisper that it was "Okay" and that I should look around.

"As I looked back, I saw the most incredible picture. I saw the rest of the army — as I looked at each one, I noted that they were all looking to the person on their left. **On their left was Jesus, riding beside them!** As I looked closer, I realized that from each person's perspective, each one was riding beside Jesus and saw themselves at the front of the army, riding on His right side. The same picture that I had at the first, where I saw myself at the front of the army and at His right hand, was the same vision that everyone else had. We all thought that we were riding at the front of the army beside Jesus! For everyone, Jesus was beside them having intimate fellowship with each one at the same time. My love and awe for Jesus soared! It is just like Him to be able to make each one of us feel *the most loved at the same time*. He is the Head and we are the body. Does any part of the body feel neglected by the head? No! It is the

same with Jesus, our Head. He is able to make each of us feel intimately loved all at the same time. It is something very hard for the finite mind to wrap around, but *it is possible with God. His love for us knows no bounds!*" — end quote.

LOOSED FROM OUR SINS

John dwelt in spirit before the door of the opened heaven as he walked about the barren slopes of Patmos. Time after time he saw in visions the glory of God, and of the Lamb, and of the kings and priests upon His throne, and of all the redeemed of the ages. The celestial scene filled John's heart with joy, praise, and wonder, and stirred by what he saw and heard in the heavenlies, he cried out, "Unto Him who loved us, and *washed us from our sins* in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests — to Him be glory and dominion for the ages of the ages, Amen!"

We need to know what "washing" means. It would be well for us to point out that some Greek manuscripts read "loves" (present tense) in place of "loved" (past) and "loosed" rather than "washed." In Greek the only difference *loosed* and *washed* is the letter "o." The idea would be, therefore, "Unto Him who loves us (continuously), and who has *loosed* us from our sins in His own blood." Since Christ has "loosed" or released us from our sins, the idea here would be that the blood of the Lord Jesus has freed us from the claim and power that sin once had over us.

There was a type of this action in the Old Testament at the time when Israel celebrated the annual day of atonement, in which the people were cleansed from all the sins that had accumulated during the previous year. The atonement was done through a priestly sacrifice. In Leviticus 16:5 it is declared that the "*two kids of the goats*" constitute a *single offering* for sin. "And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering..." The reason for this is that both goats speak symbolically of the work of Christ in taking away our sins, and the sins of the whole world.

What a tremendously meaningful ceremony the day of atonement was! The people of Israel had to plan weeks in advance for this day. Here is what took place on the day of atonement. Two young goats were brought before the gate of the tabernacle and presented to the high priest. These two goats were carefully chosen and were to be of equal character and quality in weight, height, and purity. A lot was cast upon the two goats. One lot was *for the Lord*, and the other lot was *for the scapegoat*. The goat selected for the Lord was to be offered as a sacrifice. A scarlet cloth was wrapped around its neck to distinguish it for sacrificing. The other goat was designated as a scapegoat and kept outside the holy precincts of the tabernacle. The first goat was taken in through the gate to the brazen altar in the Outer Court where it was slain, and its blood was collected in a bowl. The high priest then took the blood of "the Lord's goat" in through the Holy Place and on in through the veil to the Holy of holies, where he presented it before the presence of Yahweh with incense. He sprinkled the blood upon the mercy seat once, and in front of the mercy seat seven times. Outside, every person in the camp lay prostrate throughout the entire sacrificial procedure. No one saw any of it as it happened. Yet the ritual meant that atonement was being made for their sins! Their transgressions for the whole year were being dealt with — *atoned* for — forgiven, remitted, covered.

In contrast, the next part of the ceremony was meant as a very visible, illustrated sermon for every Israelite to see. Indeed, at this point, everyone was to stand and rejoice! Coming out of the Most Holy Place the high priest lingered in the Holy Place long enough to change out of his special clothes designed for that occasion and put on his regular priestly garments. Then he emerged and made his way to the gate of the Outer Court where he laid his hands on the

scapegoat. Now, the Hebrew word for scapegoat means "the goat that went away," or "removal." And the priest's act of laying hands on the scapegoat symbolized the transference of all the people's sins to the head of the animal. Aaron confessed over the scapegoat all the sins of the children of Israel, saying, "Oh Yahweh, your people, the house of Israel, have committed iniquity, transgressed, and sinned before You. Oh Yahweh, forgive, I pray, the iniquities and transgressions and sins which your people, the house of Israel, have committed and transgressed and sinned before You; as it is written in the law of your servant Moses, 'For on this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you: from all your sins you shall be clean before Yahweh.'"

All the sins of all the people of Israel were transferred to the head of the scapegoat and then the goat was put into the hands of a "fit man" to be sent away into the wilderness, unto a land not inhabited. There the goat was let go and left. The "fit man" mentioned in Leviticus 16 was a *strong, physically fit* man chosen for the important task of leading the scapegoat far away into the desolation of the wilderness and leaving it there. The fit man put a leash on the scapegoat and led him out of the camp. And what a sight that was to the people! All of Israel stood watching, as at a parade, cheering, clapping, rejoicing as the scapegoat was led away. It was an object lesson that every citizen of Israel — including children — could understand: "Not only are our sins forgiven to be remembered no more — but they are *taken away from us!* The fit man couldn't take the goat to just any place in the desert — he must make an arduous journey to a most remote, inescapable place, so far away that there would be *no possibility* of the goat wandering back into their midst. It must be a complete, permanent, irrevocable *removal!*"

The Lord Jesus Christ is the key character with both of these goats, for both animals together constitute *one sin offering* (Lev. 16:5). In the sacrifice of the feast of Passover the people could choose between a lamb or a goat. In the feast of Atonement, however, there was no choice, only the goat could be used. Goats were used in the flock as leaders and protectors. "The Lord's goat" represents Jesus who went before us into the Most Holy Place to open up the way through the rent veil. There are many things to learn from types and anti-types, for by them truth is taught with more force than any spoken word. You will notice then that *no sins are confessed over the head of the first goat*, the "Lord's goat." For you see, this is Jesus the perfect sin-offering, pure, spotless, unblemished, undefiled, holy, harmless, separate from sinners, who by His blood, His own precious and *divine life*, has, as our forerunner, entered into the holiest of all, opening up the way for every son of God to follow.

The writer to the Hebrews proclaimed this blessed event in these words: "For by *one offering* He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that He had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their *sins and iniquities will I remember no more*. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest *by the blood of Jesus*, by a new and living way, which *He hath consecrated for us*, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Heb. 10:14-22).

And what does it mean that we may enter into the Holiest *by the blood of Jesus*? To Moses God said that He gave the blood upon the altar to be an atonement for the soul, because THE LIFE OF THE FLESH IS IN THE BLOOD (Lev. 17:11). That is, the blood in the body is the life of the body. Ah — the power of any blood is in the worth of the life! In the blood of Jesus THE POWER OF THE DIVINE LIFE DWELT and worked — hence its intrinsic value. He was the Son of God by conception, and the Son of man by birth. He was a specially prepared body to

contain a *specially prepared blood* that was to be *the life* of all humanity! This blood was precious from the fact that it was a unique blood which could do something for all humanity that no other blood could ever do. It was the Word of God that became flesh (Jn. 1:14), who was made a man. It was the life of God that dwelt in Him! That life gave His blood, every drop of it, an infinite value. The blood of a man is of more worth than that of a sheep. The blood of a king or a great general is counted of more value than hundreds of common soldiers. The blood of the Son of God! It is in vain the mind seeks for some expression of its value! All we can say is, it is His own blood, the blood of the Word made flesh! The life is in the blood. As the value of this life, so the value of the blood. In Christ there was the life of God; infinite as God is the worth and the power of that blood!

When Adam transgressed, the *life of God* which had been breathed into his nostrils, fled from his soul, and by that separation all that was left was a residue, that mortal something which flowed in the veins of his body. This blood contains nothing of the life of God, and in its composition is similar to the blood of the animal kingdom, for when the glorious power of divine life was separated from Adam's soul, he entered into the kingdom of death. Before this Adam's spirit and soul had existed in blessed union. The record states that Adam was made a *living soul*. From the Greek the statement reads, "The first man was made a *zoe psuche* (living soul)." *Zoe*, throughout the entire Greek New Testament, is always used in reference to the *life of God — divine life*. *Psuche*, on the other hand, is used of the natural life of animals and men. Since both words are used of Adam's life in the beginning, it is clear that he possessed a physical life imbued, infused, injected, impregnated, and permeated with the glorious incorruptible *life of God*! That is what made him not simply *zoe*, and not merely *psuche*, but *zoe psuche*!

This life, *zoe*, is the life Jesus promised to give to man when He said, "I give unto them eternal *life (zoe)*, and they shall never perish." This, beloved, is the life that fled from Adam's soul when he transgressed, leaving his outer man ashamed, fearful, and *dead*. The life is in the blood, but our blood being devoid of *zoe* life, *incorruptible* and *divine* life, is in reality dead blood and capable of sustaining only physical life, and that only poorly until man returns to the dust from whence he came. It is not without significance that, when the bodies of men are embalmed, the first act is to remove the corruptible blood that the dead body may be better preserved. The fact that a chemical in the veins can preserve a dead body is the proof that the quickening power of *incorruptible zoe* restored to union with the blood of redeemed men will result in *life and immortality*! Instead of incorruptible and, therefore, deathless blood, Adam's blood corrupted through sin and became subject to death. To redeem this dead sinner, life must again be imparted! The only remedy for death is *life*! This life is in the blood, so blood must be furnished which is sinless and incorruptible. Now none of Adam's race could do this, "for in Adam **all** die." There was only one, yes, only one, who could furnish that blood, the virgin-born Son of God, the man from heaven, the last Adam, with a human body, but sinless, supernatural blood, inseminated by the Holy Ghost!

Jesus came to bring life to the world! Here is where His blood differed from the ordinary blood or life of men. His blood was precious in that it was able to do something for mankind which man's own blood or life could not do. The natural blood or life of mankind was only for a few years at most, but the blood of Christ was the *life of the ages*. So there must somehow be a discontinuance of the blood of a few years, that the blood or the *life of the ages* might be injected into mankind.

Let us notice one thing further. The red liquid that ran through the veins and arteries of the body of Jesus is not the blood whose power redeems mankind and all things unto God. There

is no biblical basis for attributing any unusual properties to Christ's body fluids. The term "blood of Christ" is far more significant than any magical or mystical power falsely attributed to His physical blood by those who are ignorant of the truth. And here I must speak a word against one of the popular myths that has been widely circulated among God's people. Various teachers have maintained that human blood is in some mysterious way "congealed light." Now that term carries with it a certain kind of mystical aura, and a rather scientific sound. But the truth is that it is neither scientifically founded, scripturally sound, nor spiritually veracious. Blood is composed of the very same chemical and mineral substances of which the earth is made. If blood is "congealed light," then your refrigerator, automobile, house, and a bunch of bananas and a cup of coffee are just as truly congealed light! Blood is mostly water, but in the blood many substances are dissolved and in this fluid float specks of matter that do not dissolve. From the lungs it takes oxygen breathed in, and from the digestive organs it takes food substances and carries these, as well as disease-fighting cells, to all parts of the body. The liquid part of the blood greatly resembles sea water. This liquid part of the blood without all the solid particles, but including the various chemicals in the blood, is called *plasma*.

The thing of importance about the precious blood of Jesus is not its physical structure, but the glorious fact that blood bespeaks **LIFE**. What Jesus poured out was His life, His holy, pure, undefiled, divine, heavenly, incorruptible life, the *zoe*, the quickening *spirit*, the life of GOD! He lived and walked out that glorious life in human form and then poured it out as an offering to God. And God took the offering and poured it out, in return, upon mankind! "He...spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, HE HATH SHED FORTH THIS, WHICH YE NOW SEE AND HEAR" (Acts 2:31-33).

Ah — the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, but in a new dimension — the divine and incorruptible life of God as it had been perfected and lived out in the life of the Son of God — was now shed forth as *the Spirit of the Son* to be received by all men to transform and lift them up high into the holiness, wisdom, and power of God. The precious blood of Jesus! There is an old Roman Catholic dogma which says that Christ carried His blood with Him to heaven in a bowl. Without even knowing its source, evangelical Christianity clings to that ludicrous idea from the Dark Ages by perpetuating a form of mysticism around the physical blood of our Lord. The bowl of blood is indeed a *type* from the outward, physical ceremony of the day of Atonement. But in its spiritual fulfillment there is no bowl in the universe that could have contained what Jesus carried into the heavens! When Christ entered heaven (see Hebrews, chapters 8-10), He carried not physical blood, which of necessity would be corruptible blood, but His DIVINE-HUMAN LIFE. He did not transport a bowl of blood or a bucket of blood; He entered in His resurrection body, with the full power of that divine life He had poured out on behalf of Adam's doomed race. If He had not poured it out upon the cross, He would have forever remained the *only* perfect man — the *only* manifest Son of God. But, blessed be His wonderful name! He shed His precious blood, He released His human-divine life, He poured forth His quickening Spirit that all may drink thereof and live!

Beloved sons and daughters of God! The blood of Jesus! The blood of the *Lord's goat*! Oh, think what it means. God gave it for your redemption from Adam's race and your transformation into the image and glory of God. God accepted it in the true tabernacle, in heaven itself, in the heaven of God's Spirit, when the firstborn of the new creation entered there and presented it on your behalf. God points you to it and asks your to believe in its omnipotent energy, in its everlasting sufficiency. Ah, this celestial man was injected into a whole world full of men descended from the earth-man to impart something we had lacked

from the day Adam was driven from Eden's bright portals. That something was *life, living blood*, for He said He came to give life to the world. He could impart a life to the world that would change it completely! When *our spirit* is quickened by *His Spirit*, and then brought into marriage union with soul and body there is raised up within us LIFE AND IMMORTALITY!

What it means is just this. Jesus, through death and resurrection into the incorruptible realm of God, has entered into the Most Holy Place of heavenly life. And now, HE HAS GIVEN US HIS LIFE! His life is His *blood*, and by the quickening of that divine life in our spirit we become the new creation. You cannot bring old Adam into the Holiest — for the *body* (natural consciousness) of the Lord's goat was left at the tabernacle gate! ONLY THE BLOOD (DIVINE LIFE) ENTERED INTO THE HOLIEST. Notice! While the King James Version reads, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest **by** the blood of Jesus," the Greek text actually reads, "Having therefore, brethren, confidence **into** the entrance of the Holiest **in** the blood of Jesus." The Greek word is *en* — IN. Entering **in** the blood of Jesus. What a word! If it is the blood that is carried into the Holiest, how else could I get into the Holiest, unless I would be IN THE BLOOD? Do you see it? He that is joined to the Lord is *one spirit*. In the union of our spirit with His Spirit we are "in" the blood or life of Christ! It is in this union of life that we are given the boldness, the ability to enter in to the Most Holy Place! In the power of that life we have now entered in! **In** the blood, the divine life of Jesus in our spirit, *we now enter into the Holiest of all!*

We cannot reform old Adam. We cannot redeem our old humanity with its desires and lusts. We must leave our *human consciousness* behind at the gate of the tabernacle, for that human consciousness is represented by the *dead body* of the Lord's goat. That dead body does not go into the Holiest! We must leave our old human consciousness, our old Adamic mind and identity, out at the altar of sacrifice (the cross) and enter into the presence, glory, and power of God in our new life in the spirit! Only the *new creation* can enter in! We have tried to make Adam "behave" so we could be pleasing to God. We have put our flesh under laws and rules and regulations and tried to make it be good. It hasn't worked! It cannot be done! Leave the old carcass behind and enter *in your spirit* into the presence of God in the Most Holy Place. There is no sin at all in your regenerated spirit! And that is who you now really are! As a new creation you haven't done anything wrong! Your regenerated spirit has not *sinned*! In your true identity you are *not guilty*! There is therefore *no condemnation* to those who are in Christ Jesus!

Someone says, "But my flesh still wants to sin. My flesh still flies off the handle, cusses, thinks evil thoughts, makes bad choices, criticizes, is fearful, deceitful, selfish, hurtful, and lusts after evil things." Sure it does — for "that which is born of the flesh **is flesh**." That's how flesh is! Flesh can't be any different! You can't make flesh holy! It's born of the wrong seed! But there is a further truth. "That which is born of the spirit **is spirit**." Oh, yes! That which is born of the spirit is your regenerated spirit and it **is like Christ**. You don't have to try to make it like Christ. It is! And that's the *real you*! That's the new man that *you are*! That's the spiritual man, the heavenly man, the divine man — Christ. And that is the man who may enter into the Holiest any time, at any place, day or night. When the flesh has mis-behaved and would heap guilt and condemnation upon your head, leave that old carcass at the tabernacle gate and enter on in to the presence of God in the Most Holy Place! Enter **in** the blood, **in** the life of Jesus in your spirit! Oh, the wonder of it!

Now surely someone will accuse me of preaching "greasy grace" and charge me with saying that you can just let your old flesh do everything it wants to do and still be a son of God in the Holiest of all. But you see, my beloved, we have only considered the *first goat* — the Lord's goat. God's dealing with sin doesn't end there. It *is* true, however, that in the Lord's goat we

can enter right on in to the Holiest while the scapegoat is still standing there at the tabernacle gate. What made the feast of Atonement so wonderful was the inclusion of the second goat. Thank God for the second goat! God has shown us by types and shadows how it is that Christ removes all sin from the experience of His people. Sin will no longer be a problem in my life. The feast of Atonement is not only a day of entering in, it is also a day of release, being freed from all temptation of sin in our lives.

When the scapegoat was led away into the wilderness by a fit man and left there, never to return to Israel, through that action, the people were to understand that their sins *had been sent away*. That was but a makeshift arrangement and was given only to crudely illustrate what God was doing. In this ritual action there was no provision made for any change in the people who committed the sins. The sins were simply symbolically rolled off from one year to the next. But it was a type of the work of God! In John 1:29 we read, "Behold the Lamb of God, which *taketh away* the sin of the world." The words "take away" mean *to lift* or *to take away*. It means to completely remove, banish, exile, cast out, disown, depose and dismiss — our sins! Again we read, "And ye know that He was manifested to *take away* our sins" (I Jn. 3:5).

Can we not see by this that Jesus is not the second goat — He is the *fit man*! The scapegoat is your human consciousness, your carnal flesh. Jesus has been chosen, selected, ordained and manifested to TAKE AWAY our sins! Can you see it? HE does it! I warn you — don't try to do it yourself. Not just any Israelite could lead that scapegoat away where he would never return. Oh, no! Only **the fit man** could do it! If you try to do it all your efforts will only end in defeat. You are not strong enough, smart enough, or good enough. That's why a fit man has been chosen for the task! You will never last long enough to get that sin-laden goat of your flesh far enough away in the wilderness so that he doesn't some day wander back into your life again. Only the *fit man* can accomplish it! He has been manifested to *bear*, to *lift*, to *carry*, to *lead away*, to *take away* our sins. He has been manifested in order that He might come into relationship with our human life, and passing underneath the load of human sins, to lift them, and take them away!

Either this is the most glorious gospel that a man has ever heard; or it is the greatest delusion to which man has ever listened. If it be true that Christ Jesus has been manifested to somehow, in some mystery that the carnal mind can never fathom, in order to take hold of my sins, *my* sins, **my** sins, my impure thoughts, my words of bitterness, my stubborn selfishness, my unholy deeds, and life, and lead, and bear them away — that is the best news I have ever heard! I long for that more than all! Consider the testimony of the angel Gabriel to the virgin of Nazareth: "And thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall *save His people* from their sins." When the songs which the shepherds heard that holy night breaking the silence upon the Judean hills were heard, what said they? "There is born unto you this day a *Saviour*, which is Christ the Lord."

Whether through the second goat we have been saved *from* our sins or not, in the first goat, the Lord's goat, in and by his blood, WE HAVE BOLDNESS TO ENTER INTO THE HOLIEST OF ALL. You do not have to be *delivered from* your sins in order to enter boldly into the presence of God and enjoy the fellowship of His life. At the stage of our initial regeneration *performance* is not the secret to God's presence! If performance were the secret to God's presence, we would of all men be most miserable, for which of us can say that we have not sinned and have had no consciousness of sins since we were converted? No one of us would be prepared to say, "I have never deliberately done the thing I knew I ought not to do!" That is consciousness of sins! But that does not exclude us from the love, presence, and glory of God! After all, God is our **Father**! Be honest with me. Unless you are a harsh, vindictive, tyrannical

brute, does *your* child's failure, misbehavior, disobedience, or rebellion exclude him or her from your love, from your fellowship, from your care, from your concern, from your counsel, from your table, from your provision, from your blessing, from your home, or from your presence? NO! Then why should our lack or failure separate us from coming boldly to the *throne of grace*? Let us come boldly that we may obtain *grace to help* in time of need!

Now that we are a new creation in our *inner man*, why do we (I speak for many) not have more victory over sin in our outer lives? It is because we have not yet appropriated the *second provision* of the day of Atonement for dealing with our sins! What did Jesus come into the world to do? He came to *save His people from* their sins — not merely from the guilt, consciousness, and punishment of sin, but from the sins themselves, the petty as well as the heinous, the respectable as well as the loathsome. His great work is to send away sin — to expel it from our hearts, to banish it from the earth, yea, to cast it into the abyss of non-existence behind the back of God. This is Christ's "holy war." He came carrying it into our world and has brought it right into the roots of our lives and the throne room of our hearts!

On the day of atonement, in the body of the scapegoat, sin is finally and completely dealt with! In the spiritual application of the fit man and the scapegoat, God deals with the "goat nature" once and for all. Some time ago, in commenting on the day of Atonement ritual, Elaine Cook shared an experience: "Having at one time kept both sheep and goats, we understand their natures. When we took a load of sheep to town, we heard not a sound from them, but when we carried goats, the air would be resounding with the sound of horns butting and the sides of the truck would rock from the conflict within. The goat nature is quite opposite to the lamb nature. What does all this mean to us? In simple terms, it means that God is going to deal with our sinful, rebellious nature once-for-all! The goat was not killed, it was *completely removed!*" This, beloved, is an integral part of the feast of Tabernacles, even the day of Atonement that precedes the fullness of that great feast! The day of Atonement prepared the worshipper for the feast of Tabernacles, even as the seventh chapter of Romans precedes the glorious eighth chapter and prepares us for the glory of manifested sonship described in that rich eighth chapter.

It is my conviction that this ritual foretold of the warfare between the flesh and the spirit — between the natural man and the spiritual man within us. During these last years of walking and progressing with God in the Spirit, we have been brought to the place in Christ which corresponds to the day of Atonement and hopefully we have yielded all the iniquities of the man of flesh, for it is here at the place of atonement that sin is dealt with. The desires and motions of the outer flesh man must be SENT AWAY, even as the scapegoat was sent away from the camp of Israel, bearing all the sins of the people. But you see, the sinful goat-nature can only be sent away by the hand of the fit man, Christ, who is ordained to take him away! What does that mean? It means that only the presence and power of Christ in our lives is able to overcome sin in the flesh! Truly He is *within us* accomplishing this! This is not a work that is wrought from without on our behalf — it is the work of Christ *in us*! That is why we have to experience the life of the first goat before we can appropriate the departure of the second goat!

Some people think that if they have sin in their lives Christ won't dwell in them, that His presence will flee, God will turn from them and the heavens become as brass against them. People have the crude and unscriptural notion that somehow God is too holy to look upon sin. That is a lie of Babylon! How can sin ever be conquered in my life if Christ is not raised up in me? And if Christ won't dwell in me, fellowship with me, and bless me because of my sin, how can He ever be raised up within me to the point where the spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes

me free from the law of sin and death? That is the *whole point* of chapters seven and eight of Romans!

Paul describes the distress that is characteristic of many believer's lives. "For I do not understand my own actions — I am baffled, bewildered. I do not practice or accomplish what I wish, but I do the very thing that I loathe. Now if I do habitually what is contrary to my desire, that means that I acknowledge and agree that the law is good and morally excellent and that I take sides with it. However, *it is no longer I that do the deed*, but sin which is at home in me and has possession of me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, *in my flesh*. I can will what is right, but I cannot perform it. I have the intention and urge to do what is right, but no power to carry it out; for I fail to practice the good deeds I desire to do, but the evil deeds I do not desire to do are what I am doing. Now if I do what I do not desire to do, it is *no longer I doing it* — it is not myself that acts — but the sin which dwells within me. So I find it to be a law of my being that when I want to do what is right and good, evil is ever present with me and I am subject to its insistent demands. For I endorse and delight in the Law of God *in my inmost self — with my new nature*. But I discern *in my bodily members* — in the sensitive appetites and wills of *the flesh* — a different law at war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner to the *law of sin that dwells in my bodily organs* — in the sensitive appetites and wills of *the flesh*" (Rom. 7:15-23, Amplified).

Our experience in this physical realm is certainly no different than the apostle Paul's! "I know that in me, that is, *in my flesh* (outer man), dwelleth *no good thing*." The thing he didn't want to do he did, and the thing he wanted to do he couldn't. What an experience for an apostle! Paul enlarges on his struggle with "sin in my members." Sin in my members is simply a euphemism for "the desires of the flesh" or "the carnal mind." And don't tell me *you* don't have them! Many of the Lord's people are in *denial*, claiming that since their old man is dead, the fear, anger, covetousness, lust, deceitfulness, and other carnal and ungodly emotions they feel are just an *illusion, a habit, a hang over, a mistaken identity* from their former old man who is now really dead, gone, and non-existent. Let me tell you the truth! Your old man *is* dead, but you *do* still have sin in your members — the desires of your flesh. The man who says he has *no fleshly desires* because his old man is dead is either caught up in wishful thinking, self-deceived, or lying. Therefore, the *old man* and the *flesh* are obviously *not the same*, for if they were, your flesh would be dead! How could you still have the option of either "sowing to the flesh" or "sowing to the spirit" if your flesh no longer exists? Look up all the scriptures on the flesh and you will see that all God's saints in physical, mortal bodies still have it! "The flesh wars against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh," Paul wrote. Has that ever been your experience? If the flesh were dead, the *war would be over!* Perhaps for you it is, and I rejoice for you if it is, but I seem to still get involved in a skirmish now and then!

This is a large subject that would take a book to exhaust, but I can assure you that if the "old man" is who most people think he is, and truly *dead*, we should all be perfect, sinless, pure, undefiled, and overcomers in every sense of the word. We should not need to *mortify, or put off, or put away, or cleanse ourselves from, or overcome* anything because all those things would be **non-existent!** Dead men don't lie, dead men don't deceive, dead men don't cheat, dead men don't fly off the handle, dead men don't gossip, dead men don't fight, dead men don't covet, dead men don't criticize, dead men don't lust, dead men don't make mistakes, dead men don't get depressed, or struggle with anything. If uncle Charlie has died and is lying in his coffin, I can walk up to him, tell him what a splendid fellow he is, flatter him, and heap praise upon praise on him, and he will never smile, appear pleased, or puff up with pride. He's *dead!* On the other hand, I can stand there and swear at him, abuse him, slap his face, yell about what a scoundrel he is, and he will not swear back, strike me, or jump out of the coffin

and knock me down. There will be absolutely no response — for he is *dead!* Dead men don't do anything!

Dead men don't keep on doing evil things and then excuse it by saying that they just didn't *know* they were dead; it was just such a *habit* that they have to remind themselves that they are dead so they can *learn to act like dead men!* What drive!! Yet, I have heard great preachers proclaiming such foolishness, in an effort to rationalize why Christians have fleshly, ungodly emotions and desires, and do bad things, when their old man *is dead!* It should be clear to any spiritual mind that either the old man *isn't dead* or we have *mis-identified the old man!* I think it is the latter. God isn't playing games with us! Do saints still struggle with the carnal mind and the works of the flesh? Do saints still *sin?* "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn. 1:8-9).

Ah, precious friend of mine, "sin in our members" and the "old man" are *not the same!* Every scripture throughout the whole Bible bears witness to this fact. Let me give it to you in the simplest of terms. There are many, many scriptures, but two will suffice to point the way. "For I *delight in the law of God after the inward man*" (Rom. 7:22). Notice what the inward man does. He *delights* in the law of God — righteousness! But even though the inward man, the new man, delights in righteousness, the awful power of sin lies in our members. Now let us look at the old man. "Strip yourselves of your former nature (the old man) — put off and discard your old unrenewed self — which characterized your previous manner of life and *becomes corrupt through lusts and desires* that spring from delusion" (Eph. 4:22, Amplified). These two passages tell us this: The new man is a nature that *delights* in righteousness; the old man is a nature that *desires* or delights in that which is corrupt. The old man, therefore, is our old unregenerated spiritual state in which we desired and delighted in the flesh! Please notice that it is the nature that *desires* and *delights* in sin — it is not the "body of sin" (the flesh) itself! It is so important that we see and clearly understand the distinction Paul draws in his writings between "sin in our members" which is "the flesh" — and the "old man." These are *not* interchangeable terms! Sin is the power and principle of evil rooted in our members, in our flesh, in our *body!* The old man, on the other hand, is our old unregenerated spiritual state in which we *delighted in the sin in our members!* And the new man is our quickened, regenerated spiritual existence by which we now *delight* in righteousness. "For I *delight* in the law of God *after the inward man:* but I see *another law in my members, warring against* the law of my (inward man) mind" (Rom. 7:22-23). How much plainer can it be!

Any thinking person should understand that once our spirit is quickened by God's Spirit our old unregenerated spiritual state NO LONGER EXISTS! The scriptures have only one thing to say about your old man...HE IS DEAD! Therefore, you are not having any problem at all with your old man, for dead men don't do anything! The proof of this is that *you no longer delight in sin!* Oh, yes, sin is still in your members, and you *can* sin, *have* sinned, and *may* sin again. But when you do sin — are you happy about it? Spiritually, does it make you *feel good?* Does your spirit say, "Amen!" Or is your spirit *grieved?* Do you now *regret* your weakness, your failure? Right there is the answer! The nature that delighted in sin *is dead,* it is *gone!* Your new man now delights in righteousness! You now *want* to do what is right, you now *desire* to please God, you now *hunger* for righteousness! That is the difference between the old man and the new man. And that is why you have still struggled with the flesh and with sin. If the flesh and sin were the old man, there would *be no more conflict.* Dead men don't sin! The fact that there is now *conflict* in your life between sin and the new life of Christ within you is the *proof* that your old man *is dead* and that Christ in you *is alive.* Before you were regenerated there was *no conflict!* The old man took pleasure in unrighteousness!

Let us look at this truth of being "loosed from our sins" from another angle, from the perspective of the sin-offering; not the sin offering of the two goats on the day of Atonement, but the ordinary sin-offering that any man could offer when he sinned. Come with me now to the camp of Israel. There is a man here by the name Eliezar. Eliezar has sinned. He has done a terrible wrong. He didn't mean to do it, but he did. He was overcome by his own passion and in a moment of weakness succumbed to the lust of his flesh. In sorrow Eliezar goes out into his flocks and chooses the very best of his bullocks. He brings the animal to the tabernacle gate as a sacrifice — a sin-offering. The priest takes the bullock and slays it for Eliezar, offering it according to the requirement of the law. Eliezar lays his hands upon the head of the bullock as it is slain, indicating that his sin is imputed to the bullock and the bullock is paying the penalty of his sin. As soon as the sacrifice is finished, Eliezar is free! His sin is atoned for! His sin is forgiven! His sin is removed! He is *loosed* from his sin and all the guilt and penalty of it! He can never be condemned, judged, or punished for the wrong he did. It is erased. The sin-offering is complete, all-sufficient, and irrevocable. With this burden off of him, Eliezar is now free to work out his problems, to seek God, to press forward, to give himself to learning how to overcome, to be worthy of the sacrifice made on his behalf!

Does sin condemn us to separation from Christ, to a doomed, lost, and hopeless state? Does sin separate us from the love of God, from the fellowship of God, from the presence of God, or from the blessing of God? NO! For we are justified by *faith* in Jesus *our sin-offering*, who once and for all offered Himself up for us. We are not justified by our *performance* — we are justified by the sin-offering that has been made for us! Shall we continue in sin, then, that grace may abound? God forbid! Performance doesn't save us — but it *does* qualify us for a place and position in the kingdom of God! "Know ye not that the unrighteous *shall not inherit the kingdom of God*? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor those who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall *inherit the kingdom of God*" (I Cor. 6:9-10).

Inheriting the kingdom is not the same as being *justified by faith*! To inherit the kingdom means to rule and reign with Christ! It denotes responsibility and position, authority and power, dominion and rulership! It means to sit upon the throne! Contrary to the childish teaching of the church systems, responsibility and rulership in the kingdom is not given to every believer in Jesus. The throne is not promised to "him that *believeth*" nor to "him that is *justified*." The throne is promised "to him that **overcometh!**" "To *him that overcometh* will I grant to *sit with me in my throne*, even as *I also overcame* and am set down with my Father *in His throne*. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches!" (Rev. 3:21-22).

Before this process of overcoming begins we are, by faith in Jesus our sin-offering, completely released from all our sins and from all the guilt, condemnation, and judgment of those sins *freely by His grace*! Because this was not taught to us in our churches when we first came to the Lord, many of the Lord's precious little children have been wandering around spiritually maimed, not knowing who they are, thinking that God still remembers their sins, and that He is angry with them, holding their weakness and failure against them, shutting the heavens up against them every time they fall. Men will not let you forget when you stumble, when you cannot break your sinful habits. Preachers, especially, will not let you forget! This is the good news — your sins are *gone*! The ones you committed before you were saved are all gone. The ones you have committed since you were saved are all gone. And the ones you have committed today are all gone! The one sin-offering has forever taken care of *all your sins*! That is the assurance you have by faith in Jesus! Don't follow the example of ignorant men who won't let you forget, and don't let the adversary pull that number on you, for Satan is the *accuser* of the brethren, and he accuses through men and he accuses *you through you*. You

say, "But I sinned!" Yes, you did. You say, "But I failed God!" Yes, you did. You say, "But this is the one-hundredth time I have flunked the same test!" Yes, it is. To which your heavenly Father responds, "Your sin is forgiven, remitted, released, *sent away*. It's not in my ledger. I don't know what you're talking about." *That* is the gospel — the good news — my friend! Any so-called gospel that makes the sin-offering Jesus has provided *less than that* is *not* the gospel at all!

Every child of God must know that God's love and acceptance of them in the Beloved is *unconditional*. Until we *know that*, we have underestimated His love! How many times can the prodigal return home? Only as many times as the Father's love will accommodate! On one occasion Jesus was talking alone with His disciples about prayer. Peter asks a question. It is never difficult to think of Peter asking a question or making a few remarks. He asks, "Master, how many times *must* I forgive a man? *Seven* times? Apparently Peter thinks he is growing in grace. He can actually *think* now in terms of forgiving a man seven times in succession! But the Lord in effect says, "Peter, you haven't caught the idea. You don't get it! Forgiveness is not a matter of mathematics; not a matter of *keeping tab* on somebody; it is not that you have forgiven someone *six* times, so you will go for one more. You must forgive not seven times but *seventy times seven* — in one day!" And Peter's eyes bulge open with an incredulous stare — "four hundred and ninety times — one man — in one day — Wow!" Methinks that Jesus is thinking that Peter will lose count, or get tired of counting, and finally *get it*, concluding that forgiveness is not optional, it has no qualification or boundary — it is absolutely, at all times, for all people, and in all circumstances *unlimited* and *unconditional*!

Nobody taught or manifested the all-encompassing and totally unconditional love of our heavenly Father more than Jesus. The sin question is settled! Under the law, when the sin-offering was slain, all was forgiven. Mattered not how the offerer felt, how mature he was, how perfect he was, how spiritual he was — his faith in the sacrifice wiped the slate clean. Jesus has now made the one sacrifice *forever*, and by our faith in the Father's love for us we are accepted of Him *regardless of our failures*. The secret is just this: HE IS MERCIFUL TO OUR TRANSGRESSIONS **UNTIL WE ARE ABLE TO OVERCOME THEM!** Only His life within us *can* ever overcome them! If He withdraws His life because we fail — even if we fail four hundred and ninety times in one day — then we are hopeless! But He doesn't! He freely forgives *every time* and floods us with His love and His life in the expectation that eventually His life will become strong enough in us to conquer all. *That* is His way! And it is the only way it can be if we are to be completely saved and perfected. What a plan! What a Saviour!

Then what are we supposed to do? We are supposed to quit trying to deal with sin, and *fall in love with Jesus!* The more deeply we fall in love with Jesus, the more time spent in His presence, the more we fellowship with Him and eat at *His table*, the easier and more natural it becomes to subject ourselves to Christ and let the Spirit lead us. The more we will *desire* to please Him! As we commune with the Lord and listen to His voice, this teaching is *life*; this teaching gives us spiritual food; it gives us spiritual drink; it raises up within us spiritual substance so we can grow up into the nature of the new man. Victory over sin and the flesh is not our own doing! We cannot produce it! But Christ raised up in our lives will lead us to it! Jesus *overcame* all things, lived out the nature of God, and manifested the power and glory of God. But He did not do it Himself! He said, "I can do nothing of myself" (Jn. 5:19,30). His complete victory came through his fellowship with, and His subjection to, the Father. "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, *He doeth the works*" (Jn. 14:10). And that is also where our power and victory are! Christ in us must do the work. And we cannot *make* Him do it; we can only *let* Him do it. And He *will* do it as we live in His presence! Come, come, my friend, into the Holiest *in* the blood of Jesus, in the power of

His life within your spirit, come right on in and enjoy His abundance! Sin will then, in due time, take care of itself. As soon as you have entered in, the stage is set for the *second stage* of your experience in Christ — the scapegoat of your flesh *can then be sent away!*

Paul, at one time in his experience, felt what we all feel in our struggle with the flesh. In desperation he cried out, "O unhappy and pitiable and wretched man that I am! Who will release and deliver me from the shackles of this body of death?" (Rom. 7:24). And then came the revelation of the glorious solution! "O thank God — HE WILL! through Jesus Christ, the Anointed One, our Lord!" (Rom. 7:25). And right on the heels of this the explanation of how Jesus Christ, the fit man, sends the sin and flesh man away: "For the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has *freed me* from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law could not do, its power being weakened by the flesh. Sending His own Son in the guise of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, God condemned sin in the flesh — subdued, overcame, deprived it of its power. So that the righteous and just requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who live and move not in the ways of the flesh but in the ways of the Spirit — our lives governed not by the standards and according to the dictates of the flesh, but controlled by the Holy Spirit. For if you live according to the dictates of the flesh you will surely die. But if through the power of the Spirit you are *habitually putting to death* — making extinct, deadening — the deeds prompted *by the body*, you shall really and genuinely *live...*" (Rom. 8:2-4,13, Amplified).

Oh, yes! The fit man is within us, and as we walk in His presence, soaking up His life, yielding to His Spirit, communing with His mind, submitting to His leading, the goat nature is sent away into a desolate land, an uninhabited wilderness, never to return! Only the mighty, living presence of Christ raised up within us as life can send the flesh man away! The flesh with all his works is sent into a state of desolation — trapped, dried up, starved, neutralized by the ascendancy of the Spirit in our lives! This is what is happening in the life of every son of God! The day of Atonement is being fulfilled within us spiritually, preparing our hearts for the exceeding glory of the feast of Tabernacles! The fullness of God is at hand! The greater than Pentecost lies directly before us! The sons of God in this very hour are experiencing the finishing touches of God's great redemption in preparation for the outflowing of His glory unto creation!

Chapter 13

Thou Hast Made Us Kings And Priests

"Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath *made us kings and priests unto God* and His Father..." (Rev. 1:5-6). "Thou...hast redeemed us unto God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast *made us unto our God kings and priests*: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9-10).

This passage is one of rare beauty. It is like a precious diamond, the effulgence of whose radiance dazzles the mind. It is a drop of pure distilled essence, whose fragrance fills the rooms of the heart of every man and woman who has received the call to sonship. It is a joy forevermore and a challenge to all who comprehend its message. It must be engraved deeply upon the heart of every son of God. It exalts and glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. "THOU hast MADE US!" THOU! There is so much depth to that text that I am afraid that we often do not perceive it. It is like a beautiful star-studded sky on a bright clear night and one cannot even begin to grasp the vast depth that lies above us. So it is with these marvelous words: "Thou hast MADE US TO BE KINGS AND PRIESTS!" The book of Revelation is addressed to those whom Christ is *making to be* kings and priests unto God! All the experiences of this wonderful book are prepared unto that end – to *make us* kings and priests unto God!

The unveiling of the sons of God is not the revelation of some people that can **do** something. No, it is the unveiling of some people that have **become** something. God is not concerned about taking us some place – to some far-off heaven somewhere. He is concerned with *making something out of us*. That is what redemption is all about! It is not a question of where we are going, it is a matter of *what we are becoming*. Two men may go to Miami Beach. One is a beggar, the other a business tycoon. They are both in the same place, but they are not both *the same thing*! There will be a lot of spiritual beggars in heaven! God is working not to *take us*, but to *make us*. "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to **become** the sons of God" (Jn. 1:12). "Thou hast **made us** unto our God kings and priests." "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will **be** his God, and he shall **be** my son" (Rev. 21:7). If Jesus is who He is, then certainly He can **do** all things, but the doing is incidental, merely a by-product of the **being**. Our vision in this new Day of the Lord is not in doing or going. We are following on to *know the Lord*! Our hearts are set on *Him*! We are not becoming occupied with ourselves, we are occupied with His purpose in us, with what He has said He would make us for *His sake*. "This people have I formed **for myself**." "Ye shall be **unto me** a kingdom of priests."

When the light of God comes and shines into our heart, we become a light. When we feed on the bread of heaven, we become living bread. When we drink of the water of the Spirit, out of our innermost being flows rivers of living water. When He is made unto us righteousness, we become the righteousness of God. When He has fully saved us, we become the salvation of the Lord. When He reigns upon the throne of our hearts, we become kings and lords with Him. God will have a body through the earth in these days, a people walking in God, walking as God, terrible as an army with banners, whose only purpose is that the Father may be glorified! God is raising up a people formed for Himself, through whom He can reveal and manifest

Himself in all His wonderful fullness. Come, let us now open our hearts wide to Him! Come, and as we gaze upon this glorious ministry and its life-flow to all the peoples of the earth, let us yield ourselves unto God that He may work HIS WONDROUS WORK in our lives, bringing us into such union with Jesus, our great King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek, the High Priest of *our profession*, that we **become** in nature and power **His Royal Priesthood** in the earth!

Because all the earth is His, God is raising up a Kingly Priesthood to reign in mighty spirit power and authority over the earth, not to be little human dictators, or an external government of laws and systems headquartered in Jerusalem, or Washington, or London, but with an outflow of life and light and love, touching God with one hand, and humanity with the other, by their priestly ministry bringing the two together, that God may indwell men by His Spirit and live and rule in them in power and glory. The kingly nature in us is not to dominate over men's lives, but to deal and break the power of selfhood and rebellion and sin and the devil that men may be reconciled to God. This is a King-Priest ministry, after the order of Melchizedek! Kings have power and authority. Priests reconcile in mercy and love. But once the reconciliation has taken place, and Christ is enthroned, we deliver men up to God, even the Father, that GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL. That is the principle of the kingdom of God! We rule only to subdue men to God – then GOD RULES IN THEM! He rules first through us, that He may rule finally in them. The manifestation of the sons of God for which all creation is in travail is nothing more nor less than the full manifestation of God's fully developed and empowered government of KING-PRIESTS AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK. Throughout the age now ending the Holy Spirit has been forming, preparing, and equipping that body. In the new age now upon us that body shall be given power and authority over all nations and all things! In the ages yet to come the kingdom shall be expanded from realm to realm, from the lowest of the low to the highest of the high, for of the *increase* of His government and peace there *shall be no end!*

A thousand, yea, tens of thousands, a mighty army is being touched by the fire from off the altar of God! A great Kingdom of Priests is being set ablaze with the life and love and power of God that will cause the nations of the world to turn to the living God in these crisis days. Too long have men occupied themselves in religious efforts to embalm the spirit of yesterday's revival, wrapping it in the grave clothes of ecclesiastical systems and securing it in sepulchers that speak only of the past. If you want to bless humanity, if your desire is to see the world transformed and the captives set free, if the cry of your heart is to see sin and sorrow and death driven from men's lives until there is a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, then *forget*, once and for all, *all* the old-order church system methods of the past, for *none* of them have converted the world, delivered creation, or brought in the kingdom of God! None of them are sufficient for this new Day! Until we see that God is doing an entirely *new thing* in the earth in this Day, we haven't learned the ABC's of sonship.

Even now a move of God of world-wide dimensions is in the making! It is being formed *in a people*, in a *sonship company* that is *becoming* the embodiment and personification of all *He is*. This will not be a revival of evangelistic crusades, television programs, musical concerts, bus ministries, or the building of church buildings, but the overflow of divine passion and power from people who have been so consecrated to God that their hearts and their hands have been filled with HIMSELF. These will not minister in organized meetings, there will be no pulpit, no choir, no song service, no prepared sermons, no organization or promotion of any kind. These will minister *spontaneously* in every place at all times – in the fields, on the streets, in the homes, in the business establishments, in the restaurants, in the hospitals, in the churches, in the schools, on the airplanes, buses, and trains – wherever they are to minister, by command of the Spirit they will *appear* in power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost! They

will minister to the meek and lowly and needy, to the great and mighty, to the common people and to kings, presidents and prime ministers, to all men everywhere without respect of persons. None will be able to gainsay their wisdom or their revelation or their power!

Already bright clouds are gathering on the horizon, clouds of a multitude of witnesses to the deep and vital work God is doing in the lives of His apprehended ones in preparation for the long-awaited manifestation of the sons of God! The celestial rivers are running full, and great glory is about to break forth upon the earth. This is the time to gird up your loins, like Elijah of old, and run before the chariots. In due time the clouds shall burst and empty themselves upon the earth. Let your heart be lifted high, for God is on the move, and this can be YOUR HOUR OF MANIFESTATION! Only that will erupt and overflow from God's people which has first been *inworked* by Father's hand. This sonship ministry will not flow from gifts of the Spirit, but from the very life and nature of Christ *formed in His body*. The ministry of kings and priests is not a gift – we are being *made* kings and priests – it is a *becoming*! Do not belittle or depreciate this day when it may seem so little is happening in your midst, my beloved. The accent of the Spirit is not on the external works and gifts and manifestations in this hour – we have already had all that! His concern is with the inner development of the Christ, the formation of all He is as life and nature within, our **becoming** the essence and substance of His very Being! Right now the greatest service we can give to others is to die out to all our own ego-self, to all the antiquated religious methods of the past, that the living of *His Life* becomes its own declaration of all that He is and can do, to His glory and praise. Amen!

COMING WITH CLOUDS

"Behold, He *cometh with clouds*; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him" (Rev. 1:7).

The book of Revelation contains deep and rich teaching for the elect saints concerning the coming of Christ; symbolic, mysterious, wonderful, but always to be approached reverently, humbly, with head bowed low and shoes removed from off our feet, as people standing on holy ground. The coming of the Lord as revealed in the book of Revelation is complex and progressive, extending through a variety of diverse scenes, stages, events, and manifestations, until He has come in such measure of fullness that we know Him finally in that dimension where HE IS the glorious fulfillment of all that our heart has yearned for, and desired so earnestly. All the lacks swallowed up into completeness, all the voids filled with His fullness, and we know the bliss of HIMSELF as our all-in-all!

Almost two thousand years ago John on the isle of Patmos saw unfolding before Him the enthralling drama of the coming of His Lord. As the awesome sight began to unfold he cried out in astonished wonder and surprised joy, "Behold! He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him." This phrase, *He cometh*, is from the Greek *erchomai*. It is the third person singular, present indicative. Any reader who knows the conjunction of verbs knows what that means. First, it means HE COMES as a present tense reality. The verb is present indicative. He comes. He is in the act of coming. Behold! He is *now* coming! In other words, He has been coming, He is still in the act of coming, and He continues to come. This is extremely important. More than once the coming of the Lord is spoken of in this tense throughout the book of Revelation. It's not merely a future thing, not something that shall happen somewhere down the course of history, but it is something that **is**. Oh, that God with flames of His holy fire would burn this truth indelibly upon the hearts of all who read these lines!

The church world is either looking back to an historical Christ, or forward to a futuristic coming of Christ. They miss this word *erchomai* altogether, their spiritual understanding never being quickened to this grand truth that HE COMES — He is coming, He continues to come, He will continue to come, until He has come in the fullness of every dimension in which He *can* come. It is something that is happening right now! It is happening in *your life* right now! It means that He comes from one place to another. He comes out of the realm of spirit to be manifested in flesh, out of the realm of the invisible to be expressed and revealed in a visible, tangible way to the physical creation. *Erchomai* means to come, to make one's appearance before the public. It means that He comes and appears before the view of the people round about. And this coming has already happened, it is happening now, and shall continue to happen! This is the revelation that so captivated the apostle John that he could only exclaim with amazement, "Behold! He comes!" And we have been just as amazed as the Spirit has borne witness for a number of years now among the Lord's people that soon Christ shall come in a manifestation of Himself on a plane, and in a measure, never before seen or experienced by men upon this planet. He shall come to be glorified in His saints, manifested in His sons to set creation free. The bondage of corruption, the power of sin and death, shall first be broken from off God's people, then from all humanity. Yes, He has come in measure, and He shall yet come in fullness!

There are two more words: "*With Clouds.*" "Behold! He cometh with clouds." "With" is from the Greek preposition *meta*. It means with, but it also means together with, in the midst of, among, between, in common with, with the help of, and by means of. Here are the ways He comes: Behold! He comes *with* clouds, denoting an association. Behold! He comes *together with* clouds, denoting a communion. Behold! He comes *in the midst of* clouds, denoting an indwelling. Behold! He comes *among* clouds, denoting a fellowship. Behold! He comes *between* clouds, denoting a union. Behold! He comes *in common with* clouds, denoting a participation. Behold! He comes *with the help of* clouds, denoting an interdependence. Behold! He comes *by means of* clouds, denoting an instrumentality.

From the dawn of history the way in which God has displayed His glory has been in the form of a cloud. This *glory cloud* of God has taken different shapes and different sizes on various occasions. When it was time for the children of Israel to begin their exodus out of Egypt, the glory of God took the form of a pillar of fire enshrouded within a cloud. "And the Lord went before them by day *in a pillar of a cloud*, to lead them in the way; and by night *in a pillar of fire*, to give them light, to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people" (Ex. 13:21-22).

What did the glory of God signify every time it appeared? The glory cloud of God signified the unique presence of God! It always told the people of Israel, when it appeared, that Yahweh was uniquely present in this place, at this time, for a special purpose. When the glory of God as a cloud led the children of Israel out of Egypt, it signified to the people that God was with them in a very real and sovereign way. "And the Lord went before them *in a pillar of a cloud.*" God was **in** the cloud! The almighty God Himself dwelt in that cloud by day and in the fiery pillar by night. That strange pillar of cloud and fire was the visible manifestation of His glory and presence. While Israel walked in the light of His fiery presence, no calamity could harm them, no enemy could attack them, no evil could befall them, nor plague come nigh their dwelling. God was with them in sovereign power in all their marches! "And the Lord said unto Moses, I come unto thee in a *thick cloud*, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe for ever" (Ex. 19:9). And again, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil before the mercy

seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: **for I will appear in the cloud** upon the mercy seat" (Lev. 16:2).

When the cloud came down out of heaven and rested on top of mount Sinai, it signified that God in a unique sense had come out of the realm of spirit to meet with the children of Israel in His manifestation on the earth plane. When they saw the cloud enter into the most holy place in the tabernacle and later in the temple, it signified again that God in a special sense was taking up residence within that worship structure within the nation of Israel. The light that shone in the holiest of all behind the temple curtain of blue and purple and scarlet and fine twined linen, laced with threads of gold and figures of cherubim, was not the beams of the sevenfold candlestick of the holy place, nor even the radiance of the sun in the outer court. It was the glory light of God's own divine majesty! Through time the Israelites called that glory cloud of God the *shekinah*. The word shekinah means "to dwell." And since the glory cloud always signified that God was present at the place where the cloud appeared, to dwell in a special sense, they called it the shekinah or *dwelling glory* of God!

The disciples of Jesus had become accustomed to seeing Jesus the man, Jesus the healer, Jesus the teacher, Jesus the miracle worker. They had heard Him tell of the majesty and glory of His Father in heaven, but had never grasped the significance of the glory, majesty, and power of the Christ who walked the road with them. On that momentous occasion when the Lord Jesus took Peter, James, and John up into the mount and was transfigured before them, suddenly there appeared a *bright cloud* – a cloud with a light in it! And out of that bright cloud the voice of the Father spake concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. "This is my beloved Son – hear Him!" It is more than coincidence that, as Peter spoke, a *cloud* overshadowed them and a Voice came out of the cloud. One of the significant facts in connection with the glory cloud of God's presence is that God always *spoke* from the cloud. This began first on mount Sinai. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may **hear when I speak** with thee...and the Lord came down upon mount Sinai...and the Lord **called Moses**..." (Ex. 19:9,20). At a later time God spoke from the same cloud after that it had descended upon the tabernacle. "And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and **the Lord talked with Moses**" (Ex. 33:9).

What was that bright cloud with the light in it from which the voice of God spoke on the mount of Jesus' transfiguration? It was none other than the pillar of cloud housing the glory fire, the shekinah glory of God that had led the children of Israel in their exodus out of Egypt and guided them for forty years! As Jesus prayed on the mount, He was transfigured before His chosen disciples. At that moment of transfiguration the glory cloud enveloped Him and God spoke from the midst of the radiance of glory. In the wilderness this *glory*, this *cloud*, and the *voice out of the cloud* are all brought together: "And Moses went up into the mount, and a *cloud* covered the mount. And the *glory* of the Lord abode upon mount Sinai, and the *cloud* covered it six days: and the seventh day He *called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud*. And the sight of the *glory* of the Lord was like devouring *fire*" (Ex. 24:15-17). On the mount of transfiguration the *Son* is enveloped in the *cloud* and we are commanded to *hear Him*. The writer to the Hebrews then identified this *voice* and this *glory* in these remarkable words: "God...hath in these last days *spoken* unto us *by His Son*...who *being the brightness of His glory*, and the express image of His person..." (Heb. 1:1-3). Jesus is the brightness of God's glory! He is indeed, the presence in the cloud and the very cloud and fire of the presence!

Let every reader of these lines be assured beyond any possible shadow of doubt that it was this same shekinah, this very same glory cloud which the eleven disciples beheld in spell-

bound astonishment on the crest of the mount of Olives that blessed day when the Lord ascended into mid-air and suddenly a bright cloud, like a chariot of God, bore Him speedily away, concealing Him from mortal gaze. "When He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and *a cloud* received Him out of their sight," the record states. An accident? An illusion? A marvelous coincidence? Not on your life! This is the equivalent of saying that the cloud which hovered over Israel in the wilderness; the cloud which rested upon the glorious tabernacle of old; the cloud which dwelt between the gleaming cherubim in the most holy place; the cloud which filled Solomon's temple until the ministers could not minister by reason of the blazing glory; the cloud which overshadowed the virgin girl Mary when she came to be with child; the cloud which enveloped the Son of God and revealed His glory on the mount of transfiguration; that cloud **is the very same cloud** that received the Lord Jesus into its midst and out of the sight of mortal eyes! The cloud that received Jesus out of the sight of those startled disciples certainly was no ordinary rain cloud which happened to be blown across a torturous sky. It was the blazing shekinah cloud which had always veiled the divine majesty of God from time immemorial!

Here is where I wish to point out a most significant fact of scripture which has entirely been overlooked by most Bible students and nearly all preachers and teachers. All the way through the scriptures, from the crossing of the Red Sea by the children of Israel, to the ascension of Christ from the mount of Olives, God consistently manifested Himself in ONE GLORY CLOUD. There was always only ONE SINGLE CLOUD! One cloud before the camp of Israel. One cloud over mount Sinai. One cloud resting upon the tabernacle in the wilderness. One cloud shining in the most holy place. One cloud filling Solomon's temple. One cloud overshadowing the virgin of Galilee, implanting the seed of the Christ. One cloud shimmering over the summit of the mount of transfiguration. One cloud in which Christ ascended from the mount of Olives. Christ ascended in **one single cloud** of God's glory – the very **same** cloud in which He had manifested His presence throughout the long ages of time!

It is when we come to the return of the Lord that we notice a distinct difference! For suddenly the one single cloud disappears and we are introduced to a great **plurality of clouds!** Let us see! Christ departed this earth in *one cloud*. He comes again in *many clouds!* "Behold, He cometh with **clouds**: and every eye shall see Him" (Rev. 1:7). Daniel in vision beheld Him thus: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like a Son of man **came with the clouds of heaven**...and there was given unto Him dominion" (Dan. 7:13-14). Jesus Himself said, "And they shall see the Son of man **coming in the clouds of heaven** with power and great glory" (Mat. 24:30). And again, "Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and **coming in the clouds** of heaven" (Mat. 26:64). Finally, the apostle Paul relates this dramatic experience: "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them **in the clouds**...and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thes. 4:17). In the CLOUDS! More than one cloud. Many clouds. A great company of clouds!

Why are there many clouds attending Christ's coming, and what are these clouds? Let us not for one moment forget that we are dealing with *the cloud of God's glory, presence, and power* – the shekinah! When the firstborn Son of God was in the world John said of Him, "We beheld *His glory*" (Jn. 1:14). When did they behold His glory? You may reply that they beheld His glory when He went about doing good, healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, raising the dead, performing miracles and teaching and speaking as never man spake. Ah, yes, I am sure that in all those things they beheld a glory, but the apostle Peter reveals to us what is really meant by their beholding the glory of the Son. "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and *glory*, when

there came such a voice to Him *from the excellent glory* (the glory cloud), saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, *when we were with Him in the holy mount*" (II Pet. 1:16-18).

How very significant that at the end of Jesus' earthly ministry He said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also shall be one in us...and **the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them**...I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one...that they be with me where I am; that they may behold **my glory** which Thou hast given me" (Jn. 17:20-24). And this is the crux of the whole matter! From the dawn of creation's light until Jesus stepped upon this planet, God manifested to His creation in a *singular way* His own glory. He, the one eternal God, exhibited His presence in the form of one glory cloud! But as Jesus approached the cross, and the glorious events to unfold thereafter, He disclosed the grand truth that God purposed from eternity to **SHARE HIS GLORY WITH A VAST FAMILY OF SONS**...that glorious body which is the fullness of Him that filleth all in all!

Let us see, then, what great encouragement God has given us concerning His glory. "And ye know how we exhorted you...that ye should walk worthy of God, who hath called you *to His kingdom and glory*" (I Thes. 2:11-12). Peter asserts: "I...also am...*a partaker of the glory* that shall be revealed" (I Pet. 5:1). "Whereunto He hath called you...to the obtaining of *the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (II Thes. 2:14). "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with *the glory that shall be revealed in us*" (Rom. 8:18). The writer to the Hebrews adds this significant testimony: "For it became 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" (Heb. 2:10). As the spirit of revelation and understanding floods our minds, we are left without question as to the meaning of all this. There is to be a mighty and universal revelation of the glory of God, that very *same glory* which was revealed in the cloud of old, but now an *intensified many-splendored* glory in the *many clouds* of God's sons!

Another evidence that the "clouds" with which Christ comes are in fact the sons of God *in their glory* is couched in the terminology of the scriptures on this subject. In most places the passages in question speak of Christ coming "with clouds." There is only one other group of plurality of objects of which it is stated that Christ comes "with" them, and that is – the SAINTS! "To the end He may establish your hearts...at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ **WITH ALL HIS SAINTS**" (I Thes. 3:13). Jude says, "And Enoch also...prophesied...saying, Behold, the Lord cometh **WITH TEN THOUSANDS OF SAINTS**" (Jude 14). The Amplified is helpful, when it reads, "Behold, the Lord comes **WITH MYRIADS OF HOLY ONES** – ten thousands of His saints." But the Interlinear reading from the Diaglott translation gives the clearest of all renderings from the Greek text, so we note, "Lo, comes Lord **IN HOLY MYRIADS OF HIMSELF**." Myriads of Himself! And all of them partakers of His divine nature, conformed to His image, imbued with His mind, filled with His life, radiating His glory! Myriads of Himself, of His own kind, born of His seed, reproducing His life, a many brethren company of sons – all His sons. Though there are multiplied testimonies to this truth, we will add but one more: "And the Lord my God shall come, and **ALL THE SAINTS WITH THEE**" (Zech. 14:5). The beloved John sees this same scene in wonder-filled vision and cries out, "Behold, He cometh **WITH CLOUDS**; and every eye shall see Him!"

When Jesus ascended two thousand years ago, He ascended glorified in that singular glory cloud in which He had dwelt from eternity. He was the **one God** manifested in all fullness in **one Man**, the Son. But, blessed be God! As He comes again, "He shall come to be

GLORIFIED **IN HIS SAINTS**, and to be admired **IN THEM** that believe" (II Thes. 1:10). Centuries ago the apostle Paul wrote these words to the saints at Rome, "And if we are children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also GLORIFIED TOGETHER" (Rom. 8:17). Christ coming "with clouds" certainly shows that each of these sons, to whom is given that *same glory* that Jesus had from eternity, shall stand ultimately *in his own realm of the glory of the Lord*. The glory is shared, so the cloud which represents that glory is shared. Each elect son becomes a manifestation of the glory – of the *cloud* – of the *shekinah*! In the light of truth so sublime let us search our hearts and sanctify ourselves in the knowledge that we are the *body of Christ*. The cloud of old rested upon the tabernacle and filled the temple with the glory of the Lord! *We* are now His tabernacle and His temple! *We* are now His ark, His most holy place, and His holy mount! The glory is now given to us, rests upon us, increasingly fills us, and shall radiate out from this holy habitation of God forevermore! In Old Testament times God dwelt in one single cloud. But now He says, "I will dwell *in them*, and walk *in them*...and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord" (II Cor. 6:16-18).

As the clouds pour out the rain upon our land, so the heavens pour down water upon the earth. When a cloud becomes so heavy with droplets that it can no longer hold them, it spills over, and we have rain. "O Lord my God, Thou art very great...who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters: who maketh the *cloud His chariot*: He *watereth* the hills *from His chambers*" (Ps. 104:3,13). The clouds are the chambers of God containing the water of life! A cloud is full of water and water speaks to us of life. Water typifies both the Spirit of God and the Word of God (Eph. 5:26; Jn. 7:37-39). A cloud speaks to us of a vessel which contains water, or contains life. God by His Spirit gives *living water* to refresh and impart life to His creation! It is the nature of a cloud to *empty itself*. "If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth" (Eccl. 11:3). When the cloud gets filled up, it rains! That is the nature of the clouds – rain pours out! Now, all that God *is* is being formed in His sons, we are becoming a receptacle, a vehicle for all the fullness of God, filled up with the life-giving properties of our Father! HE IS FILLING THE CLOUDS!

The nature of each son will be to pour out that life just as God poured it into Jesus and Jesus is pouring it into us. If the sons, as the clouds of heaven, be full of God, they will pour Him out upon all who dwell in the earth-realm! A true ministry has life to give, and is willing to empty himself in order to give life to a dry and thirsty people. Pour out his life for others – that is what Jesus did! We shall empty out that same life on a groaning creation and quicken all who are held in the bondage of corruption! The apostles Peter and Jude both tell us that *false ministries* are "*clouds without water*...carried about of winds." A *true* ministry, then, is a *cloud with water*. A true ministry has life to give! A true ministry is willing to empty himself out in order to bring that life to a dry and parched land! Jesus was a bright cloud laden with water, for "the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and *give His life*..." Prepare to rain, O ye clouds!

The one glory has become the multiple glory! The one cloud of His presence has become many clouds of His presence! The Lord is coming to be glorified in a many-membered body, in the clouds of His presence! These are the clouds of His glory into which the triumphant saints of God are being "caught up." Our "catching up" is being brought to that high spiritual sphere where we become one with that whole great "cloud of witnesses," the *spirits of just men made perfect*! They without us cannot be made perfect, but they with us are the very perfection of God expressed out of the high realm of the heavens of God's Spirit. What a glorious *union* of forces when those of our generation on earth, and all those overcoming saints of all former ages who have gone on before us, are joined together, becoming an indestructible force in the

full, total and complete manifestation of God's majesty, power, and glory at the manifestation of the sons of God! Gird up your loins, beloved, for I hear the sound of *abundance of rain!*

The Resident within the shimmering cloud of glory is just the Lord Himself! The Lord is the source of the dazzling light, for it is HE who causes the celestial host to shine forth, thus forming the "cloud" and manifesting His glory thereby. Be not discouraged, my beloved, for our Lord shall complete all of His work and purpose in us, lifting us up into higher realms of His Spirit, and completing that *union with the whole body of the firstborn*. The life of God is taking form! The clouds are coming together! The clouds are gathering rain! The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together! Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him!

This treasure we have in *earthen vessels* (II Cor. 4:7). Ah, there is a glory even now as we glorify God in these mortal bodies. Christ had and disclosed such a glory in that dim and distant past when He walked the shores of blue Galilee. But, blessed be His name, in His resurrection He came forth in new garments, clad in a sin-free and death-free body of incorruption and immortality! Now His wonderful life is swallowing up the sin and death in us, bringing to His chosen ones also a change of raiment, and in His due time we shall be *changed* in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, for this corruptible is putting on incorruption and this mortal is putting on immortality. Only as we daily *put on* the Lord Jesus Christ are we changed! "Putting on" is not a passive thing. *We are* putting on the Lord Jesus Christ; *we are* putting on incorruption and immortality; and because *we are* putting on the life, mind, and nature of His resurrection, *we are* being changed! When we are fully changed by the power of His resurrection we shall be *bright clouds* out of whom *God shall shine* and out of whom *the voice of God shall speak*. We shall be pillars of clouds by day, and pillars of fire by night, to lead and guide *all humanity* from the bondage of Egypt to the blessing and abundance of the Promised Land!

Though His glory has generally been hidden throughout the ages, at certain times and on special occasions that hidden glory has flashed forth into prominence before the eyes of the few who by the predestined counsel of God were permitted to experience unspeakable things unlawful for a man to utter. We are coming ever nearer when God shall unveil His power and glory before the face of all nations and peoples in a manner far beyond any measure experienced by men of any age! The whole world shall soon see the glory of the Lord in an unprecedented way! From earth's teeming millions of all ages there is a people arising in the image of Christ. Those who watch the spiritual heavens shall soon see clouds as they have never seen before! We have seen the clouds of earth's atmosphere, inky black clouds, and clouds of snowy whiteness; clouds brightly tinted, and many silver lined; clouds made brilliantly gorgeous by the afterglow of the setting sun. But we never yet have seen clouds made magnificently glorious by the blazing splendor of the Son of God! We have seen clouds charged by flashes of lightning. Not yet have we seen clouds charged with the power of omnipotence and flashing with the incorruptible radiance of Christ's life and immortality! Afar off we have seen the morning clouds as they have enwrapped the distant mountain peaks and splendidly capped the hilltops. We have yet to see the clouds which enfold the blazing form of the Mighty One! We have seen clouds driven as chariots to carry rain to the dry and thirsty fields. But **CLOUDS ARE FORMING IN THE HEAVENS OF GOD'S SPIRIT THAT WILL BE SEEN, THAT WILL BE THE CHARIOT OF HEAVEN'S KING OF GLORY AS HE COMES TO REFRESH AND QUICKEN AND RESTORE ALL THINGS!**

What a sight for eyes to behold! How it enraptures the faithful ones who "love His appearing" and have hoped to the end "for the grace that is to be brought unto them" at "the revelation of

Jesus Christ." Of a sudden the blazing light of day will take on a new brightness, above all the glory of the sun, and grow still more light, more bright, and more dazzling, until the eyes of men behold the advancing glory of God's Christ! And with the glory clouds of myriads of like ones unto Himself the all-conquering Christ will appear in all the fullness of Himself in the earth! These brilliant bands will fill the glory-flashing skies from end to end and flood the world with life, light, and love! How magnificent will be the advancing pageantry of the skies! How sublime beyond all mortal comprehension will be *the revelation of Jesus Christ!*

No wonder John followed his exclamation concerning the Lord coming with clouds with this significant explanation: "...and *every eye shall see Him.*" This beautiful text has often been misused and abused in an attempt to prove the erroneous theory that Jesus will return as a flesh and blood man and be suspended in the sky until every individual throughout the whole earth has had an opportunity to see Him. But this crude interpretation of the prophecy is quite out of harmony with the Bible's use of language and the symbolic scheme of the book of Revelation. Let us note, for example, how scripture uses the function of the eye to symbolize *discernment*. After Job's long experience of calamity and trial, and the revelation of God's heart to him, he cried out in communion with God, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but NOW MINE EYE **SEETH** THEE!" (Job 42:5). All will concede, I believe, that Job did not see God literally, but he saw Him, nonetheless. Jesus said to His disciples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see." I doubt that any would contend that Jesus was reminding the disciples to reflect upon how fortunate they were not to be *physically blind!*

To "see" means to *know*. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall *know* God." A pure heart is one to which all that is not of God is strange and jarring. A heart that has no desires but for the glory of God, whose affections all center in Him, whose delight is in His perfect will, such an one will truly see and *know* the Lord! It is better to know God than even to see Him by the eyes of sense. There were many who saw Jesus who did not know Him. They saw the Christ, but they knew not that He was the Christ. They saw His miracles, but they did not know Him. They even rejected Him and hated Him, some of them. You could see Jesus Himself in bodily form today, but unless your heart be quickened, cleansed, and transformed, you could not know Him to be the Christ. It is only purity of heart that gives purity of sight!

I don't believe every eye is going to see Him because they are watching TBN, CBN, CNN, or reading USA Today. Every eye is going to see Him because there is coming such great grace and mighty power at the revelation of Jesus Christ in His body that it shall produce a supernatural *quickenning* in the lives of all who behold the appearing of the Lord. Their *spiritual eyes* shall be opened and they will *understand* and *know* what they have never known before! They will not see as they have seen before, but their minds and hearts will be changed and transfigured in the light of His glory. What a hope!

A beautiful illustration is found in the gospel of Luke. The aged prophet, Simeon, who had received the promise from God that he should not see death until he had *seen* the Lord's Christ, came by the Spirit into the temple, when Joseph and Mary brought in the child Jesus. "Then took he Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: FOR MINE EYES HAVE S-E-E-N THY SALVATION." What kind of eyesight is this? A little babe in the arms of his mother, and yet Simeon's eyes were opened to see – not just the form of the babe, but THY SALVATION! This certainly was not an uncommon sight, mothers were constantly coming into the temple with their children, to do for them after the custom of the law. And no doubt there was a vast multitude of other people in the temple on that day; they, too, saw the babe in the arms of his

mother, but they did not see THY SALVATION, for having eyes, they saw not – "and the world knew Him not."

When the scripture said, "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed and *all flesh shall see it together*," God is saying the same to the world today. The unveiling of the sons of God is the revelation of the glory of the Lord! When the glory of the Lord is revealed, which is the salvation of God, it is the fulfillment of the word of the Lord to His elect through Isaiah, "I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that THOU MAYEST B-E M-Y S-A-L-V-A-T-I-O-N UNTO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH." When the kingdom of God fills the earth, the earth will be filled with righteousness. WE ARE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD! When the glory of the Lord is revealed, the earth will be flooded with light. WE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD! The reason the world will know the sons of God to be the salvation of God is because God pours out His Spirit upon *all flesh*. All humanity, with that quickening of the Spirit, will have their eyes enlightened to see in the body of Christ the salvation of God, to see in the sons of God the glory of God and the righteousness of God. The world will see God's elect as the righteousness of God because we are becoming righteous sons! The world will see God's elect as the light of the world because we are becoming a glorious shining people! The world will see God's elect as the salvation of God because we are becoming a fully-saved people!

"Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him!"

Chapter 14

The Alpha And Omega

Long centuries ago Moses stood in the burning sands of the Sinai desert where with bowed head, bare feet, and a trembling heart he beheld the God of the burning bush. The impetuosity and self-confidence of his youth had waned from his spirit and he was content with his flock of sheep and solitary thoughts in the wilderness silence. This, however, was not to last, for God was speaking to the aged man of a stupendous work he was yet to perform beyond the confines of his chosen world. He must return to his enslaved brethren in Egypt and marshal them into the greatest exodus of any people on earth. Moses had no desire for this mission, and we can scarcely blame him, but when finally he consented to obey the call of the Voice out of the bush, he hesitantly asked, "Who shall I say has sent me?" And Yahweh replied, in the words of the King James Bible, "*I am that I am*. Tell your brethren that *I am* hath sent you."

It seemed a strange name, yet the magnificent truth contained in those words wrought their emancipation from the slavery of Egypt, formed them into a nation, and led them into the security of their own land. Nearly all Hebrew scholars agree that these words could be rendered, "I will be that I will be" or "I will become what I will become." In the Old Testament the principal revelation of God's name is the word "Yahweh" or "I AM." The word is really three separate phrases joined together in the same manner as in our modern custom of combining the initials of a firm or the syllables from the names of different men to form a company or patent name for a product. The three phrases in the word *Yahweh* are the three tenses of the verb *to be*: I was, I am, I shall be. A part of each of these words is combined in Hebrew to form the name Yahweh. It is God's memorial name to all generations. It shows God's intimate relationship with all that is past, His independent, unchangeable existence in the now, and His eternal connection with all that is in the future. What an adequate name for God!

Since divine resources are infinite, God is pleased to *become* to His people what is best for them and what is needed at the time. This name is at once a *revelation* and a *promise*! God was saying to Moses, "What ever my people need me to be for them, *I will be!*" "I will become what I will become." In fulfillment of this promise-name Yahweh *became* for the children of Israel a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. He became water out of flinty rock and bread from heaven. God became Miracle Worker, Deliverer, Provider, Sustainer, Healer, Counselor, Law Giver, Military Leader, and many other things on their journey from the servitude of Egypt to the glory of the Promised Land.

The further truth is, however, that "I will become what I will become" is an in-part, out-dated, Old Testament revelation! It is, in fact, but a *prophecy*. You will understand a great truth when you see that the prophecy is now *fully fulfilled*. Its fulfillment is in *Jesus Christ*! Almost two millenniums ago Jesus Christ stepped upon the stage of history, the firstborn Son of God, God (Yahweh) manifested in the flesh! "No man has ever seen God at any time; the only unique Son, the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him – He has revealed Him, brought Him out where He can be seen; He has interpreted Him, and has made Him known" (Jn. 1:18, Amplified). When God came in Jesus Christ He did not say, "I will

become what I will become." For you see, beloved, Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophecy – He **is**, within Himself, **all** that God has promised to **become!** In Him dwells *all the fullness* of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9). These words suggest that Jesus is alone sufficient, for the fullness is *in* Him; always sufficient, for the fullness *abides* in Him; all-sufficient, because He is *all* the fullness; absolutely sufficient, because the fullness resides in Him *bodily*. In Him are summed up *all the treasures* of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3). He is the sum and substance of wisdom, the center and circumference of knowledge. *All power* in heaven and in earth is given unto Him (Mat. 28:18). He is the source and the sovereignty of power! He is the *righteousness of God* revealed from heaven (I Cor. 1:30). *All the nature, love, and glory* of God are expressed in the Son! *All judgment* is committed into the hands of God's Christ! (Jn. 5:22). He is the *salvation of Yahweh* in human flesh! Our Lord and our Christ is the verity of Yahweh's truth; the surety of Yahweh's promise; the majesty of Yahweh's power; the authority of Yahweh's throne; the compassion of Yahweh's heart; the repository of Yahweh's fullness; and the legacy of Yahweh's will. Could any imagery ever exhaust our Lord's boundless worth?

In Christ God *has become* ALL THAT HE WOULD BECOME! When God came in Jesus Christ He did not speak as He spoke to Moses. He did not say, "I will become..." Oh, how my heart leaps within me today as I hear the lovely Christ of God proclaiming, "**I AM!**" "*I am* the way, the truth, and the life." "*I am* the resurrection and the life." "*I am* the door, *I am* the bread that has come down from heaven, *I am* the good shepherd." "I AM!" "I AM!" "I AM!"

What would you think of a preacher who, every Sunday, stood up and preached about himself? Nearly all of those in the church systems would soon get another preacher! Yet Jesus did this persistently and consistently! The apostle Paul has said, "We preach not ourselves," and so it is. Yet, wonder of wonders, Jesus preached Himself! He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me shall never die." "All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers but...I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." "For without me, ye can do nothing." "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me...bringeth forth much fruit." "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." "Before Abraham was, I am." On and on it goes. Throughout all His ministry Jesus Christ preached *Himself*. He would indeed be an egomaniac were He not *truly* the firstborn Son of the living God!

When Jesus says, "I AM," He reveals within Himself the very nature and power of God. God IS. God is constant. That's why He is eternal, because *nothing that changes can be eternal*. Everything that is eternal is unchangeable, unvarying, unaffected, without fluctuation. The constancy of God's nature – that is eternity! When you know God as He is, you have touched eternity! You have transcended time, space, and matter into a realm where you can see time from beginning to end. There you see all things as they really are, and you transcend into the realm where *as He is, so are you* in this world. The I AM of Christ is the "Day of the Lord." It is the unveiling of Himself in all that He is! Unchangeably, unvaryingly, constantly, eternally, incorruptibly, immortally – I AM! That is the nature of God! That is what Jesus came into this world to demonstrate and reveal! And, *He is bringing us into union with Himself in the I AM*. That is *manifest sonship!*

Let me put it this way. God dwells in the ever-present NOW! *Now* is common to every time and place. There is no time, no place – there never has been and there never will be – that did not exist in NOW. *To live in God's now, is thus to be everywhere and in all times at the same time*. On earth we have seconds, minutes, hours, day and night. We may work all day and sleep at night. For us the day is past, and the night is present. At the same time the Chinese are working in the day while we sleep at night. For them the night is past, and the day is present.

But an astronaut high above the earth, circling the planet every ninety minutes, sees both at the same time and for him both day and night are *now, the present*. God, my friend, is high enough that for Him *everything that ever has been, or ever will be, is NOW!* In the eternal nature of God there is no past, no present, there is only the eternal now. Therefore *now* is common to every time and every place. To live in *now*, is to be everywhere and in every time I AM THAT I AM.

Let me give you an illustration. Albert Einstein believed that, according to his theory of relativity, it would be possible to do time travel, to travel forward or backward in time. Now hear me well. If I were to step into a time machine and you say, "Where do you want to go? Do you want to go forward in time, or do you want to go backward in time?" perhaps my first request would be to go backward in time. I would like to go back to the time of David and Solomon. I would also like to go back to Egypt at the time when the pyramids were built, and I would love to go back to the days when Jesus was here; but the era of David and Solomon has always held a special fascination for me. So if I have the opportunity to travel in a time machine, that possibly will be the first place I will go! Now, let's suppose the date is February 13, 2003. We climb into our time machine and travel back to the years of David and Solomon. We're not going to make it a quick weekend trip, take a hasty look, jump back into our time machine and return. Oh, no! We're going to stay a while. So we spend twenty years caught up in the events of that period in Israel. We find a residence there, learn the language and culture, make friends, and become involved with what is happening. We walk it out, experience and relish every minute of it for two long decades! Finally, we get back into our time machine and journey back to the twenty-first century. Guess what the date is when we arrive home. We get back on February 13, 2003! That's right, we get back exactly when we left! Now – if you do not understand *time* and *eternity* that will blow your mind!

What did Einstein discover? He discovered that there is no past, and there is no future, there is only now. That is not a metaphysical or new age concept; that is a scientific fact. Everything that ever happened, and everything that ever will happen, is now. What a mystery! But it is the *mystery of life*. It is the mystery of *immortality*. It's the mystery of the *spirit*. It's the mystery of *God*. It's the mystery of *eternity*. It's the mystery of *manifest sonship*. It's the mystery of that realm, that dimension of life and reality, which transcends time and mortal consciousness. And it is out of that realm of reality that Jesus spoke when He declared, "I AM." Oh, the wonder of it! John was *in the spirit on the Lord's day* and do you know what he saw? He saw the beginning and the end! He saw all the processing in between, from the day of darkness until the whole earth is full of the glory of the Lord. He saw the glorious One who spoke and said, "**I AM** Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." The beginning and the end, time and all its works, are contained in the I AM of God's Christ! From our earthly perspective there is a beginning and an end. But Jesus says, "I AM that beginning and that end!"

For Jesus Christ there is no past or future. He lives in a continual present. Therefore He sees the whole history of mankind in one sighting. It all "is" to Him! He knows what will happen a million years from now and shows it to you, as something that happened a thousand years ago. That is why there are prophecies in the scriptures; not because God guesses or because He is a divinator; and it is not simply because He *knows* all things. Rather, it is because all things **are** for Him! For Him the future is as the present, or as the past is for us. Everything IS in God's eternal day, in God's timeless state of being. That is why His name is, **I AM**. Sometimes it appears that God makes grammatical mistakes. Jesus says, "Before Abraham was, **I AM**." "Lord, you *were*. You should say, Before Abraham was, *I was*." "No, **I AM!**" He also mixes the future. He said, "Lo, **I AM** with you till the end of the ages." "Lord, *I will be* with you, that's future." "No, you don't understand; **I AM** with you!"

Jesus never directly said He was God, but twenty-one times in the Greek text of John's gospel He spoke the words, "I am." We all use the words "I am" in normal speech all the time. If I say, "*I am* thirsty," or, "*I am* an American," I am not implying that I am God! But we must understand Jesus' unique use of these words. On one occasion He said to the Jews, "If you do not believe that **I AM**, you will die in your sins" (Jn. 8:24). It was later in the same discussion that He declared, "Before Abraham was, **I AM!**" How did the Jews regard His statement? "They took up stones to cast at Him" (Jn. 8:58). To them He was claiming to be God! For you see, "I am" was the name YAHWEH – they understood precisely the inference! Therefore, in their view, He was breaking the third commandment, and the penalty for this under the law was *death by stoning!*

No name known to human tongue can describe the firstborn Son of God like this name. No sentence ever uttered by eloquent orator, no phrase ever penned by sage or scribe, no song ever sung by angelic choir can describe in such all-inclusive excellence the almighty magnitude of what He really is. "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way," complained Thomas. "*I am* the way," Jesus replied, "*I am* the truth, *I am* the life." "*I am* the door. *I am* the light of the world. *I am* the good shepherd. *I am* the bread of life." "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day," sobbed Mary sadly of her dead brother. "*I am* the resurrection," Jesus answered, "and *I am* the life." "*I am* Alpha. *I am* Omega. *I am* the first. *I am* the last. *I am* the beginning. *I am* the ending. *I am* thy redeemer. *I am* thy strength. *I am* He that liveth. *I am* He that is alive forevermore. *I am* He that shutteth and no man openeth and openeth and no man shutteth. *I am* the root and the offspring of David. *I am* the bright and morning star." There is no end to what He is, for He is everything! He is the Christ. He is the Lord. He is the Creator and Redeemer of the entire universe. And all He is He always is – He changes not! He is the **I AM!**

I have mentioned some things in which the Lord said, "I AM." There are many, many more! What is there throughout all the galactic spheres that He isn't! He is "the Lord our righteousness." He has "become our salvation." He is made unto us "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." All that the Father has is His. He and the Father are one. If we have seen Him we have seen the Father. All that the Father gave Him, He *became*. He didn't come saying, "I have," but "I AM." He didn't say, "I have brought you life; I have brought you truth; I have brought you salvation; I have brought you righteousness; I have come to show you the way." No! "**I AM!**" The Lord Jesus became the personification of all that the Father showed Him. *We are to be like Him!* Those called to sonship are being conformed to His likeness, filled with His Spirit. Those who are becoming His many brethren are putting on His mind, growing up into His nature, wisdom, power and authority. All that is true of Jesus is *now becoming true of us!* He first said, "I AM the light of the world." Later He said to His own, "YE ARE the light of the world." He first said, "I AM the bread that is come down from heaven." Later Paul, by the revelation of Jesus Christ, wrote: "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are *one bread*, and one body: for we are all partakers of that *one bread*" (1 Cor. 10:16-17).

He was first made unto us righteousness; but now "WE ARE the righteousness of God in Him." Sons are coming to the place where they no longer say, "I have received, I have been given, I possess, I have," but, "I AM!" We once prophesied, "Thus saith the Lord..." but now we must say, as Jesus said, "I say unto you..." We are no longer something apart from Him, for we are bone of His bones, flesh of His flesh, life of His life, mind of His mind, spirit of His spirit, nature of His nature, word of His word, united with Him, made *one in Him*. Oh, the wonder of it! It is one thing to go out and tell the world that "the light of the world is Jesus." It is a greater thing to say, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is *risen upon thee*" (Isa. 60:1).

Then it is that "the nations shall come to *thy light*, and kings to the brightness of *thy rising*" (Isa. 60:3).

THE ALPHA AND OMEGA

In the revelation of Jesus Christ to John on Patmos our Lord proclaims the superlative, transcendental, all-encompassing truth in five marvelous words: "I AM Alpha and Omega!" (Rev. 1:8). Most believers, whatever their language, are aware that Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the alphabet used by the Greeks. Alpha is the name given to the letter **A**, and Omega is the name for the long **O**, the last letter of the Greek alphabet. For Christ to affirm that He is "A and O" is as though He were to say, "I am A to Z." The English language has twenty-six letters. All the books ever written, all the libraries of the western world, have contained only these twenty-six letters. These are used to program space research, label medicines, and give messages to the delivery man. Every newspaper or magazine ever printed has used just twenty-six letters. Arranged, juggled, and placed in millions of different configurations, only twenty-six letters are used for the communication of all information.

Jesus, as Alpha and Omega, likens Himself to the whole alphabet. "I am the A, I am B, I am C, I am D and so on all the way to Z – do you get it? Not only is He the letters, He is all that the letters can convey! As one has written, "Is there any need in the whole realm of our experiences, our topics and our themes that the alphabet cannot be adapted to meet? Has the alphabet ever failed poet or lover? Has the traveler found it lacking, or has any philosopher, author, statesman, scholar, scientist or theologian proved it inadequate for literary needs? Potentially the alphabet, with its twenty-six letters, contains all that is necessary for the expression of the utmost wisdom and knowledge. If we wish to describe our feelings, disclose our hopes and dreams, or expound upon any subject of interest, we possess, in the alphabet, the means to do so. Through the medium of words, thought is expressed, so that, in the letters of the alphabet, we possess the key that unlocks every gateway of learning, every door of knowledge, and every treasury of wisdom." The declaration of Jesus that He is Himself Alpha and Omega conveys the thought of infinite resource and inexhaustible wealth. The letters A to Z constitute a claim by which is set forth the absolute completeness of His character, wisdom and power. Is this not what Jesus is saying: "I AM THE TOTAL REALITY OF ALL THINGS! I am every letter, I am unique, I am substance, I am shape, I am image, I am form, I am essence, I am all height and depth and length and breadth of Being, not just words and letters, but the reality of life and power and value of all things, the WORD OF LIFE!" "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:1,14).

Alpha and Omega is a revelation! It is all that can be said of the Lord Jesus proclaimed in a way that can be seen and understood. It stands for the *revelation of Jesus Christ!* By *this word* He is revealed! Christ is the alphabet – the Word, all that can be said of God. We've seen that in the figure of a Man who walked the shores of Galilee. But we have only touched the shell of that Man, the outer image, not the inner intelligence. The inner intelligence of the Lord Jesus represents His *omniscient mind*, His *omnipotent power*, and His *divine nature*. In speaking of the inner intelligence of the Lord Jesus, we are speaking of the greatest reality of Being in the universe! The truth we are entertaining at this point will prove that all our eternal hopes of sonship and the kingdom depend upon one thing and one thing alone: that the mind of Christ, the power of Christ, and the nature of Christ *dwelt in us fully*. This is the Alpha and the Omega – all that can be said of God *written and inscribed in our inner life*. Here then is the truth of truths: *God is the Word – the Word is God*. Language not only describes what has happened

and what is seen – it creates. "And God *said*, Let there be...and there was." God as the Word creates within us the substance of Himself! The Alpha and Omega speaks into our being the reality of God! When we speak of Christ as Alpha and Omega, we speak of Christ as the Word. When we speak of Christ as the Word, we speak of that dimension of Christ by which God reproduces Himself within us. If God by the Christ within you, my beloved, is speaking a word within you, it is a *creative word*! Believe that word, walk in that word, live by that word and you will be changed! You will be filled with all the fullness of God! God will take form in you! He will write Himself in living reality upon the tables of your mind and heart! Christ in us, the Alpha and Omega, is our only *hope of sonship*!

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord...the *first* and the *last*" (Rev. 1:8,11). I have heard it said that when Jesus called Himself "the *first* and the *last*" He was claiming to be both the "*first Adam*" who stood in the garden of Eden and ate the forbidden fruit, and the "*last Adam*" who came to take away the sin of the world. How could this be, my friends? If Jesus had been the first Adam by whose *disobedience* sin entered into the world, through whom death passed upon all men, then would He not have *needed a Saviour*? He would need another Son to *save Him* from His sin and death! Now if this *sinner*, Jesus Christ, came to earth again as the last Adam by whose *obedience* the many are made righteous and given eternal life – how did Adam the sinner *become* Adam the righteous without a Saviour? If He *saved Himself without a Saviour* then obviously there was no need for Him to come as *our Saviour* – for if *one sinner* can be made righteous apart from a Saviour, surely *any man*, or even *all men*, could make themselves righteous apart from the action of another. If Jesus had been the first Adam of the Garden, He could not have been an acceptable sacrifice, pure, spotless, and without blemish. We know, however, that He was the acceptable sacrifice slain from the foundation of the world and "...ye were not redeemed by such corruptible things as silver and gold...but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb *without blemish* and *without spot*" (I Pet. 1:18-19).

It is always a fatal mistake for any man, regardless of who he is, to add to the word of God. That mistake will lead him into error and many strange and unscriptural absurdities. When men say what the scriptures do not say they are strumming on harps that have no strings. They make a lot of interesting noise, but there is no *harmony* with the rest of God's revelation. You see, dear ones, Jesus did indeed say, "I am the *first* and the *last*." But He clearly *did not* say, "I am the *first Adam* and the *last Adam*." When you add the word "Adam" to Christ's statement you have qualified it and changed its meaning altogether! You could add *any* word to His statement and make it mean anything you please! Jesus proclaims that He is the *first* and the *last* – **period**. This momentous statement reaches *far beyond Adam* – first or last! It reaches from eternity to eternity and encompasses all things. The statement corresponds to the other terms that accompany it – the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *beginning* and the *ending*. How gloriously do the New Testament writers describe what it means for Christ to be *the first*!

It would be of utmost profit for any of us to diligently study the oft repeated scriptural term "in Christ" or "in Him." With this thought in mind I would draw your attention to some scripture passages which appear to teach us that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things. He is, of course! But that is not the truth set forth in these particular verses. The first passage we will consider is found in Colossians 1:15-17. I will quote this first from the King James Bible for this is one of the passages that seems to say that all things were created *by* Jesus Christ. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature; for *by Him* were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created *by Him* and for Him. And He is before all things, and *by Him* all things consist."

From this scripture we would be led to believe that the creation was made by the Son; but the word translated "by" here in the first instance is in the Greek *en*, and means "in," not "by," and this is the way most of the other translations have translated it. "For *in Him* were all things created." If you have other translations, check them, and you will see that this is correct. The Greek preposition *en* clearly defines location or position. In the second instance in this passage where the word "by" is used – "all things were created *by Him* and for Him" – the word translated "by" here is the Greek word *dia* meaning "through," "on account of," or "by the agency of." You will find nearly all translations have translated it this way. Weymouth's rendering of this is lovely, "For *in Him* were created the universe of things in heaven and in earth, things seen and things unseen, thrones, dominions, principedoms, powers, all were created and exist through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and *in* and *through* Him the universe is one harmonious whole." Isn't that beautiful?

You see, there is a whole world of difference between something being created *by* Him, or created *in Him*, and my prayer is that the Holy Spirit will make this real to you. I think, as we proceed with this thought, we will clearly see what the Spirit has said. It is unfortunate that the translators were so inconsistent in some of the translations. In this statement, "For *by* Him were all things created that are *in* heaven," the word *by*, and the word *in*, are both translated from the same Greek word *en*, yet in the first instance it was translated "by," and in the second instance "in," as it should be. This is misleading to the reader!

I am not a carpenter by any stretch of the imagination, but when we were on the mission field in Mexico back in the 1960's, I built most of the furniture we had in our house, crude though it was. From rough lumber I constructed kitchen cabinets, tables, chairs, beds, and a variety of other items. Even I was amazed at how serviceable and attractive some of these articles turned out to be! They were made by me, but when I left the place where they were, they were all sold and left behind, and I was separated from them, never to see them again; for, you see, they were *not part of me*. Though they were made *by* me, they had no part with me. But if somehow they had been made *in* me, rather than merely *by* me, then wherever I went they would be with me, for they would be a part of me, of my very being. If the creation had been merely made *by* the Son, then it could be a thing apart from Him, and not a part of Him. When we see that God the Father created the universe **IN THE CHRIST**, and the whole of created things was in the beginning an integral part of His Being, then that is an altogether different picture!

Words are totally inadequate to articulate a truth so sublime, so I must leave this ultimately to the blessed spirit of Truth to unfold within your spirit. You see, when God planned the present universe, He planned it in and around His Christ. The Christ is the center and the circumference of all! He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. The whole vast creation was made *in* Him and for Him. Before the sun ever kissed this earth creation began *in Him* and it will end *in Him*, for He is the beginning and the end. The Christ is the beginning of the creation of God! "These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, **THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION OF GOD**" (Rev. 3:14). Do you see how this theme is stated again and again in different terms throughout the book of Revelation? Christ is the beginning of creation and He is also the end, all things must begin in Him and end in Him, for this is the Father's purpose for His Son!

Our God and Father has been pleased to leave us in no doubt or uncertainty as to how or where all things began, but in clear, unequivocal language stated the source and goal of all things for our assurance and joy. All originated *in Him*, created from the substance of His own divine energy and Being, and held together in a harmonious wholeness *in* His eternal Word, or

the Christ. But, for His own wise purposes, all did not remain that way! We have already explained the Greek preposition *en* which means "in" and denotes a position of rest, an established location. According to the scriptures ALL was created IN the Christ! The scriptures are clear, however, that all did not remain "in" Him. We are assured that there was initiated another stage of activity whereby all things were brought "out" of Him. Nothing can be clearer than the fact that "in" and "out" are *opposites*! You cannot be both in and out of any place or thing at the same time! Coming "out" from a place or position involves a process, an action. There is another Greek preposition, *ek*, meaning "out of." It indicates action. If you *come out* of your house – that is an action! The word of God declares that not only were all things created *in* God and Christ, but there was a process by which all things *came out* of God. Let us read it: "We are aware that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there *is no other God except One*. For even if it so be that there are those being called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, even as there are many gods and many lords, nevertheless to us *there is but one God, the Father, O-U-T OF (ek) WHOM ALL IS, and we for Him*" (I Cor. 8:4-7). Again, "O, the depth of the riches and of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For who knew the mind of the Lord? Or who became His adviser? or who gives to Him first, and will be repaid by Him? Seeing that ALL is O-U-T OF (*ek*) Him and through Him and for Him: to Him be glory for the ages! Amen!" (Rom. 11:33-36). Now let us read these last verses from the Emphatic Diaglott: "For who knew the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counselor? Or who first gave to Him, and it shall be given to him again? Because OUT OF HIM, and through Him, and for Him are ALL THINGS. To Him be the glory for the ages. Amen."

This is without doubt one of the least understood statements in the word of God! And yet, a true comprehension of the real purpose of God throughout the ages cannot be had apart from it. Considering the creation of the heavens and the earth – the universe and all that is therein, visible and invisible – fresh from the hands of the Creator in all its primeval and pristine glory; God being all-wise and omnipotent; the question presses itself upon us: From whence came sin and evil? From whence came darkness and death? Why did God permit these to enter the creation which had been made *in Him*? How did it happen? Why the disruption of the primeval state?

The answer to these monumental questions is to be discovered in the great fact of the creation being brought "out of" God! When God lowered the creation from the realm of pure spirit existence in Christ in the heavenly sphere, to this gross material realm of matter and form, there occurred a mighty disruption, breaking up, or fragmentation. The creation was "made subject to vanity" and the whole downward process of disintegration and dissolution was begun. Just as our ascent back into the image and fullness of God is ever "from glory to glory," "from faith to faith," and "from experience to experience," so the process downward into fragmentation and dissolution continued through various stages and vast ages of time until the lowest depths of frustration were reached.

The first downward step came when creation was lowered from the realm of pure spirit existence in Christ to this physical and material realm. Not only did man begin *in the spirit*, later to be lowered into this material realm, but *all things began in spirit* and were subsequently lowered into this physical world. The magnificent wonders portrayed in Genesis reveal this truth with divine certainty. We read there of "every plant of the field *before it was in the earth*, and every herb of the field *before it grew*: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground...and the Lord God *formed man* of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the *breath (spirit) of life*; and man *became* a living soul" (Gen. 2:5,7). Behold how great an understanding divine inspiration has placed upon all

who have ears to hear! These words teach us infallibly that there were plants and herbs *before* they were in the earth or ever grew in soil, and there was a *spirit man* who was *blown into* the clay model of the man Adam by the very breath of God. The union of this spirit man with the clay model *produced Adam the living soul!* That was the first step downward, even in the glories of Eden! And then the Tempter came, man's experiment with sin followed, and death seized man with its unrelenting power. Step by step, stage by stage, the whole creation *came out* of Christ!

How obvious today the vast difference between those who are either "in" or "out" of Christ! "If any man be *in Christ*, he is a new creation." "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings *in Christ*." "*In whom* we have obtained an inheritance." Of our state *before* we were *in Christ*, it is stated, "At that time ye were *without Christ*, being *aliens* from the commonwealth of Israel, *strangers* from the covenants of promise, having *no hope*, and *without God* in the world" (Eph. 2:12). *Outside* of Christ is naught but ignorance, sin, sorrow, darkness, and death! *In* or *out* – what a great gulf separates these two! The very process of creation's coming *out* of God produced a disruption and fragmentation of the whole. "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is ONE LORD." That statement doesn't mean that Yahweh is the only God, true as that is. It signifies that He IS ONE – that is, UNITED, UNIFIED, UNDIVIDED, UNFRAGMENTED. All within Himself is harmonized, synchronized and joined in perfect unity. That is God's nature! Therefore, *in Him*, creation was one harmonious whole without a discordant note anywhere! It was preeminently a *spiritual* creation, vibrating as a symphony of unutterable beauty, a triumphant masterpiece of dynamic harmonious accord. In the glory of that celestial beginning we were all *sons of God*; there was no trace of sin, no evil, no carnal mind, no adversary, no death, and no darkness or discord at all. Everything everywhere existed *in Christ* and every spirit stood forth in its full majesty, pulsating the dynamic anthem of exulting creative glory. What a song!

And that is how it is in the **new creation!** For you see, beloved, the new creation is but the old creation re-conciled, re-deemed, re-generated, re-stored to its original place, condition, and state IN CHRIST! The new spiritual creation is all that is "in Christ Jesus" in the fullness of what that means. We are *unified again* in Him. The new creation has already begun! Step by step, just as we *came out* of God, we are now *coming into* God. When the scripture says, "If any man be *in Christ* he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," this is speaking of that little firstfruits company that is the first to enter into the new. These become *fully* a new creation *in Christ*. In the life of the one who has truly entered into Christ, and been unified again in Him, all the old has passed away and everything has become new! Now I know this scripture is applied to all believers of whatever stage of spiritual experience, but if we consider this reverently and carefully, we can easily see that this not the experience of the average believer. When we first believe on the Lord a new beginning takes place. A change has started. Some of the old has passed away, and some new things have taken their place; but how many believers can honestly say that *all* old things have passed away, and *everything* has been made new? Our restoration is a progressive work! It begins when we first turn to the Lord, and continues until we are completely *in Christ*.

The proto-type of this wonderful reality of restoration into Christ is our Lord Jesus Christ. That's what the book of Revelation is all about – it is **the revelation of Jesus Christ!** When Jesus says, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last," – what a revelation that is! Jesus often spoke of His Father being in Him. He said, "It is not I that do the works, it is my Father that is in me." The Father dwelt in the Son and worked through His Son to accomplish His will. But this isn't all! He also explained to His disciples this great truth, "Believest thou not that I am *in the Father*, and the Father *in me*?" It wasn't just that the Father

was in Him, but He was also in the Father. The glory of creation when it was created *in God* is thus revealed in our Lord Jesus the Christ! When Jesus was praying to the Father for those God had given Him, that they might be one, that they might come into this glorious unity, He prayed thus: "That they all may be one, as Thou Father art in me, and I in Thee, that they may be *one in us*" (Jn. 17:21). Only this mutual dwelling can bring the oneness, the unity, the *wholeness* that God desires!

The only way all old things can completely and forever pass away is through our entrance back into God! John 3:16 is called by many "the golden text" of the Bible. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." There is a marvelous significance in those words that surpasses any sermon I ever heard in my years in the church systems. "That whosoever believeth *in* Him..." The word "in" here is translated from the Greek word *eis*, which means "into," denoting action and progression. If we use the word "into" it reads like this, "That whosoever believeth *into Him* should not perish, but have the life of the ages." *Eis* carries with it a sense of growth, and of going on into something. It suggests a progressive salvation, as other scriptures tell us. "Now is our (full) salvation nearer than when we believed." We didn't *come out* of God in one grand leap, and we are not returning *into* God in one grand leap. We were not delivered from all sin and death by "believing *on*" the Lord Jesus Christ one night in a revival meeting. Oh, no! But we are being progressively delivered, changed, and transformed as we constantly believe *into Him!*

It is this same Greek word *eis* that is used in many, many wonderful passages where the true meaning has been concealed by faulty translation. I will quote just one passage for you and capitalize the places where the word *eis* has been used, and will use the word "into" in place of whatever word the King James Bible uses. I think you will see the beauty of this, and perceive its special, deeper meaning. "Till we all come INTO the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, INTO a perfect man, INTO the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...speaking the truth in love may grow up INTO Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ...from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body INTO the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:9-15). In these verses we are told of the body of Christ and how the body grows and is built up by the ministry of every part. We are exhorted to minister in love, so that the body can grow INTO CHRIST. We are to grow up INTO the full stature of God's Christ!

Paul Mueller has written a precious exhortation, "As we have grown and progressed in the kingdom of God, our understanding of Christ and of the Father also has increased, for we now see ourselves as being a part of Him. We are the body of Christ, and He is the Head of this body. Christ has said, "*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*" Christ is the Spirit of God; He is the beginning of all things. He is the Word that was spoken by the Father that brought all things into existence. And He also is the end of all things! All things shall ultimately be gathered into Christ, to be unified with the Father that "*God may be all in all*" (I Cor. 15:28). By the wisdom of the mind of Christ we now see that we are a part of Him who is the "Alpha," or the beginning of all things, for we were originally in Him in spirit. So also are we a part of Him who is revealed and seen now as the "Omega," or as the end of all things. We came out of God in our beginning! And now we are returning into God, but with a redeemed mind (soul) and body. We also are becoming a part of the glory of Christ!"

Our Lord called Himself the Alpha and the Omega in Greek, the Aleph and the Tau in Hebrew, or the A and the Z in English, or its equivalent in any other language, without in the least

altering the figure of its significance. Alphabetical languages usually have the letters arranged in a fixed order. The first is often used as a symbol of the beginning and the last for the ending. That is, our Lord claims to be what letters and language were meant to be, namely the *expression of truth*. HE IS T-H-E W-O-R-D – the expression of the totality of God's nature, wisdom, power, purpose and substance from first to last. God is a spirit – an invisible, incorporeal, intangible, unapproachable Spirit. But that hidden and unsearchable One may be uttered, expressed, manifested. And that utterance, that expression, that manifestation of invisible Godhead is the Christ, the Logos, the Word – God projected from the plane of the invisible, intangible and unknowable into the realm of the visible, tangible, and knowable. In that long ago beginning all things were created *in the Christ*, and *apart* from Him, *outside* of Him was not anything made that was made. In Christ Jesus we see clearly our very own origin in God! In Christ Jesus we see perfectly the *original state* of all things! Oh, my Christ and my God! In Thee I see how I, and all men, and all things *once were*! My God and my Christ! In Thee I see how I, and all men, and all things *shall again be*! My Lord, that is the Word that Thou art to me! In God's revelation of Himself and His plan of the ages He has used many characters, but the first one was Christ and the last one will be Christ again. All commences and concludes *in Him*!

Christ is the Alpha and the Omega. Only the glorious mind of Christ can reveal to our hearts what that means! Through a glass darkly I can see that He was the *first*, "before all things." Can I also believe that HE IS THE LAST? If He is the *beginning*, can my feeble mind dare to comprehend what it signifies when He says that He is also the END? Surely Ephesians, chapter one, makes this as clear as it can be at this juncture in our understanding. Paul says that "God...chose us *in Christ before the world began*." He goes on from that beginning out of eternity to reach forth to that which will be at the conclusion of all ages of time, declaring that God is "making known to us the mystery of His will – of His plan, of His purpose. And it is this: In accordance with His good pleasure which He hath **previously purposed** and set forth **in Him**, He planned for the maturity of the times and the climax of the ages to **unify all things and head them up and CONSUMMATE THEM I-N C-H-R-I-S-T...in Him** also we had been **foreordained** in accordance with His purpose" (Eph. 1:4,9-11). All that began in Christ – and that was *all things, everything!* – shall end in Christ, that He may be *the first and the last, the beginning and the end*. If you can conceive of God taking Eve and putting her *back into Adam*, as it was in the beginning, then you may also understand what is this glorious purpose that transcends Adam and Eve – when God takes the whole vast creation and **MAKES IT ONE IN CHRIST AGAIN!** All of mankind's yearnings and searching after God to fully **know Him** shall find their complete and eternal satisfaction there where all things are *brought back into Christ*.

The First and the Last bring before us both the time element and the substance of creation. "For *out of Him* everything comes; *through Him* everything exists; and *in Him* everything ends! Glory to Him forever!" (Rom. 11:36, Goodspeed). "For *out of Him* and *through Him* and *to Him* are all things. For all things originate with Him and come from Him; all things live through Him, and all things center in and tend to consummate and to *end in Him*. To Him be glory forever!" (Amplified Bible). Truly HE is the beginning and the end of all things! The beginning, precious friend of mine, was not a date on the calendar. The beginning was and is a glorious Person – our Lord Jesus Christ! Christ Himself *is* the beginning! If you consider with reverent honesty these words of significance and truth, you will understand as never before the spiritual words which open our Bible: "*In the beginning* God created the heavens and the earth." **IN THE BEGINNING!** "I am the beginning." Thus, the spiritual translation of the first verse of scripture should read, "IN THE CHRIST God created the heavens and the earth." Jesus Christ is "the *beginning* of the creation of God" (Rev. 3:14). All things were created *in* this beginning! The beginning is neither time nor place. The beginning is Christ Himself! In Him all things were

created and set in order in the beauty and unity and perfection and harmony of the Spirit of God!

What has now been provided in Christ is a re-turn, a re-storation, a re-newing, a re-demption, a re-conciliation, a re-surrection, a re-stitution. The prefix "re" means BACK, AGAIN, ANEW – and all the words with this prefix indicate something that LEFT ITS PLACE AND HAS NOW MADE ITS CIRCUIT AND COME BACK TO THE POINT OF ITS BEGINNING. Oh, mighty Christ!

"All God's sons are coming home,
All God's sons are coming home;
Home to the Father, home to the throne,
All God's sons are coming home!
All creation is coming home,
All creation is coming home;
Home to the Father, home to the Son,
All creation is coming home!
Coming home, coming home,
Never more to roam;
Open wide Thy arms of love,
Lord, I'm coming home!"

Chapter 15

The Beginning And The End

"I am Alpha and Omega, the *beginning* and the *ending*, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come" (Rev. 1:8).

Not only is Christ the *beginning*, He is the *end* of all things! Mankind is yet groping about in the dense darkness of the carnal mind, knowing not that HE is standing right there in the shadows, were their eyes opened to see. Yet He hath appointed a day – O glorious day! – when His light shall shine forth and the plan shall be completed as the apostle saith, "For God has allowed us to know the secret of His plan, and it is this: He purposed long ago in His sovereign will that all human history should be consummated *in Christ*, that *everything that exists in heaven or earth should find its perfection and fulfillment in Him*. IN CHRIST we have been given an inheritance, since we were destined for this, by the One who works out all His purposes according to the design of His own will" (Eph. 1:9-11, Phillips).

Everything in history is moving inexorably toward a day when Jesus will have conquered everything and everyone. Like a mountain of dirt before a gigantic bulldozer steadily moving forward, all that can be conquered is being collected into the loving arms of Jesus, whose right it is to rule. When Christ ascended on high after His resurrection, He led many captives out of the prison house and also set forth His great purpose: "Now He that ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that *descended* is the same also that *ascended up far above all heavens THAT HE MIGHT FILL A-L-L T-H-I-N-G-S*" (Eph. 4:9-10). The message is clear – redemption includes the complete transformation of the entire universe (all heavens) and all that is within it so that God in Christ shall FILL ALL THINGS. There shall not be left one corner of this vast universe, nor one creature in it, where He shall not be Lord and King. Everything everywhere shall be restored to the beautiful harmony and order of the love of God. Indeed, He shall fill all things that *God may be all in all!*

All that God has ever done or ever will do, all that He has said or ever will say, will ultimately redound to His glory, that He may be "All in all" – *and why not?* "In the beginning GOD..." Everything else is *because* of God – God's love, God's wisdom, God's purpose, God's power, God's righteousness. And for all things to find their purpose, their reality and their end in Him is the final goal of salvation's history. It is an extraordinary thing, yet sublimely true, that the Lord Jesus gives us to understand that what He is doing on earth today and throughout the ages to come *is only a beginning*. What He has given us is a root, and not yet a tree; a foundation, and not yet an edifice. The Kingdom Seed must grow, the branches spread out, the blossoms appear, and the fruit be formed. The little stone cut out without hands must grow and grow and grow until it becomes a great mountain that fills *all* the earth. In the end the kingdom of God will have filled all realms everywhere, from the Milky Way to the outermost galaxies, from the caves of Afghanistan to the government halls of Beijing and the worshipping throngs of Mecca, and God *will* be All in all! Those who on earth are now being perfected in Christ are the *firstfruits* of this marvelous revelation of God All in all!

In these days many people are seeking to know what the *end* will be. At this time of frustration and confusion, men want to know what God will bring to pass in the end. Many years ago heaven shed its light in my spirit and I saw clearly that if we could know something of God's beginning of things, we could then understand something of the end. A clearer conception of the *beginning* would give us a clearer knowledge of the *ending*. In connection with this, I would like to quote from a book called The Gospel of Thomas. While it has not been accepted as being inspired, along with many other apocryphal writings, there is still truth to be gleaned if we can separate the meat from the bones. The Gospel of Thomas consists of a series of sayings attributed to Jesus. On one occasion Jesus is reported to have said, "I will give you what eye has not seen, what ear has not heard, what hand has not touched, and what has not arisen in the heart of man." The disciples said to Jesus, "Tell us what our end will be." Jesus said, "Have you then discovered the beginning, so that you inquire about the end? FOR WHERE THE BEGINNING IS, THERE SHALL BE THE END. Blessed is he who shall stand at the beginning and he shall know the end and he shall *not taste death*." Here is blessed confirmation of what we have known from the scriptures and by the spirit of revelation from God! Jesus says that if we know the beginning and stand at the beginning, we shall know the end, and we shall not taste death! What a word!

Is it not true that in the beginning there was no sin, no sorrow, no pain, no tears, no limitation, and no death? Behold Jesus Christ! HE is the beginning and HE is the end! HE abolishes death! HE brings life and immortality to light through the gospel! It is *in Him* that we *have life*, and have it more abundantly! All that is happening now came out of the Beginning and will come into the Ending. If Jesus Christ *is the End*, then this does away with all this teaching in the church systems about everlasting hell and eternal damnation, for HE IS THE END. Death is not the end, judgment is not the end, hell is not the end, fire and brimstone are not the end, damnation is not the end, for CHRIST IS THE END! Though men be processed by judgment "unto the ages of the ages," that judgment is not their end, merely a *means* to the end, there is an end *at the conclusion of the ages* — and that end IS CHRIST!

"God sitteth upon the *circle* of the earth," said the prophet Isaiah. While the word for "circle" in the Hebrew text denotes the *sphericity* of the earth, it may also denote the *cycles* of nature. These cycles are the continual goings and comings of the seasons, days, months and years, ordained by God in the beginning. Everything in nature moves in cycles: winter and summer, seedtime and harvest; generation after generation all show the might and wisdom of God. Even electricity must have a circuit. There are positives and negatives in all of nature, and everything flows through them. The earth spins upon its axis while it revolves around the sun; the sun moves in its own circuit in the heavens as also each galaxy moves in a broad circular sweep through distances that defy the imagination. SO IT IS WITH GOD'S WORK. In the spiritual realm there are the positives and negatives of life and death, good and evil, spirit and flesh, blessing and curse, temptation and triumph, strength and weakness, light and darkness, God and Satan. It is in the interplay between these that we are brought to perfection! It is therefore reasonable to conclude that man, the highest of God's creation, came out of God, was then lowered into the world of vanity, darkness, and death, but will return to God, thus completing the cycle, not in part, but in full. Our Lord Jesus Christ is Himself the supreme illustration and example of this wonderful truth, for He *came out of God*, descended into the *lower parts of the earth*, that is, into the very depths of human nature and experience in the fall and the curse, overcame in it, and then arose and returned back into God.

This great principle has been called "The Law of Circularity." Some would have us believe that this is a "New Age" concept, but I do not hesitate to tell you that that notion is *far from the truth*. If it is a New Age concept then they *borrowed* it from somewhere, for this great Law *originated*

with GOD! It is found written by inspiration of the Holy Spirit all through the scriptures and is inscribed as well upon every law of nature within the cosmos. "For *from Him* and *through Him* and *to Him* are all things – for all things originate with Him and come from Him; all things live through Him, and all things center in and tend to *consummate and to end in Him*. To Him be glory forever! Amen" (Rom. 11:36, Amplified).

The Law of Circularity requires that just as all things began in Christ, all shall end in Christ. "I am Alpha and Omega, the *beginning* and the *end*, the *first* and the *last*, saith the Lord" (Rev. 22:13). Only the glorious mind of Christ can reveal to our hearts what that means! Through a glass darkly I can see that He is the *first* – "before all things." Can I also believe that *He is the last*? If He is the *beginning*, can my feeble mind dare to comprehend what it signifies when He says that He is also the *end*? All that existed in Christ before the ages began, shall return into Him again that He may be the First *and* the Last. All that came out of Him, lowered into the realm of the negative, completes its circuit, returning once more to its former estate – IN CHRIST! This is not New Age philosophy, my friend, this is sound, fundamental *biblical truth*. The first Adam had power to take ALL with him into sin and death, without their knowledge or consent; therefore, the last Adam, the Lord from heaven, gathers up the same number in His great redemptive work and ALL MEN who came out of God shall return, that the circle may be unbroken. There is an old song that asks the question, "Will the circle be unbroken, bye and bye, Lord, bye and bye." We now have God's answer to that question: "**YES!**" The circle will be *unbroken*, the circle will *not* be broken! God's great Law of Circularity will bring all men back into God!

THE "END-TIMES"

The Greek word for "end" is *telos* meaning "the limit where previous activities cease; the goal; final result of a state or process; aim; purpose; conclusion; consummation; that which is brought to the full, being finished; the uttermost or terminal experience beyond which nothing remains to be said or done." May I just add – WOW! I am sure that many of you, like me, once thought that "the end" was an event, a date on the calendar, a period of time. I used to preach about the "end times" and referred to our writings as "studies in end-time revelation." But a wonderful thing happened along the way – I *found* "the end-time!" I also discovered the beginning of time! "In the beginning GOD..." Time is relative only to creation and John in his Gospel explained, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made" (Jn. 1:1-3). Jesus Christ is Himself the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, and when we have found Him we have found not only the beginning of the matter but also the end of the matter. The "end-time" is not some dark, distressful period at the end of a particular age; the end-time is ALL THINGS GATHERED TOGETHER INTO CHRIST. "That in the dispensation of the *fullness of times* He might *gather together into one all things in Christ*, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him" (Eph. 1:10). That really says it all! The end-time comes for each of us when we truly and fully find Christ as our *all in all*. If you can see it, my beloved brethren, the sons of God are THE ADMINISTRATORS OF "THE END" FOR ALL MANKIND! The end is not a time period, the end is not a world war, the end is not a "rapture" of the saints to some far-off heaven somewhere, the end is a glorious person, even *Christ*. HE is the beginning and the end for *all things*, for *all men*, and for *all ages*. Hallelujah!

"Then cometh the end" – the end of what?
The end that God so long hath sought!
The end He always had in view,

The end that man so little knew.
The end of sin's triumphant sway,
The end of death – the grave's decay.
The end of judgment and of ire,
The second death, the lake of fire.
The end when God will ever be
With us for all eternity:
The end for which His love doth call,
The end when HE is All in all!

THE BEGINNING AND THE END

Thank God for the light of Christ that is shining into this world of darkness! He is removing the darkness first in His elect and causing us to look to the realm of the Spirit where all things begin and end. The Alpha and the Omega has sent forth the rays of His glorious light so that we can see all things as they really are! All things do not begin or end *in time*. Time is not the Alpha and the Omega – *Christ* is the Alpha and the Omega! All things begin and end *in Christ*. Christ transcends time! Only *in Christ* are we able to see both the beginning and the end of everything!

A synonym for "beginning and end" is "author and finisher." "Looking unto Jesus the *author* and *finisher* of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2). A brother shared his experience at the museum in Florence, Italy which beautifully illustrates the truth of Christ as our beginning and end – the Author and Finisher of God's great work in our lives. He writes, "As you enter the museum in Florence, at the very end of a long corridor stands this enormous, brilliant statue, *David*, lighted especially to enhance the work of the master craftsman. Unfortunately when most people go to see this fabulous piece of work they do not notice the other statues which line the hallway leading to this masterpiece. For, along the hallway is, in my opinion, some of his best work – some of his most futuristic work. Aligning this hallway is his abstract art. Some art historians say he was probably one of the world's first abstract artists. Others call it his unfinished work.

"After studying some of those pieces and seeing them for myself, I was amazed at the beauty of one statue in particular. When Michaelangelo wanted to sculpt he would go to the marble quarry. He would walk throughout the quarry until he could find a special piece of marble with a statue that he could "see" trapped inside. It was his job to *release* this statue! He would simply chip away the marble from the outside that concealed the image within! And so he released the statue of Moses, he released his Pieta, he released David. But there was one piece that he saw that he was unable to release. And so it stands off to the side. Few people see it. But if you ever go to the museum in Florence to see the statue of David, stop and look at the unfinished art. There you will see a man who is still imprisoned in the hunk of marble. He is straining to escape from his imprisonment in the marble. You can see his neck stretching. The muscles in his neck and the muscles across his chest and his shoulders bulge as he is apparently trying to crawl out of this piece of marble. *But his creator is dead*. So he is permanently, historically, forever imprisoned in his cube of marble! He was there hundreds of years ago. He is still there today. And he will be there when you go to see him, or when your great grandchildren go" — end quote.

There are people today who are in the process of being released from their statue! They are not an image encased in marble, but they are a regenerated spirit imprisoned in a body – in a

fleshly Adamic mind and nature. They are wanting to bring forth their inner man that he may step out of his bondage to the outer, out of his subordination to the desires, ways, and passions of the flesh man. The outer earthly identity must be put off, chipped away, so that the inner spiritual identity may be revealed. But many people today feel stuck. They're imprisoned in their piece of marble! But listen, O child of God, for the good news I have is this: *Your Creator is not dead!* He is alive today and He is not finished with you yet! God loves you and He has a plan for your life! He has walked up and down through the quarry of this world, and He found you, a special piece of marble with a unique expression of the image of Christ locked within! He selected you, He bought you, He called you, He chose you, He ordained you to be a son of God in this age. The Master Craftsman has begun His wonderful work in you. He has a purpose for you, dear one, and it is a purpose of *completion!*

The story is told of a stunt pilot who, thinking he would have a bit of fun, endeavored to persuade a rather wary friend to take a ride with him. The friend declined the generous offer. Thereupon the aviator assured him that he would not perform any hazardous feats while in the clouds. Finally the reluctant friend decided to take the risk. Once in the air, however, the aviator performed all kinds of stunts, much to the horror of his passenger. Having subjected him to this ordeal, he then landed and they alighted. The pilot hastily stepped out so that he might enjoy every bit of his companion's reaction. Freeing himself from his little cabin, the passenger looked at his tormentor and said, "Thanks for the two rides." "Two rides?" asked the pilot curiously. "What do you mean? We had only one ride." "No, thank you," said the friend, "that was my *first* ride and my *last* ride!" The past and the future and often treated in the same way. They are considered separate and distinct as a first and a last, or as a beginning and an ending. But once we see that Christ the Lord IS the **first and the last**, the **beginning and the ending**, it becomes clear that neither is separate or distinct from the other, for both are united in one reality *in Him!* The Lord who began His work in you *will finish it* because He that is in you is *both* Beginning and End, *both* Author and Finisher of your faith. It is not a matter of *time* at all, it is a matter of *Christ!*

Let's imagine for a moment that there is a great parade scheduled to pass through your city. So you go downtown early in the morning and set up your little chair there on the sidewalk in front of the hardware store. At that spot you seem to have the perfect vantage point from which to view the parade as it passes by. The hour arrives and you begin to hear the beating of the drums, the sound of the band, the tramping of feet and the noise of the wheels. You know that the parade is on its way. Soon the floats begin to pass before your vision. But there is a problem – there are people all around. Thousands of people are pressing together, standing on the sidewalk or sitting on the curb. There you are in your little seat watching the parade, but because of the crowd all you can see is the one float that is right there in front of you. One by one you watch the floats go by. There are some floats that are in your past – they have already passed by and have rounded the corner. You can't see them anymore, so they are in your past. There are other floats that are in your future. They are still far down the street. You can't see them, but they are on their way and you will view each one from your limited perspective. You are like a horse with blinders. All you see is that little portion right there in front of you!

Now let's suppose that you make your way up to the top of a three-story building. You perch yourself there on the edge of the roof in order to have a better view of the parade. In that instant past and future pass away because now you see *the whole parade at once*. You see the float that is down there in front of the chair where you were seated. But you also see the one behind it, and the one behind that one, and the next one, all the way to the end of the parade. You see the float in front of it, the one in front of that one, and the next one, all the way

to the beginning of the parade. You see both the beginning and the end! You see the end from the beginning! You see everything in between! It is a matter of perspective. It's your viewpoint. It has to do with your elevation. If you can get high enough you can see it all at once and the whole parade exists in the **now**. *It's all now!* And that's how it is *in Christ!* The eternal **now** IS CHRIST! He IS the Beginning and the End! Only *in Him* are we able to see both the origin and the consummation of all things as *one unified whole*.

As we ascend in Christ the Spirit of God changes our perspective of all things. He alters and adjusts our viewpoint. God is bringing us up into a dimension in Himself to see as He sees. God can see all things at once! He exists in the eternal **now**. A million years are to Him as but a day. There is no past in God. There is no future in God. The garden of Eden is not past, nor is the millennium future. The dawn of creation is not thousands or billions of years ago, nor is the consummation of all the ages of time future. God is *high enough* to see the whole purpose from beginning to end, that beginning and end are *in Him*, and it all exists in the eternal now! Oh, the mystery of it!

In the limitation of our natural minds we view things with our blinders on. We are perched on our little seat on the sidewalk in front of the hardware store with thousands of human bodies around us – with all the confines of the systems of this world, with all the restrictions of this gross material realm, with all the impediments of the carnal mind – and all we can see is that little portion of history that is right in front of us at this moment in time. Everything else is either past or future! That's why men are distressed. That's why believers are troubled. That's why even we are sometimes confused. That's why we cry out to God and say, "Oh God, *Why?* Why did this happen? Why did that happen?" We feel helpless and hopeless in the midst of circumstances, situations, problems, and troubles that come our way. But did you know that all of our "Why" comes from the little chair in front of the hardware store! Many years ago the Spirit of God spoke to me and said, "*Sons do not ask, Why?*" Tragedy and trauma come into our lives and we don't understand. We look out at the world, society, and the nations, and see what is happening in our schools, in our communities, in our government, and even in our own families sometimes. We see ungodliness and wickedness, sin and sorrow, terrorism and war, disease and death, misfortune and heartbreak, and we feel helpless because we are sitting on our little chair on the sidewalk in front of the hardware store. All we can see is *how it looks from where we are!* We miss seeing where it all came from and we cannot see where it is all headed. We fail to discern the *great purpose* in it all because of our limited vision! We can't see the origin, nor do we see the consummation. We just see what is in front of us. And we call that *now!* **THAT'S NOT NOW!** That is now, but it is not all of now. In Christ the origin is now. The destiny is now. The whole plan is now because God is NOW! When we get high enough in the Spirit to see from God's perspective we see the whole thing. Christ Jesus is the source and the consummation of all things! Dwelling in Him we know that all our steps are ordered of the Lord and our "future" is secure, the "outcome" is certain, for HE is our Alpha and Omega, our beginning and our end! When we truly see that all our happenings are ordained of God, all is according to divine purpose, all is secure in Him, and the outcome is by divine appointment, what rest it affords! What peace this holy knowledge brings! What confidence the truth evokes!

I have had agnostics and skeptics ask me, "If God is real, if God is in control, if God is all powerful, if the God you worship is as good as you claim He is, why do we have all the millions of starving people, little children with bloated stomachs, drug addicts strung out committing suicide, prisons full of criminals, teenagers shooting up our schools, and famines, tornadoes, war and destruction? If God is love, why do we have all that?" And you know, it is difficult to answer that, because you are trying to explain something to people who are sitting on their little chair on the sidewalk in front of the hardware store. They are looking only at *appearances*.

Their perspective is limited and their vision defective. All they can see is what appears in front of them without any knowledge of either the origin or destiny of all things. In the blindness of their minds it is impossible for them to comprehend the *grand design*, the *great purpose*. And you can't answer their "Why" unless somehow they can get high enough to SEE THE WHOLE PICTURE! Until they can see for themselves both the origin and the consummation, they cannot perceive the real *meaning* behind everything happening in between. So how are you going to describe the perspective of the man up on the top of the three-story building to the man sitting in his little chair on the sidewalk in front of the hardware store? You can explain it to him but he just can't see *it!* This great truth has to come by *revelation!*

Suppose you were to meet a mystic today, a spiritually sensitive one, who could see your past, your present, and your future. He could see what you will do tomorrow, where you will be twenty years from today, and see your end – the whole thing! It is like a man high up in an airplane over an island of the sea. He is looking down on a river. He sees where the river begins in the mountains, he sees the continuation, and he sees the end of the river where it empties into the sea. He sees all this at the same time! God, therefore, sees us in a way that we cannot see, and because He sees from a height from which we do not see, we should *trust* Him without questioning or fear. Those called to sonship in this Day are learning to *trust!* We are learning to trust so that whatever God tells us to do, we do it! If He says, "Jump over the precipice," we jump, because our heavenly Father is seeing us in a way that we do not yet see, and knowing us in a way we do not yet know. HE is seeing what our end will be! Each of us has an end. Have we ever thought of it? We have an end, and God is seeing our end right now. Does that cause you to fear? Not if you are a son! For we know our end – our end is CHRIST! "I am the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord!"

There is divine meaning in every happening that comes into our lives. There are no accidents in God! *Everything* that comes to us is for our learning, for our growth and development in God! How God teaches us is His business! If we try to put our hand to it, we'll only make a mess of it. If it is left up to us to direct our steps, we will guard, preserve, fight for, and save everything that needs to go to the cross because we are sitting on our little chair on the sidewalk in front of the hardware store. May the Voice that spoke to John on Patmos resound in our ears this day. "*Come up hither*, and I will show thee things which *must be hereafter*. And immediately I was *in the spirit*: and, behold, a *throne* was set in heaven, and *one sat* on the throne" (Rev. 4:1-2). Ah, there is where we want to *see* from! When we "come up hither," high enough "in the spirit," we see the "throne" of God's sovereignty and are enlightened with the holy understanding that all is well because our Father is *reigning over all!*

THE SOURCE OF LIFE

Before we leave this subject of the Beginning and the End, I would like to point out one other outstanding thought that is inherent in this beautiful title. When Jesus says, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending," He is proclaiming the great truth that He is both the *source* and the *consummation* of all things. This is a truth that every son of God is learning to know and experience *within ourselves*, for Christ *in us* is our hope of glory. Christ is now becoming the beginning and the ending of our lives!

Here I would share some inspired and challenging words from a brother we labored with some years ago. He began with the beautiful text from the gospel of John, chapter six. "Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall

give unto you: for Him hath God the Father sealed. I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; he that believeth on me shall never thirst...it is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." In order to understand the great mystery that Jesus is seeking to reveal to us in these verses, we need to understand the word "quickeneth" that is used in the King James translation. It is an old English word that the King James translators used to describe the original wording in the Greek scripture which meant "to give life" or "that giveth life" or "that is the source of life." So what Jesus is really saying here is, "It is the spirit that giveth life" or "it is the spirit that is the *source* of your life." The next thing we need to understand in order to comprehend this great mystery is that when Jesus said, "It is the spirit that giveth life" or "is the *source* of your life" He was not talking about the Holy Spirit of God alone, but He was talking about your own spirit, for, "He that is joined to the Lord *is one spirit*" (I Cor. 6:17). Your own quickened, regenerated, born-again spirit – which is the Son of God dwelling in you – is the source of your life!

The next thing we need to understand, to comprehend this mystery, is the meaning of the word "profit" Jesus used here when He said, "The flesh profiteth nothing." Now the profit on any investment is always the increase. It is that which was not, which is created out of the investment's creative powers of that which one starts with. If I invest a thousand dollars, and it brings back two thousand dollars, then the second thousand dollars is the increase, the profit, that is literally brought forth out of the creative powers that were in the first thousand dollars to increase itself, to double itself, when properly invested. Therefore, this word "profit" is a *creative word*! It implies the power to create, to increase one's self, or to reproduce one's self. Therefore, when Jesus said, "The flesh profiteth nothing," what He was trying to get over to us is that there is no creative power in the flesh – in anything that is physical and material in this earth. It cannot increase itself, it cannot reproduce itself; in fact, it cannot even sustain the life that it has, for if our spirit were to depart from our flesh body, it would immediately begin to deteriorate and go back to the dust from whence it came. When Jesus said, "The flesh profiteth nothing," He was revealing to us that every visible, carnal, natural, material, physical thing in this world, including our own flesh body, is *not creative*. It has no power to increase itself; it doesn't even have power to sustain its own life! All it can ever be is the visible manifestation or expression of the Life of Spirit, and of the creative power that is in Spirit.

On the other hand, when Jesus said, "It is the spirit that quickeneth" or "it is the spirit that giveth life" or "is the source of your life," what He was seeking to reveal to us is that the spirit is *creative*, that our regenerated spirit has *creative power*! Therefore, the great mystery and the great truth that Jesus was seeking to reveal to those who can receive and understand it is that it is our own spirit that is the source of our life, that we carry the source of our life around in our own beings; and therefore, our own spirit being the source of our life *we are not dependent on anything outside of our own being for life*! For you see, when you are a source, you are *the beginning*. A spring from which a river comes out of the earth and flows into the earth is the beginning of that river. It is the *source* from which the water of that river comes. And therefore that is what Jesus was trying to get over to us – that since we have been born of the seed of God, and since Christ, who is the beginning and the end, is that regenerated, recreated, born-again spirit that is within us, it is *your spirit* that giveth life, or that is the source of your life, and being a source within itself, is therefore not dependent on anything outside of itself for its life!

When you are a source, you are the beginning; therefore you are not dependent on anything before you or anything after you, or anything outside of you, for your life. The truth that Jesus teaches us is that we carry the source of our life within our own spirit and we are not dependent on any fleshly thing outside of our own spirit for our life. It is because Jesus came to the revelation of this truth and the reality of it within Himself that He could step out into the

world and say, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." Knowing that He carried the source, the beginning of His life within His own spirit, He could say, "I am the beginning." Knowing that the creative power was in His spirit to bring forth His final destiny, and that that destiny was under the control of the creative powers that were within His own spirit, He could say, "I am the end."

When Jesus said, "The flesh profiteth nothing – it is the spirit that quickeneth, that is the source of your life," He was revealing to us the great truth that the source of our life is not in the flesh, not in the visible, not in the carnal, physical, material things, nor in anything that is of this natural world; but all those things are but outward manifestations of the creative powers that are in the life of Spirit, and that the source of our life is in our own spirit. Now the problem with all of God's precious people, you see, is that they have not known this great truth. They have thought that they are dependent for their lives on the carnal, material, physical things of the flesh of this world – natural money, natural housing, natural food, natural body, natural abilities, and the laws of nature. All of us have thought that those things were the source from which our life came! In fact, we have so been deceived that those visible, physical, carnal, natural things were the source of our life that we were so completely dependent upon them that if we were cut off from them – if we lost our job, lost our money, lost our housing, lost our food – we thought that we would die! For you see, this is the great lie that the carnal mind deceived man with through the fall. When man lost the consciousness of his spiritual nature, and degenerated down into the consciousness of the outer, carnal, physical nature, man became convinced that he was dependent upon the visible and the physical and the natural for his life – natural money, natural job, natural business, natural food, natural medicine, natural clothing, natural housing, natural possessions, natural transportation, natural body – natural, natural, natural! We have been so convinced that that is the source of our life until we have been scared out of our wits that if we were cut off from that source of life, *we would die!*

Jesus, when He was out in the wilderness with His people, and needed bread, by-passed the natural resources, by-passed the wheat field, by-passed the flour mill, by-passed the grocery store and sat down on the ground, and through the operation of that *spiritual law* of faith, drew right out from within His own spirit enough bread to feed five thousand people! For you see, beloved, there is a source of life, and all that pertains to life, including bread that sustains life, which is not dependent on the natural resources of this world. It is the original source of life – SPIRIT! The Bible makes it very clear that all life, and every manifestation of life that is in this universe, originally came right out of Spirit. Thus the apostle Paul says that "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed *by the Word of God*; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. 11:3). Therefore, the Bible says that everything in this world which is visible and physical – in the beginning, originally, was not made of something visible or tangible already existing – which does appear – but was made of the resources that came originally right out of Spirit, by the spoken word of faith. Faith drew it right out of Spirit and manifested it! Therefore, you see, Jesus, as He sat on the ground that day, and fed five thousand with five little loaves of bread and two small fish, had become a *manifest Son of God* who was not subject to the laws of nature, neither underneath them; and therefore not dependent on the natural resources for bread, but could by-pass them. He was a spiritual Son of God who was sovereign over all physical laws, and therefore could go right back to the original source of bread and draw it right out of His own spirit.

Do you notice how easily Jesus did this? The scripture says that Jesus instructed His disciples, "Make the men sit down." You see, when you get bread from this source, you don't have to get it standing up, with a plow or a sickle in your hand, laboring and sweating, as men have for six thousand years, since they've been under the curse; but you can sit quietly down and bring

forth all things from a position of rest. The men sat down, and Jesus sat quietly down with them. The record states that Jesus simply took the loaves of bread, and when He had given thanks, He distributed to the disciples – as much as they would. You see, there was no shortage here. Everyone got to eat as much as he wanted, as much as he would! And Jesus did it so smoothly and so easily – He just sat down, gave thanks, and began to hand it out. He didn't have to go through all the soulish hype men go through today in an effort to work up a little faith! He didn't have to go through a thirty-minute praise service, dance around in the Spirit for a while, speak in tongues, prophesy, and then scream, "In the name of Jesus, let there be bread!" There was no fanfare, no showmanship, no theatrics, no emotional appeal at all. This great truth that we're seeking to share with you, that it is the spirit, the Spirit of Christ in your own spirit that is the source of Life – this truth had become so real to Jesus that, moving in the spiritual law of faith, He could draw it, effortlessly, right out of His own spirit!

Out of the experiential knowledge of this great truth Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life." He knew that through coming into the world and shedding His blood to cleanse us from our sins, and make us clean vessels, so the Holy Spirit could regenerate us, recreate us, birth us again, restore us to the consciousness of our true identity, grow us up into the spirit to that place of manifested sonship in which He stood, then *through Him in us* we would be able go back to the original source of Life, and of Bread, and of Reality. HE is the bread of Life to us; not the natural world system, neither the material resources of this natural world system. It is the spirit that createth Life; the flesh profiteth nothing! Jesus on another occasion stated it this way, "That which is born of the flesh *is flesh*, and that which is born of the spirit *is spirit*." He set before us two ways of life. We can live our life in the flesh, or we can live our life in the spirit. We can walk after the flesh, or we can walk after the spirit. We can draw our existence out of the natural realm which passes away, or we can draw our existence out of the spiritual realm which liveth and abideth forever. We can live our life according to natural law, or we can prepare our mind and heart to live life according to Spiritual Law.

I do not mean to say that as sons of God we should not work, earn money, drive a car, build a house, or eat food. Jesus and His disciples had a purse with money in it, they bought food and clothes, rode donkeys, ate ordinary food, and slept in houses. Jesus knew the Father within as His source, therefore He walked in no anxiety or concern about natural things. If Father supplied them in natural ways He received it with thanksgiving, and if there was no natural supply He made wine out of water, got money from the fishes mouth, and multiplied loaves and fishes. It wasn't a question of *how* it came to Him, but a matter of the law of faith by which all things were possible! For thirty years Jesus worked, it is believed, in Joseph's carpentry shop. I have no doubt whatever that for a number of years He was *dependent* upon His skill as a carpenter to feed His mother and His brothers. But as He grew in wisdom and in stature as the Son of His Father, the day came when He fully learned and appropriated the higher Law of the Spirit of Life! Then the carpentry shop ceased to be His source – the Father within became His source! As long as the Father within led Him to work in the shop He worked in that way, and that was the spirit's supply. and when the Father called Him to leave it He walked away in confidence for His *source of supply went with Him!* Now He was truly the *manifest Son of God*. How wonderful this is! When the spirit within becomes our source it ceases to be a matter of how things are done – it is a matter that all wisdom, knowledge, understanding, and action spring from the Life within instead of from the natural world!

To us today, as to men of old, Jesus says, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but labour for the meat that endureth unto everlasting life." You see, beloved, the problem with us is that we have spent all our life laboring for the meat that perishes; working on the job and doing some business and labor for the natural meat, wearing ourselves out, growing old and weary,

our hair turning gray, sweating and toiling always for the meat that perishes. And often we have not spent a balance of time and effort laboring for the *spiritual meat* that will endure when all the natural meat has perished. Yes, the bread that Jesus fed the five thousand was natural bread, although He drew it out of the realm of the Spirit! But by learning and knowing and moving in that realm of the true source of Life He was able to go on and by the same law of faith overcome all natural things and, finally, conquer even the last enemy – death – and stride victoriously out of the tomb! Therefore it is time for all who have received the call to sonship to labor more and more for that Spiritual Meat that shall endure unto everlasting Life, when all the natural meat has passed away!

I have observed in the ministry of Jesus that there was never a problem He faced that He could not solve, never a need that He could not meet, no victory He could not win, no realm of revelation, experience, or relationship to God that He could not possess. To this *sonship ministry* we are called, my beloved, and we are learning to walk by the faith of the Son of God! Press on, dear ones, set your face as a flint, turn neither to the right nor to the left. Continue to *look unto Jesus* who is the Author and the Finisher of your faith! He is our Beginning and He is our End! This is indeed the true END-TIME REVELATION!

Chapter 16

Companions In The Kingdom

"I am Alpha and Omega...who is, and who was, and who is to come, **THE ALMIGHTY**," speaks the divine voice at the opening of the book of Revelation. A little later we read, "When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last..." (Rev. 1:17). At the closing of the book the same voice declares, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last...**I Jesus** have sent mine angel to testify these things unto you in the churches" (Rev. 22:13,16). Centuries earlier the Lord spoke through the prophet Isaiah, saying, "Thus saith Yahweh, the King of Israel, and his redeemer Yahweh of hosts; I am the first; and I am the last; and beside me *there is no God*" (Isa. 44:6). Again in Isaiah 48:11-12, "For mine own sake I will do it...and I will not give my glory unto another. Harken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last." These and a number of other scriptures show that Yahweh is the first and the last, the only God, the God of Israel, the Almighty. In the book of Revelation Jesus Christ is the first and the last, the Almighty. Let the saints of God arise to the wonderful truth that JESUS CHRIST IS THE YAHWEH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT!

People have great difficulty understanding an abstraction, a force, or a spirit. It must be personalized, it must take form, and that is why God has come in the person of Jesus Christ so that we might see Him and see what God is like. That is why in the book of Colossians the apostle Paul says of Christ, "He is the exact likeness of the unseen God — the visible representation of the invisible...for it was in Him that all things were created, in heaven and on earth, things seen and things unseen, whether thrones, dominions, rulers or authorities; all things were created and exist through Him and in and for Him" (Col. 1:15-16). Therefore, the embodiment referred to as Jesus in the physical world, in the atomic world, is the invisible Yahweh who exists in a Spirit or Light World. He is Almighty Creator of everything in heaven and in earth! "In the beginning *God* created the heavens and the earth." Other scriptures tell us that it was Yahweh who is the great Creator! Glorious, indeed, and wonderful beyond human description is the great truth that the book of Revelation is the unveiling of God-Yahweh-Yahshua — the invisible Almighty God who came to earth as our Lord Jesus Christ!

The great Yahweh appeared to Israel in a cloud and a pillar of fire. He lived in that pillar of fire and led Israel daily. At the dedication of Solomon's temple He announced His coming as a great cloud that appeared to all the assembly of Israel, so bright and glorious was the cloud of His presence that the ministers could not minister because of the blinding, overwhelming glory. Then one day the same Yahweh was manifested in a virgin born body that was prepared for Him. The God that tabernacled above the tents of Israel, who tabernacled in the temple on mount Moriah, now took on Himself a tent of flesh and tabernacled as a man amongst men. But He was the SAME GOD! The Bible teaches that GOD WAS IN CHRIST. The *body*, the *outward human form*, was Jesus, the Son of God. In Him dwelt and dwells all the fullness of the Godhead, *bodily* (Col. 2:9). Nothing can be plainer than that! Mystery, yes. But actual truth — it can't be plainer!

No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him — He has revealed Him, brought Him out where He may be seen; He has interpreted Him, and He has made Him known so that he who has seen the Christ has seen the Father (Jn. 1:18; 14:9). The One who walked by the sea of Galilee and through the dusty roads of Palestine was none other than the living God, Yahweh in human form, the Creator who humbled Himself and came into this world. This One who died, who rose again, who ascended up far above all heavens that He might fill all things, who sits upon the throne of the Majesty on high and who has entered into our lives by the power of His Spirit — this Lord Jesus Christ is Himself THE ALMIGHTY! "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending...*the Almighty*" (Rev. 1:8).

I have no desire to dispute doctrines about the Godhead. I am sure each of us has our understanding of God, how God is one and how God is three, and all the rest of it. I am not writing to debate those issues, rather to point out a truth which the Spirit has made very real to my heart. There are many kinds of terminology that we still use that are not the Spirit's terminology. They are not what the Spirit has witnessed concerning God, but terms that men have coined to express *their conception* of the Godhead! Many of these terms have come right out of the darkness of religious carnal minds and the Lord's people have embraced them and parrot them as though they were divine revelation! Christians talk about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Did you know there is not a scripture in the Bible that talks about God the Son? There is not a scripture in the Bible that speaks of God the Holy Ghost! Yet the title "God the Father" appears many, many times throughout the New Testament. "To us," Paul said, "there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him" (I Cor. 8:6).

Jesus is always referred to as the Son of God — not God the Son. Now you say, "Wait a minute, brother Eby, are you telling me Jesus isn't God?" Not at all! I am saying that He is not called God the Son. Likewise, the Holy Spirit is most often referred to as the Spirit of God — not God the Holy Spirit. God Himself said, "I will send *my Spirit*; I will pour out *my Spirit*." He nowhere said, "God the Holy Spirit will come to you." Do you see what I mean? We use terminology that has been formulated by the theologians of the church systems, but which are not found in the word of God! Jesus said that the Father had sent Him, and that the Father is God. So to us there is one God who is the Father! The question follows — Was Jesus God? Absolutely! But did you know that the God in Jesus was the Father? What did He say? "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak *not of myself*: but **the Father that dwelleth in me, HE doeth the works**" (Jn. 14:10). Can you imagine GOD saying, "I can of mine own self do nothing?" Yet Jesus confessed that He, of Himself, could do nothing! Only the Father in Him could speak and do the works! So what I am saying is, THE GOD THAT WAS IN JESUS WAS THE FATHER! "Great is the mystery of godliness: GOD was manifest in the flesh" (I Tim. 3:16). Not God the Son manifest in flesh. GOD was manifest in the flesh!

The great Indian apostle and mystic, Sadhu Sundar Singh, was caught up in the Spirit. I know not whether he was in the body or out of the body, but he was caught up in the Spirit and saw, in Spirit, the throne of God. Just as John saw, when on Patmos he was caught up in Spirit, Sadhu Sundar Singh saw the throne of the heavens of God's Spirit and "there was ONE who sat upon the throne." He did not see three thrones! He did not see God the Father sitting on one throne, God the Son sitting on another throne, and God the Holy Ghost upon a third throne. Nor did he see one throne with three Gods seated upon it! He saw one throne and on the throne he saw One sitting, and the One he saw was Jesus. He saw Jesus sitting on the throne! But emanating, radiating out of Jesus in a never-ending and all-encompassing

effulgence of glory, majesty, wisdom, power, dominion, love, mercy and goodness was the Father! Shining out of Jesus was the scintillating glory of the Father so that Jesus could say, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet thou hast not known me? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" (Jn. 14:9).

My heart's desire and prayer to God is that all who read these pages may now *see themselves in Christ*. May God enable you by His Spirit to see yourself IN CHRIST! God's elect, God's chosen ones, Christ's many brethren are *the body of Christ*. God has one glorious Christ who is composed of many members. Jesus Christ our wonderful Lord is the Head of this Christ body and we are members in particular. To all who have received the call to sonship Jesus says, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in *my throne*, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father *in His throne*" (Rev. 3:21). And yet John sees only *one throne* and *One* seated upon the throne! The mighty, eternal, all-embracing truth of it is that when all God's sons are seated *in Christ*, who is *in the Father*, upon that awesome throne of the heavens there is still only *One* that can be seen upon the throne! Truly we are able to say, "It is no longer I that live, but Christ *liveth in me*." And the Lord Christ witnesses, "It is not I, but my Father that *dwelleth in me*." Oh, the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it! If you today can by the Spirit see that one throne where the King of glory is seated in all the fullness of the nature, power, glory, wisdom, love and majesty of God, and see yourself seated in Him, *then you know what UNION IS!* Then you know what *SONSHIP IS!* If you are able to comprehend these simple truths, you know more about the Godhead than all the theologians of Babylon!

May the beautiful words of the prophet fall with divine understanding upon our spiritual ear. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given...His name shall be called...the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father" (Isa. 9:6). It does not say mighty man, but Mighty God. A little child is called the Mighty God! The child mentioned here refers to the child born in the stable in Bethlehem, who is not only named Jesus, but also the Mighty God, and furthermore the Everlasting Father. As a child born to us, He is called the Mighty God; as a Son given to us, He is called the Everlasting Father. This is very strange, is it not? When the *child* is called the Mighty God, is He the child or God? And, when the *Son* is called the Everlasting Father, is He the Son or the Father? If you try to figure it out you cannot do it! You must accept the truth that since the child is called the Mighty God, it means the child IS the Mighty God! And since the Son is called the Father, the Son IS the Father! If the child is not the Mighty God, how could the child be called the Mighty God? And if the Son is not the Father, how could the Son be called the Father? Then, how many Gods do we have? We have only one God because the child Jesus is the Mighty God, and the Son is the Everlasting Father.

When Jesus came, He came to take the place of Adam — to fulfill the eternal purpose of God for *man to be the expression of God* to the whole universe! Is that not why God created all things in the heavens and the earth, then as the crowning glory of His creation He brought forth in the earth *man in the image and likeness of God*. It was by, through, and in man that creation would see, touch, and know the invisible God. Man was destined to be the manifestation and revelation of the invisible Creator to the visible creation! When Christ came as the last Adam, to fulfill that great purpose which had been aborted in the first Adam, His emphasis or principle was: "I will be a man and I will fulfill the divine plan. I will be a man living wholly unto God." His first consideration was not evangelistic — that is, toward man. His first consideration was toward God! "I will live unto God. I will live by the Father. I will draw upon His life. I will be simply a vessel filled with God! I will express Him, manifest Him, reveal Him. I will do nothing on my own; I will not initiate anything. I will not show how much I can do, how much I know, how much power I have. I will not display my own attributes. I simply will be humanity, a human vessel, but God the Father will be in me, living out His life, speaking His

words, acting out His purpose, and working through me His glory, power, and will." *That*, my beloved, is sonship! And that is how the child became the Mighty God, and that is how the Son became the Everlasting Father! Sweet mystery of God!

When Jesus came into the world He said two things. First, "A *body* hast Thou prepared me" (Heb. 10:5). He was saying, "I have a means of expressing God among humanity." A body is for *expression*. If I never moved my hands, or my mouth, or my eyes, you never would know what I was thinking. But having a body gives me these unique physical capacities, and I am able to express outwardly what I am inwardly. Well, Jesus Christ said, "I will not express what I am; I will express what HE IS!" As I have pointed out earlier, Jesus also said, "I do nothing of myself." Oh, my! That is just contrary to what we have thought. We have thought that Jesus was the second Person of the Godhead, and He could do **anything!** Yet He plainly said, "I do nothing of myself." "As I hear, I judge." "What I see the Father do, that I do." In effect He said, "My judgments are just, because I judge no man; my Father judges and my Father never makes a mistake. He knows what's going on! I just listen for His judgment and as I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, for it is not mine, but His." This is the *man* Jesus speaking! If Jesus were the second Person of the Godhead, as the theologians tell us, He could never say, "Of myself I can do nothing." Imagine *God* saying, "Of myself I can't do anything!" One impotent God waiting for another more powerful God to act! Oh, no! The man Christ Jesus is saying, "As a man, I can do nothing. But the Father, the Mighty God who dwells in me, who is my life, my reality, He can do all things!" And that, my beloved, is sonship!

Again Jesus said, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but THE FATHER THAT DWELLETH IN ME, HE doeth the works" (Jn. 14:10). You could ask the Lord Jesus, "Where are you going?" He would answer, "I'll go where my Father goes. My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. I don't stop and consider when I take a journey. When the cloud of my Father's presence within me begins to move, I move with the cloud. Now I'm going to Galilee, then to Judea, and then across the river. I never anticipate anything. I just walk as my Father walks. He guides me this way, and that way. I just walk as my Father walks, for it is not I, but my Father who lives in me." This is the way He was living His life, moment by moment. He had no desire to speak, unless the Father had something to say. He did not heal, unless the Father in Him was healing. He had no desire to *do* anything — just the Father's will. He had no desire to perpetuate anything. When the Father changed directions, He changed directions. When the Father was finished with something, He was finished with it. When the Father passed something by, He passed it by. When it looked as if the people wanted to set Him up as king, He said, "My hour is not yet come. I can't anticipate anything. I can't jump ahead of schedule." And that, precious friend of mine, is how the child became the Mighty God, and the Son became the Everlasting Father! *That* is sonship!

Now here is the second thing Jesus said when He came into the world. "I delight to do Thy will, O God!" Jesus never stopped to consider whether He was going to be understood or misunderstood. He never stopped to consider if He was going to suffer. He never stopped to think about whether He was going to die. He knew that as long as He walked in the will of His Father, nobody could take His life from Him, because it was the Father's life. Whatever His Father willed moment by moment, that was all He could will. "I come to do Thy will, O God."

The record states of Jesus, "And when even was come, they brought unto Him many possessed of devils: and He cast out the spirits with a word" (Mat. 8:16). That word was not Christ's word at all! I do not believe that Jesus ever cast out a devil. I do not believe that Jesus ever healed anybody. I believe what Christ Himself said, "The words that I say unto you I

speak not from myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, HE doeth the works." Who did the works? The Father! Did Jesus do them? No! Oh yes, the record does say that He did mighty works, but Jesus made it plain that it wasn't really Him at all, it was the Father, the Mighty God, who dwelt in Him. Jesus never said that He did any works! Men recorded that He did, but Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (Jn. 5:17). In other words, it was the Father that worked in and through Him. All glory to the Father! The words which flowed from the Christ's lips were not the words of Christ at all. They were the words of the Father. For you see, Jesus was *possessed*. He was possessed by a *Spirit*. He was possessed **by God!**

Jesus never said to a sufferer, "*Brother*, be of good cheer!" All Christ's words were the words of the Father! He always said, "*Son*, be of good cheer!" Was that not the Father speaking? When He said to the woman who touched the hem of His garment and was healed of the issue of blood, "Thy faith hath made thee whole," did He call her "sister"? Was it our Brother or our Father who was speaking? Hear what He says! "*Daughter*, thy faith hath made thee whole!" These were the words of the child who was the Mighty God, and these were the words of the Son who was the Everlasting Father!

My spirit is stirred with the knowledge that the Father was *in* the Son, deity was *in* humanity. There was no revelation of sonship until Jesus came and revealed the Father in human flesh. Since the child has become the Mighty God, and the Son has become the Everlasting Father, we are to honor the Son even as we honor the Father! The beloved John saw a throne set in the heavens of God's Spirit, and *One* sat upon the throne. He that sat was to look upon as a jasper and a sardine stone, and there was a rainbow round about the throne, with a glory like unto an emerald. And yet — *in the midst of the throne* He saw a Lamb as it had been slain! The *One* who sat upon the throne was also a Lamb! And the little Lamb was furthermore the Lion of the tribe of Judah! And *in the midst of the throne* were four living creatures. Four is the number of universality. It speaks of that which is world-wide, all-encompassing in relation to earth. Again and again the Revelation speaks of the "four winds" of the earth, the "four corners" of the earth, and the "four angels" with their action earthward. The four "living creatures" *in the midst of the throne* represent the worldwide or universal expression and revelation of THE LIFE OF THE GOD OF THE THRONE! They are the figure of all the overcomers, of all the holy sons of God who sit with Christ upon His throne! Just as the twenty-four elders *round about the throne* represent the ministry of priesthood, so the four living creatures *in the midst of the throne* represent the power of kingship. Kings and priests! These are all pictures of THE THRONE. Understand what is *in the throne* and you will understand the greatness of the *One* who sits upon the throne! There is *One* who sits upon the throne, yet that *One* is also a Lamb, He is as well a Lion, He is furthermore Four Living Creatures, and in addition He is Twenty-four Elders. All of this is included in the revelation of the throne! "And when He had taken the book, the *four living creatures* and *four and twenty elders* fell down before the Lamb...and they sung a new song saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast *redeemed us to God* by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast **made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth**" (Rev. 5:8-10). Oh, yes! There is only One upon the throne, but that One is a MANY-MEMBERED ONE, THE RULING FAMILY OF GOD, THE FATHER AND HIS SON WITH HIS MANY BRETHREN BROUGHT TO GLORY!

I am still speaking of Jesus Christ who is "the Almighty." Paul says in II Corinthians 3:17, "Now the Lord is that Spirit." The Lord is what Spirit? The "Lord" spoken of here, of course, is the Lord Jesus; and "the Spirit," of course, is the Holy Spirit. Then again Paul tells us, "And so it is written, the last Adam *was made A QUICKENING SPIRIT*" (I Cor. 15:45). Today's Christians, steeped in the false doctrines of the church systems, blinded by the traditions of men, have a

traditional way of saying that "Christ is *in* the Holy Spirit." But the word of God does not say that! There is not one verse in the whole Bible which says that Christ is *in* the Spirit! "Christ is *in* the Spirit" is, therefore, a traditional saying, whereas "The Lord IS the Spirit" is the scriptural expression. This is made very plain in chapter eight of Romans, as well as many other passages. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the *Spirit of God* dwell in you. Now if any man have not the *Spirit of Christ*, he is none of His" (Rom. 8:9). The Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ are **one Spirit!** And there is an even greater mystery than this! "He that is joined unto the Lord **is one spirit**" (I Cor. 6:17). Oh, the wonder of it!

The last Adam *was made* a quickening or Life-giving Spirit, Paul explains. The last Adam, of course, is the Word made flesh, the man Christ Jesus. The Life-giving Spirit, of course, is the Holy Spirit. There can never be another Life-giving Spirit beside the Holy Spirit! The Word was made flesh and became the last Adam, and then through death, resurrection, ascension and glorification, *became* THE LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT! "Now the Lord is the Spirit." John wrote, "This spake Jesus of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given; because JESUS WAS NOT YET GLORIFIED" (Jn. 7:39). Two things were essential before Jesus could return *as the Spirit*. He must **go away**. He must **be glorified**. "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come. I will not leave you comfortless: I WILL COME UNTO YOU." On our behalf, as man and the Head of man, Jesus was resurrected, and then ascended, being admitted into the full glory of the Divine, and His human nature received up into union and participation with the eternal Spirit, becoming of the same substance and essence of the eternal Spirit. He was *glorified*, He was truly *spiritualized!* And the Holy Spirit could now come down as the Spirit of the GOD-MAN — most really the Spirit of God, and yet as truly the Spirit of Jesus the man. He could come down as the Spirit of the GLORIFIED JESUS, to be in each one of us who receives Him. And to as many as receive Him, to them gives He the power to become the sons of God! God be praised! Jesus has been glorified! The child has become the Mighty God! The Son has become the Everlasting Father! The Lord has become the Spirit! There is now the Spirit of the glorified Jesus and we have received Him! Christ in us is *our hope* of glory, and *our reality* of sonship to God!

When Christ the Spirit comes into us, He comes to fulfill this high and holy calling. He comes within as the all-sufficient Spirit to make us all that we must be as God-men. In our modern era man has learned much about nutrition. Nutrition is the science and study of the foods that build the human body and make it strong and healthy. The body gets the nourishment it needs from the raw materials contained in foods. Starch, sugar, fat, protein, minerals, vitamins and water are all raw materials. From these raw materials the body builds flesh, bones and muscles, and makes blood and other body fluids. There are some foods that build body tissue, others that make strong bones and teeth. Many of these materials are minerals. One of the important materials that helps the body grow and function is vitamins. There are several different kinds of vitamins and each has its particular use. All of these minerals and vitamins are important! For instance, calcium promotes proper formation of teeth and bones. Iron helps build red blood cells. Vitamin A aids good eyesight. B vitamins are good for the nerves. Niacin builds healthy skin.

In order to supplement your diet and get all the vitamins and minerals your body needs you can go to the store and purchase them in tablet form. There you will find bottles containing calcium, bottles containing iron, others of niacin, vitamin A, B vitamins, vitamin C, D, E, etc. You could soon fill your entire cabinet with bottles of all kinds of vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and other food supplements. But the supplement companies have simplified all this for us by creating the "multi-vitamin-mineral" tablet! One of these tablets will contain sufficient amounts of every known vitamin and mineral needed by the human body. You don't have to swallow

fifty different pills — you just take the one! This one is the *all-inclusive dose*! And friends, have we ever realized that *Christ the Spirit* is the best and most all-inclusive "dose" in all the world? HE is the one complete dose which is enough to meet all our *spiritual need*! HE is the raw material of the new creation man! HE is the stuff sons of God are made of! The Spirit of Christ is all that God is! Christ *in us* is our hope of glory! And we are the hope of creation!

Our human body needs all the vitamins and minerals in order to develop and function. The *body of Christ*, the *new creation man*, the *sons of God* need the all-inclusive dose of the quickening Spirit of Jesus, the last Adam, in order to grow up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ and be perfect God-men. God is preparing to manifest His sons to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption. We shall see the glory, wisdom, and power of God's Christ manifested in all fullness in a many-membered body right here upon this earth! How can we attain to this? By taking liberally of the all-inclusive dose of the Life of God in Christ!

Adam had the opportunity to become the full revelation of the image and glory of God to the whole universe. This was offered to him in the tree of life! The tree of life was nothing else than the life of God in Christ. This life was in man's very spirit. The tree of life was the all-sufficient "dose" which would have built eternal spirit life in Adam, making him in turn the very source of that life. But Adam refused his "dose" of incorruptible life, choosing rather to live from the devitalized, insufficient junk-food of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in his soul. Consequently, Adam quickly sank into degeneration, weakness and death. In the natural, a person who does not get enough vitamins may have poor eyesight, rough skin, sore gums, or a host of other ailments. People who are too thin or feel tired much of the time usually need more nutrients. There are ugly diseases, such as pellagra, scurvy, and beriberi, that occur when the body does not get enough vitamins. We have all seen the debilitating diseases of osteoporosis, arthritis, heart trouble, cancer, and others that often come from a lack of proper nutrients. Have you not seen the pictures of the pitiful children in third-world countries suffering from acute mal-nutrition? The eyes are large and protruding, cheeks sunken, stomach bloated, arms and legs thin and bony, and other awful conditions. Lorain and I saw this scene thousands of times when we were on the mission fields. It is a heart-rending sight! And friend, this is the spiritual portrait of old Adam! It is also the spiritual portrait of millions of professed believers in Christ in all the churches of the world! This is the picture of the horrible spiritual image into which men sink when they refuse, or cannot acquire, their "dose" of the all-sufficient life of God in Christ! This is the sad result of the deficient diet of the tree of religion's empty forms, lifeless ceremonies, man-made doctrines, carnal programs, vain traditions and commandments of men — the tree of the knowledge of good and evil!

All of mankind today, enslaved by sin, sickness, sorrow and death, are manifestations of Adam's wretched condition. Mankind today, after six thousand years of degeneracy and impoverishment, bears absolutely no resemblance to man as God destined him to be from the beginning! And religion hasn't helped one bit. Religion has brought mankind their "Care Package" of religious junk-food, religion has given men a little strength and cosmetically dressed up the outside and made men appear a little better, but the internal disease is still raging out of control. Death has passed upon all men. But, blessed be God! God is forming a people into the image of His Son to bring to all mankind the all-sufficient dose of the incorruptible life of God! He has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given unto us the ministry of reconciliation! "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, WE SHALL BE SAVED BY HIS LIFE" (Rom. 5:10). It is wondrously true! We *have been* reconciled by Christ's death, and we *are being saved by His life*! Yes, we shall be saved COMPLETELY, spirit, soul and body, by

His life! Through the death of His Son God has opened Eden's gates, and brought us back into the garden of God! In the garden, in the tree of life, God has again made available to us the all-sufficient dose! Within the Spirit of Christ there is an all-sufficient supply! Everything we need to be God-men is contained in the Lord the Spirit! We are now becoming what we have never been. We are now becoming all that man was intended to be. We are now becoming the sons of God! We are now able to *live* in His sight! There is no need to cry, beg, or fear. We have only to draw near with a confident heart, and full expectation of faith, to take Him, eat of Him, appropriate Him. We are being saved, changed, transformed BY HIS LIFE!

Is it not therefore wonderful that Christ should be called the True Light, the Truth, the Life, the Resurrection and the Life, the Holy One, the Just One, the First and the Last, a Just God and the only Saviour, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Lord the Spirit, God our Saviour, the Creator and Maker of all things, God over all, blessed forevermore, who only hath immortality; our Lord and our God, whom we are commanded to worship, and whom all the angels of God are commanded to worship, for unto the Son He saith, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" — is it not wonderful, I say, that this Jesus Christ declares Himself to be "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come — THE ALMIGHTY!"

JOHN

"I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9).

John has the supreme distinction, and the everlasting honor, of being our Lord's most intimate friend on earth. And what an exalted light that casts on the character of John, on the qualities of his spirit, and on the disposition of his heart! When we would know all about a man, the first question we may ask is, "Who are his friends?" "Who is his most intimate friend," we seek to know, for any man is known by the company he keeps and by the friends he chooses. And when we ask this question about our Lord, the answer comes back, "John — he was the disciple whom Jesus loved!" He was one of the twelve, the one who leaned on his Master's bosom at the last supper. And he was the disciple, above even her own sons and daughters, to whom Jesus from the cross committed the care of His grief-stricken mother.

The Lord Jesus, at the opening of His ministry, had a whole multitude of disciples who followed Him about. But both the needs of His heart and the nature of His work led the Christ to make a selection, and to choose an inner circle of more intimate friends out of that large and loose multitude. And after much prayer, and listening carefully to the voice of the Father within Him, Jesus at last chose just twelve men to have them always with Him. They were more than His staff, they were His friends, His very brethren. But as time went on, both the drawing of His heart, and the discernment of the Father's purpose in each of the chosen ones, led their Master to make yet another selection of still more special associates, inside the circle of the twelve. And thus we may notice as we read through the Gospels from chapter to chapter, we read less and less of the *nine*, and more and more of that chosen *three* — "Peter, James, and *John*." And then, even of the select three, John more and more stands out as *the* loved disciple — the special, distinct, prominent, and by far the most intimate friend of his Master!

The root of all friendship is always found in likeness — in likeness of nature, likeness of character, likeness of mind, likeness of interests, likeness of tastes, likeness of purpose. What a validation that is, then, of John's heart, character, and purpose — to be told that, out of all

the men that our Lord met with and chose as His associates while on earth, John was the man He best loved and made His closest and most intimate friend! What a close and precious relationship they had! This is clearly and powerfully revealed in John's Gospel, for far above the other three Gospels, John wrote not about the day by day happenings in the outward ministry of Jesus, but of the deep things of the Father made known to man by the Son of His love. The depth, the spirituality, the heavenliness, the supreme divineness of John's Gospel makes it a perfect miracle of revelation, truth, and inspiration. How close must have been the likeness, how deep the love, and how perfect the friendship between Jesus and John! Little wonder, then, that when the time came for the full and complete REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, that it was to John that the heavenly vision came! And John is himself in the book of Revelation a type — representing that chosen elect, the footstep followers of the Lamb, who follow their Lord all the way from mount Calvary to mount Zion; the little remnant who turn from all the delusions of the church systems and the carnality of their own ways and wills, to lean upon His breast, to know the beat of His heart, to sup with Him in the secret place, partaking of His mind, filled with His love, one with His purpose. These have a higher heritage and are heirs to a higher calling. These have privileges, and duties to perform. These blessed ones are about their Father's business. These are arising and beginning to shine, going forth and leading the way for all who will follow. These are the *sons of love*. These have ascended into the heavens of God's Spirit, they have beheld the throne set in heaven, they have stepped into the day of the Lord, and to them is given the kingdom of Heaven!

COMPANIONS IN THE KINGDOM

"I John, who also am your brother...and *companion in the kingdom* of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9).

Some people think that the kingdom of God has been held in abeyance, it has been held up in heaven somewhere, until Jesus comes back and establishes it in the earth. Why, my beloved friend, you are just about two thousand years behind time! Don't you know Jesus already came and established His kingdom in the earth? "Now after that John was put into prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the good news of the kingdom of God, and saying, the time *is fulfilled*, and the kingdom of God *is* at hand: repent ye, and believe the good news!" (Mk. 1:14-15). "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man *is pressing into it*" (Lk. 16:16). You say, "Well, we're waiting for Jesus to come back and make the kingdom take over." Well, my beloved, He has come back *in you* in His fullness to make it take over! "That you may be accounted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven...when He shall come to be glorified *in His saints*, and to be admired *in all them that believe* in that day" (II Thes. 1:5-10). That's how it's going to take over! There will be no other take over of the kingdom of God except it comes in and through you who are hearing the word of the kingdom, who by faith and obedience are entering into the kingdom of God. The kingdom has been planted in the earth and God is now preparing and equipping a company of king-priests to expand it, extend it, and increase it, until every enemy is defeated and all things are subdued unto Jesus Christ the King!

One glorious day the firstborn Son of the living God walked among men and announced, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand." The new reign of God had come to the birth! The call went forth throughout all the earth in the power of the Spirit for men to become willing subjects of the kingdom of God. First twelve, then seventy, then vast multitudes responded to the call. On the day of Pentecost alone about three thousand precious souls, quickened by the Holy Spirit with eyes to see and ears to hear, answered the call and were gathered into the reign of God. No longer did devout men wait for the kingdom, but they were

in it, and they ate new heavenly food and drank new heavenly wine with Christ in the kingdom of heaven! Let God be praised! For His rule in ransomed hearts had begun. Everywhere men and women were translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's Son. Even in lonely exile on the isle of Patmos, John the disciple could exult that he was a brother and a companion to the saints "**in the kingdom** and patience of Jesus Christ."

The kingdom of God is established in that domain where God's *saving power* has defeated all opposition, broke down every wall, transformed all that is contrary to God's nature, mind, and will, and has brought men into willing submission to His authority. Where the nature of God and the mind of Christ have mightily conquered, the state of things is called the *Kingdom of God*. Where hearts are changed, where sin and error and darkness have been defeated, where truth and righteousness advance, where the will and ways of God are raised up as reality and life in a people, where the mind of Christ rules out of union with God — *there* the kingdom of God has come and is advancing! In the kingdom it is no longer God ruling *over you* by His sovereignty from without, but the life, mind, heart, nature, power, wisdom, knowledge and will of God *entering into you, becomes your very own reality*.

The kingdom of God that John was in, and the kingdom of God that I am proclaiming today is composed of that company of elect sons of God who have aligned themselves with God; who lean upon His breast, who listen to His voice, who put on His mind, who obey His commands, who walk in His nature, who do His will and carry out His divine purpose in the heavens and on the earth. They are loyal subjects of His kingdom, for they ever do His bidding. Their King is the Lord God Almighty and He is their Father. They obey without question; for it is their nature to do only and always those things that please the Father! They are true citizens of the kingdom of God! They are first under His rule and authority, but they are ambassadors of that divine and heavenly kingdom. They are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ! They are destined to share all His glory and sit with Him upon His throne! They are the members of the government of God and the kingdom of heaven is expressed through them and the power and the glory of the kingdom is being committed into their hands for the age and the ages to come.

Thank God for John who, in the dark distress of inhospitable Patmos, could testify, "I am your brother and companion in the kingdom of Jesus Christ." He was *on* Patmos, but he was *in* the kingdom! While the irons wore deep grooves in his arms and legs, through the long nights and the cold ground, while the rats scrounged for food, scurrying around and over the sleepers, John was living in the righteousness, peace, and joy of the kingdom! It was not on Patmos, but *in the kingdom*, that God spoke to John, and started showing John things, and He opened up to him like you would do when putting one of your video tapes in the VCR and playing it through the television. As the gulls wheeled and screamed, John was lifted up in spirit so he could see the outworking and consummation of God's great plan of the ages. All the vain things of this age passed away and the real was in the panorama before him.

Before him passed the vision of the church. He saw the condition for centuries to come. It was a mix of tragedy and triumph. He saw the four living creatures of God's divine life and dominion revealed in the holy sons of God in the midst of the throne, and he saw the twenty-four elders of the Royal Priesthood round about the throne, emanating from the throne in grace, mercy and restoration for all creation. He saw the Lamb upon the throne open the book of God's great dealings and purposes. He saw the seals of *revelation* opened, he heard the trumpets of *initiation* sounding their herald, and the vials of *consummation* bringing an end to all that opposes the kingdom. He saw the horses of conquest desolating that earth which *we are*, and he saw those slain who laid down *their lives* that they might take up the *life of Christ*. He saw the stars of human wisdom fall from the heavens of men's minds like the wind shaking figs

from a fig tree. Every mountain of man's kingdom, every stronghold of fleshly dominion was shaken so violently that none remained in its original place. The sun and moon that lighten the outer court were darkened, the trees and grass growing *out of the earth* of the carnal nature, and bearing the fruit of the works of the flesh, were completely burned up, and Mystery Babylon the Great *fell*.

John staggered as he witnessed the sealing of the hundred and forty-four thousand sons of God, with the Father's name in their foreheads, standing in the authority of God's kingdom upon the heavenly mount Zion. With amazement John gazed upon the great multitude that no man could number, the vast company of earth's redeemed, clothed in the white robes of Christ's righteousness, with palms of victory in their hands, singing praise to God and to the Lamb. He saw a new heaven of spiritual dominion and a new earth of righteous expression. He saw the city, not the city of Rome with her pomp and power, but the glorious city of God which originates in the heavens of God's Spirit. He saw the Manchild upon the throne, and the great dragon of deception, accusation and death cast into the abyss. He saw the refining inferno of the lake of divine fire which burns for the ages of the ages until all things are purified and God is All-in-all. Then he saw "*every creature* which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and *all* that are in them, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever!"

John is our companion in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ! There is on Patmos a grotto enshrined today as the place where John received the Revelation, but it was not there that he saw the glory of the unveiled many-membered Christ of God, for John was *in the Spirit* on the Lord's day when he saw all these things. You can climb Patmos' rocky slopes, you can stand there in the grotto and receive nothing. I have stood there upon that lonely mountain myself, and I testify that I received no enlightenment there. God is not on Patmos! It is in the holy mountain of God, upon the spiritual mount Zion, in the heights of the kingdom realm of God's Spirit, that God is seen, touched, and known. Those sons who are walking with God in the Spirit today are eye-witnesses of His majesty, and have heard the Voice from heaven as they stand with the Lamb upon the holy mount. We are companions with John — with Jesus — in the kingdom of God!

Chapter 17

Companions In Tribulation

"I John, who also am your brother, and *companion in tribulation*...was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9).

One of the most frequently expressed concerns among Christians is, "When is *the tribulation* going to begin?" The real question that people seldom ask is, "When is the tribulation going to *end*?" The popular teaching of the church systems is that there will be a seven-year "Great Tribulation Period" upon the whole world at the end of the church age. According to the "end-time" teachings of a number of evangelical denominations and groups, this doom is coming to the world very soon. We are, these alarmists inform us, currently in the last of the last days, and the end is upon us. Therefore, perilous times will come, the antichrist will arise upon the world scene to impose upon men the dreaded mark of the beast, and the Great Tribulation will break in savage fury upon the nations.

There are many who believe Jesus will come just prior to this time of great tribulation and rapture the church away to heaven. Some say He will come in the middle of it, and others after it is over. There have been many theological debates by so-called authorities on the subject. The more I study all these aspects, the more I wonder how they ever invented such doctrines at all — *all of them!* At the very least, the scriptures they use are completely taken out of their context. What the Bible teaches, and what most of us have been taught, are definitely two different things!

Peter, in speaking of the coming of the Lord, said, "For we have not followed *cunningly devised fables*, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty" (II Pet. 1:16). The apostles of our Lord did not teach or follow after *cunningly devised fables*. Yet, when it comes to the events that mark the transition from the church age into the new and more glorious age of the rule of the sons of God, vast multitudes are following *cunningly devised fables!* Believers have spent so much time listening to these cunningly devised fables proclaimed by the ministers of the carnal church systems that they have completely ignored the words of God that show there really is no such thing as a seven-year tribulation period! There is no scripture in the whole Bible that connects *seven years* with the mention of *tribulation*. It is a miscalculation, misinterpretation, and misrepresentation of the program of God! No doubt these misconceptions have been made by sincere men and women who love God, but I do not hesitate to say that the whole scheme of "end time events" proclaimed on television, radio, and from the pulpit is a *cunningly devised fable*.

Elaine Cook said it so well in one of their papers. "'Who's afraid of the big bad wolf, the big bad wolf?' I hear the children chant at their play. It seems many Christians are afraid of one particular wolf called '*the great tribulation*.' This fear that has been planted in their hearts prevents them from seeing God's plan and purpose for them. When I speak to some people about the kingdom, they raise up the barrier of this great tribulation that must come first. I'd like to shoot down this wolf before their eyes and render it *dead* and powerless to keep people

from walking in all that Jesus purchased for them. It's hard for believers to see that the kingdom *has come* because they believe the 'great tribulation' has to come first. Of course, they don't want to be here for *that*, so they want to make their exit out of here! Expecting Matthew 24 to be fulfilled in the *future* prevents them from seeing that the kingdom came in Acts 2. Jesus said, 'I won't drink wine with you again until I drink it *anew* with you *in the kingdom*.' On the day of Pentecost, they tasted wine that had never been drunk before, and they toasted the king and the coming of the kingdom! The kingdom is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost! So — receiving the Holy Ghost gives us the kingdom potential to walk in the kingdom! The kingdom of God came in power!

"*The big bad wolf* teaching would have Christians believe that they must go through seven years of tribulation before they can walk in the kingdom. They ask you, 'Are you pre-trib, mid-trib, or post-trib?' If they knew the scriptures, they would be none of these! They could throw the whole 'trib' out! Jesus said, 'In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world' (Jn. 16:33)" — end quote.

A number of people in this "sonship" or "kingdom" message have brought this *fable* of the "end-time great tribulation" right over from their old-order doctrines of the church systems into this present move of the Spirit and word of the kingdom. Many years ago we were in fellowship with brethren who believed that within a few years the antichrist beast government would rise up in the earth and take over the government of the United States and, indeed, of the whole world. They took this old-order Babylonish doctrine, mixed it with the present truth of sonship and the kingdom, and came up with a "hybrid" revelation that it was time for the woman (end-time body of Christ) to *flee to the wilderness* from the face of the beast. They would escape the fury of the beast and his mark, and the horrors of the great tribulation, by literally fleeing to remote wilderness areas of the world and hiding out there until the Manchild would be birthed, take the throne, and wrest power from the beast.

These brethren began to raise up "farms" in remote areas of the world, where they could become self-sufficient, living off the land. A mass exodus of saints began from all over the United States and Canada. I have stood on those end-time farms where people were preparing for the great tribulation, and witnessed those precious brethren plowing the mules, pumping water, chasing cows, slopping hogs, rising before dawn, stumbling in at the close of day bone tired, physically exhausted, and spiritually drained, then required to attend nightly meetings, sing and clap, move in the Spirit, minister the Word — and all became so dry and lifeless, going through the motions by rote, for the "cares of this life" had choked the anointing and outflow of HIS LIFE. The terrible truth is that they were far less pressured and more relaxed, more in the word, and in prayer, and in the Spirit *back in the city on their jobs before* they "fled" from "Babylon"! They had the cart before the horse, anyway, for according to chapter twelve of the Revelation the woman doesn't flee to the wilderness to birth the Manchild — the Manchild is born, caught up to the throne, and *then* the woman is carried away into the wilderness! And here we are, more than thirty years later, and the beast government *still* hasn't taken over the world, nor has the anticipated Great Tribulation begun! The "great tribulation," which is supposed to run its course for three and one half or seven years, at the end of the church age, is nothing more than the idle imaginings of men who have no knowledge of what they affirm. It is nothing but an invention of ignorance.

THE TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE

To grasp and comprehend this powerful truth, we must be able to *rightly divide* the word of truth. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,

rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). The word for "divide" is *orthotomero* meaning "to cut straight or to dissect correctly." Would God that all His saints would be enabled by the Holy Spirit to correctly dissect, or cut apart and lay open, the word of truth! In the depths of my spirit I am sure that all who read these lines, with prayerful contemplation, will be able to correctly divide truth from error in the scripture passages I shall now quote. I list below EVERY PASSAGE in the New Testament in which the word "tribulation" appears. I am using the King James Version because it is the primary one the preachers use to teach the seven-year great tribulation that is coming upon the world after the church has been raptured to heaven.

What you should look for is the context — the connection, subject, theme, setting and application of the word. See how many times tribulation applies to the *Jews*, how many times it applies to the *ungodly* or the *world*, and how many times it applies to the *saints* of God. Consider carefully in how many cases tribulation is associated with terms such as "end time," "last days," "seven years," "judgment," "wrath," "vengeance," "antichrist," "beast," "rapture," etc. When you have prayerfully examined all these scripture passages in relation to these questions God will speak and give you wisdom and understanding of His ways and His plan. When God speaks to your heart He will not merely help you to decide between the various opinions, teachings, and doctrines of men. When He speaks it is revolutionary and the opinions of men are discarded, for they are always contrary to His will. When the holy light of truth breaks forth in our minds and is established in our hearts, every stone of the old erroneous edifice of carnal man-made religious teachings will be thrown down and God will build within us a temple of truth and reality after the mind of Christ. The mind of Christ is the thought, intent, and purpose of God. The mind of Christ is the mind of eternal, immutable, omniscient wisdom. It is the mind of Christ which will govern the world in wisdom through the manifest sons of God! This is the mind that will bring order out of the fearful chaos that now exists! It is the mind of wisdom that will fill the whole earth with the knowledge of the Lord as the seas are filled with water! The mind of Christ is a priceless gem, rich and rare above all the treasures of earth!

Now here are the scripture passages on tribulation.

"But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when *tribulation* or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended" (Mat. 13:20-21).

"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth let him understand:) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains...for then shall be *great tribulation*, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be...immediately after the *tribulation of those days* shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken" (Mat. 24:15,16,21,29). This speaks of the tribulation that has come upon the *Jews* beginning in A.D. 70 with the destruction of the temple by the Roman general Titus, bringing the termination of the Jewish nation and the final and complete end of the Old Covenant of Law with its priesthood and sacrificial order. The writings of the Jewish historian, Josephus, outline the history of the incredibly horrible events of that time. History records how the Christians escaped from Judea, just as Jesus foretold. This reference is repeated in Mark 13:24.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have *tribulation*: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn. 16:33).

"Paul...departed to...Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that *we must through much tribulation* enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:21-22).

"*Tribulation* and anguish upon *every soul of man that doeth evil*, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile" (Rom. 2:9-10). This passage appears, to the inattentive reader, to promise tribulation upon every evil man. The contrast, however, is not between saints and sinners, but between two classes of people who are serving God! And it is not talking about every evil man, but every *soul* of man that doeth evil. There is a difference! On the surface one might think that Paul was vindictive or cruel by suggesting tribulation and anguish upon every *soul* of man that does evil, but when we understand that pressure is for a purpose, then we can see the end, that the soul may be saved and the evil dealt with in our lives. Oh, yes, there is *purpose* in pressure! Notice that the judgment of the Lord is to come upon "every **soul** of man that doeth evil." The Greek word for "soul" here is *psuche*, and refers to the mind, will, emotion and desire of man. This is a reference to the powers of the five senses in man, including the mind, which is the seat of consciousness. Thus, the carnal nature and the carnal mind are that part of man that experiences the Lord's indignation, wrath, tribulation and anguish, until all evil is eliminated. That is why *we must through much tribulation* enter the kingdom! God does not require His elect to pass through tribulation out of some sadistic desire to see us suffer — but He does indeed *scourge* every son whom He receives! The scourging is out of His love for us, and for our good, that we may be purified thereby. The elect are those who, because of the indwelling spirit of sonship, seek for God's highest and best. They are the spiritual ones whose vision is fixed upon "glory, honour, and immortality, eternal life." Their desire is for the glory of that incorruptible and immortal life of Christ! Others are looking no further than the temporary healing of this physical body, but we are looking beyond healing to a complete salvation in spirit, soul, and body, conformed to the image of the resurrected and glorified Christ!

"And not only so, but *we glory in tribulations* also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience..." (Rom. 5:3).

"Who shall separate *us* from the love of Christ? Shall *tribulation*, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us!" (Rom. 8:35,37).

"Blessed be God...who comforteth *us* in all *our tribulation*, that *we* may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith *we* ourselves are comforted of God" (II Cor. 1:3-4).

"Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all *our tribulation*" (II Cor. 7:4).

"Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at *my tribulations* for you, which is your glory" (Eph. 3:13).

"For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that *we* should suffer *tribulation*..." (I Thes. 3:4).

"So that *we* ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and *tribulations* that *ye endure*...seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense *tribulation* to them that trouble you" (II Thes. 1:4,6).

"I John, who also am your brother, and *companion in tribulation*" (Rev. 1:9).

"I know thy works, and *tribulation*...fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have *tribulation* ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:9-10).

"Notwithstanding I have few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols...behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into *great tribulation*, except they repent of their deeds" (Rev. 2:20,22).

"And he said unto me, These are they which came out of *great tribulation*, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 7:14).

Now — that is **every passage** in the whole New Testament in which the word "tribulation" appears! Twice it speaks of the great tribulation that came upon the Jews when God abolished the Old Testament order of Law and Sacrifices by destroying the Jewish nation, temple, and priesthood. Once tribulation is pronounced upon those who persecute the saints. Once Jesus promises great tribulation to those believers in the churches who commit spiritual fornication. AND IN EVERY OTHER PASSAGE THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAKS OF THE TRIBULATION WE ENDURE AS GOD'S ELECT! It is especially significant to note that not one single mention of either *tribulation* or *great tribulation* applies to the world or to the nations! Every mention of tribulation **in the book of Revelation** concerns the tribulation suffered by the Lord's people! Where is the seven-year Great Tribulation Period the preachers so confidently and audaciously proclaim, as though it must be written all over the pages of God's Word! With all humility of mind and with complete understanding of my own human ignorance and limitations, I want to affirm that I cannot find in the scriptures the Great Tribulation theory or any of the other so-called "end-time events" so loudly heralded from the pulpits and over radio and television. They just aren't in the Bible!

Please disabuse your mind of the erroneous notion that the great tribulation is something that comes upon the world, or upon the wicked, or upon the kingdom of the beast. Tribulation is a word that the Holy Spirit uses in the book of Revelation *only in relation to saints*! This truth cannot be stated more eloquently than it was by John W. Follette when he wrote, "Tribulation is a word that God uses in relation to saints. The etymology of the word means *threshing*. The farmer does not thresh weeds; he threshes the golden wheat that the grain may be separated *from* the chaff and the sticks. He is after grain, not trying to pound out some straw. Therefore God says, *Tribulation worketh patience*; that is, the golden grain of patience, long-suffering and kindness, comes by way of threshing or tribulation. Think of the splendid spiritual grain of character and noble living produced only through the tribulation process. The spiritual tone and quality of the mighty men of God came only through trouble and suffering.

"In the world about us, in the fields of fine music, art and literature, the artist never reaches the climax of his labors and gives to the world the best in creative beauty and strength until he has known the poignant touch of personal sorrow or grief or trouble. Oftentimes it is like a divine alchemy turning the ordinary and prosaic life into a glorious display of divine power, fortitude and beauty. It is the *use* of trouble that releases the deeper springs of our lives and sets aflow the streams of mercy and understanding which a perishing world needs" — end quote.

George Hawtin once wrote, "What man, sweltering in the consuming heat of the fiery furnace of his affliction, can understand that naught but his shackles are being removed, but not one

hair of his head is being singed? What man, receiving stripes, can know that the devastating stripes themselves are *becoming the marks of the Lord Jesus?*"

Why do men choose to believe the cunningly devised fable that "the tribulation" is the final and full outpouring of the anger, wrath, and judgment of God upon *the world*, rather than the purposeful dealing of God with His people who are to be purified, perfected, and conformed to the image of Christ? Some teachers paint a terrible picture of this tribulation which is supposed to come upon the world with phrases like: avalanche of judgment, ghastly pestilence, devastating judgments, mankind's darkest hour, incredible horrors — a judgment so terrible that God isn't going to let His church go through it. Where do men get such notions as these? Certainly not from the scriptures on tribulation! Why have men so naively overlooked the plain statements of scripture that trial, testing, chastening, pruning, purging, refining, and tribulation are specifically ordained *for those called and apprehended to sonship*? Can you not see how Christians do not love the truth, but hide from it? They don't want to pass through the tribulation that worketh patience and the nature of Christ! They prefer to believe, contrary all the testimony of God, that an angry, offended, vengeful God is going to finally give this wicked old world *just what it deserves!* And while the world is experiencing the horrors of the damned, all God's "special little saints" will be caught up on clouds of glory, indifferently and unconcernedly dancing with glee at the marriage supper of the Lamb!

The believer who has received the call to sonship and has been introduced to the spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, rejoices in hope of the glory of God and *glories in tribulation* (Rom. 5:3). That this is a supernatural experience is evident from the meaning of the words that describe the suffering which purchases for us patience, perfection, eternal life, glory, the kingdom of God and the throne of the Lord! "Tribulation" has been brought into the English language from the Latin. The verb is *tribulare*, which means, "to press, to oppress, to afflict." The Latins had a *tribulum*, a threshing sledge which separated grain from chaff. It consisted of a wooden platform studded underneath with sharp flints or iron teeth. As this instrument passed over the pile of grain the wheat was separated from the straw. We can well understand how a man undergoing afflictions would compare his sufferings with those which would be inflicted if such an instrument passed over him. Now, how can a son of God *rejoice* in such grinding pressure?

The Greek word brings us the same terrible thought, couched under slightly different imagery. The word is *thlipsis*, and originally conveyed the idea of "pressing together, pressure." The Greeks themselves did not use this word in connection with human suffering — only in the New Testament did the Holy Spirit chose this term to describe the experience of God's sons! The disciples of Christ were the first to think of themselves as being in the vat like grapes or olives, and being pressed to the point where the nature of Christ within them flowed out like wine or oil! How can we press righteousness, peace and joy from pain and sorrow as one presses wine from grapes or oil from olives?

When John the Baptist was introducing the Lord to the people, he said that Christ would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Then he continued, "Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His garner; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire." Phillips translates it this way, "He will come all ready to separate the wheat from the chaff, and to clear the rubbish from His threshing floor. The wheat He will gather into His barn and the chaff He will burn with a fire that cannot be put out."

The purpose of *threshing* is to separate the wheat from the straw and the chaff. This speaks plainly to us of the two aspects of our lives: the inner and the outer man, the spirit and the

flesh, the spiritual and the natural, the carnal mind and the mind of Christ. The stalk grows up for weeks and then the head appears before the kernel of wheat begins to form in the head. One will see fields of beautiful green wheat waving in the wind, but there is not yet any grain! It is all there, the stalk and the head, but there is no wheat in the head. That comes later. The stalk and the chaff are necessary for the formation of the wheat. Gradually the kernel of wheat begins to form, and all the life that was in the stalk and in the head settles in the kernel. As the grain comes to maturity the rest of the plant dies, dries up, and is no longer needed. The wheat is the Christ that is formed within, the rest of the plant is our natural life which was used as a vehicle or womb for the Christ life. Paul was like a farmer nurturing the Christ life in the saints, and his cry was like that of the farmer waiting for the harvest, "My little children, for whom I travail in birth again until *Christ be formed in you!*" (Gal. 4:19). You see, the farmer is not after stalks or heads — the farmer is after *grain!* He eagerly anticipates the formation and maturation of the wheat in the head!

As the Christ within us, the life of sonship, comes to maturity there must come a separation of the wheat from the chaff and the straw. There must come a separation of the inner son from the outer man, of the spirit from the flesh, of the divine from the human. The old is no longer useful, it is only in the way, and must be destroyed. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God! When the wheat in the head matures all the life settles in the grain. That is where the fullness is! That is where Christ is formed, where His life is preserved, to be revealed! The rest of the plant has to die. There is no life in it! The straw and the chaff are dry and lifeless. They serve no further purpose. The only life there is is in the kernels that have formed in the head! The only life there is in us is in the Christ who has been formed in us! The rest of us is dead. "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Phil. 3:3). There is no life in the natural man or in the carnal mind. So there has to be a separation of the old from the new, and the old must be consumed with fire. Most Christians interpret the fire to be hell fire. They think the Lord will separate the wheat (the Christians) from the chaff (the unbelievers) and cast the unsaved into hell fire. That's not what its talking about at all! "He shall thoroughly purge *His floor...*" "His floor" is the territory of His kingdom, it is the people gathered into His kingdom. God is not in the business of burning up sinners! God is in the business of burning *out of us* that which *makes us sinners!* It is the Lord's called and chosen and predestinated elect who appear on His threshing floor to be threshed and purged until nothing is left but Christ!

The threshing process, separating the wheat from the straw and the chaff, is one of beating, tearing, and rubbing. In ancient times the wheat was trampled by the feet of the oxen. Oxen were driven back and forth over the wheat until the separation was complete. Another method was to beat it with a flail. This was a stick and the wheat was pounded with it until the kernels were knocked from the heads. The modern combines have a rub bar process where the wheat is subjected to pressure and rubbed between two surfaces. Whatever the method used, the process of separation is not an easy one! It is not a pleasant experience! The separating of our fleshly ways from our walk in the Spirit is not a pleasurable experience either! The separation of our carnal religious traditions from the expression of our new spirit man is not a simple process. The separation of our human will from the will of God is not easy. It may *sound* easy, but believe me when I say it is not easy! The Lord has to beat us, just as a stubborn child sometimes has to be beaten with the rod of correction. The Lord has to tramp us, pound us, tear us, put us under pressure and rub until our flesh man is separated from our spirit man and there is none of the old self nature left to pollute the kingdom of God, to desecrate His temple, or to threaten the righteousness of His throne within us.

The separating is accompanied with much suffering. The firstborn Son of God was *made perfect* through the things He *suffered!* There is no other method by which we will be perfected also. George Wylie certainly understood these processings of the Lord when he wrote, "Perfection is not attained on any pathway of roses. It is a rugged, torturous way strewn with sufferings, pain, sorrow and grief, oftentimes beyond what we think we can bear. Sometimes the process is so severe as to cause His elect to cry unto Him day and night. Many days and nights I have cried unto Him, saying, 'How long, O Lord, how long?' When subjected to some fiery trials in the past I have often said to the Lord, 'Lord, it is enough, I can't take any more; please remove it, take this load from me.' This was a prayer He never answered and I am glad now that He never did! When I prayed like this, instead of lightening the trial He heaped more on me. Instead of turning down the heat He turned it up, making it hotter. I don't pray that way any longer! My cry now is, 'Lord, keep the fire burning until the purifying process is complete, until there is nothing left of this old corruptible man and you have a vessel that is sanctified and meet for your use.' Those whom He has called and chosen for this high calling are being put through the refining fires now; they are being persecuted, tramped upon, slandered, buffeted, subjected to suffering, pain, and sorrow and they cry unto God day and night. They are not crying for deliverance from the trials, but for grace and strength to bear it until the process is finished" — end quote.

Oil and wine are biblical symbols of joy, revelation, and life. Oil and wine represent the *inner essence* of the fruit from which they come. Olives and grapes are the fruits which produce oil and wine but they are not oil and wine themselves. In Palestine we find olives and grapes that have never fulfilled their true destiny! The olive shrinks and is wrinkled. A hungry man will eat such olives, and the poor people put them into their food; but the richness has evaporated. Grapes that remain on the vine harden, and after a time they are pulpy and dry. They will keep for months, dry all the time, and will still be nourishing, but the wine is gone, and the raisins excite a thirst for the juice that is not there. Such olives and grapes are better than nothing, but they are not substitutes for oil and wine! The fact is, the only way to preserve the inner essence of the olives and the grapes is to extract it from them in the form of oil and wine!

Are you satisfied with olives and grapes? Be sure they will dry up in your storehouse and will never flow out to quicken, nourish and bless humanity! Oil and wine bring lasting joy and strength and life, not olives and grapes. And surely you can see that it is not possible to have oil and wine unless olives are *pressed* and grapes are *crushed!* Even the finest fruit will not yield its essence without this process. Indeed, the finer the fruit the firmer the skin, and the heavier the pressure must be put upon it to burst its surface that the juices may flow. If the Christ life in us is to be released to humanity, we must be crushed!

To have oil and wine you must have olives and grapes. The natural man cannot bring forth the life of Christ or the ministry of sonship, because he has no fruit from which they can be produced. Religion is the product of the natural man, but religion has no life! Only the new creation man of the spirit has within him the life of God. If you are walking after the fleshly mind you can bring forth no quickening life because you have nothing but thorns and thistles. Crush them and you get thorn juice and thistle milk which never made the heart of any man rejoice! The natural man can observe rituals and ceremonies, obey rules and regulations, and do many good religious works, but he can never be conformed to the image of Christ and he can never reveal out of himself the life of God that sets creation free. This comes only from God's oil and wine; and these, in turn, are pressed only from God's olives and grapes!

Most Christians are content with the knowledge that they have olives and grapes in the garden of their life. They take a certain pride in the fact that the Lord has visited them and has digged

the earth and pruned the trees and vines; He has also sent seasons of refreshing and watered them with care and even gathered fruit. They consider themselves a fruitful bough in a fertile garden. And the fruit of their lives certainly does become a blessing to many! But those who are called to sonship have been made aware that God is after something more than that. He is after grain that has been threshed, and olives that have been pressed, and grapes that have been crushed! He is after the inner kernel, the oil, and the wine where the essence and power of the inner life is brought forth. The presence of fruit alone does not satisfy the heart of the Father. Nor can it be preserved to meet the need of creation. God has caused a people in these days to become dissatisfied with the mere production of olives and grapes. If you are satisfied with grain in the head, or with olives and grapes in the vineyard of your life, you will never flow out to creation in grace, love, and power!

The olives must be pressed and the grapes must be crushed! "*We must through much tribulation* (pressure) enter into the kingdom of God." For this the Lord has many different processes. In all vintage countries proprietors of great vineyards have their own secrets for making wines. Connoisseurs tell the difference between the products of one vineyard and another by their tastes. Soil, sun, method of preparation, all enter into the final product. So the Lord works in each of us to bring forth a particular brand, expression, or dimension of His life that we may impart. To each He gives a new name which no man knows saving he that receives it! (Rev. 2:17). To that end the Lord is now working in the lives of all His elect sons, first growing olives and grapes in the vineyard of our life, and then pressing them out so that there may be oil and wine to bless creation. We cannot know the quality of the work of God in us except when the pressure comes! What flows out of our lives when we are pressured? Ah, have there not been those times when there was nothing but thorns and thistles, and anger, bitterness, complaining, unbelief, and ungodliness flowed out when we were crushed. But what a mighty work the Lord has been doing in us! Yet — we can never know the true quality of the Christ life formed within us until the pressures come and the essence is literally squeezed out of us! In the measure that we welcome infirmities and tribulations, we shall glory in them and realize afresh the power of Christ to transmute the suffering into glory and distill the nature of Christ from tribulation.

Yes, my beloved, the Lord is growing His olives and His grapes in the gardens of our lives, and He will press out His oil and His wine! He will give us such an expression of the outflowing of the nature, love, wisdom, glory and power of Christ that nothing else in the world will charm us like the knowledge that we are the sons of HIS LIFE. It is evident that this kind of living is miraculous, for it is not in the capacity of the natural man to give forth oil and wine. It is natural to whine and sigh and cry in adversity! The worldling often lives such a life of failure, and, alas, many Christians settle down to the same low level. But our Father has called and ordained us for better things and higher realms! We are learning to *glory in tribulations*, for we have been called to the kingdom for such a time as this!

God is constructing a temple, built of *living stones*, out of which to manifest His glory in the age and the ages to come. Tribulation has been prepared as a chisel and hammer to be used in the constructing of this building. The living stones that even now are being placed in this temple have been chosen in the furnace of affliction and in the crucible of suffering. It has been necessary that an oven be heated in which to purify the gold for God's temple, a furnace in which all the dross is separated from the gold, and all the hay, wood, and stubble is burned up from our lives. When we realize that behind every happening of our lives is the mighty hand of God working to bring forth gold from these earthen vessels, we can rejoice, as David, in our afflictions and trials and exclaim with him, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes" (Ps. 119:7). When we begin to see the good that comes from the

pressures in our lives, we are able to appreciate all the more the greatness of our God and the depth of the wisdom of His great mind!

The carnal mind says, "I see no value or purpose in all this trouble and tribulation." The carnal mind is shrewd as a lawyer looking for a loophole! The carnal mind doesn't like it or want it! But the mind of Christ knows that the servant is not above his Lord. The disciple is not above his Master who learned obedience through the things He suffered. God is preparing a people who cannot be moved, upset, or frustrated by *anything*! The cry of His heart is for a people who can share His throne and shepherd the nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 2:26-27). These have to be people of character who are unshakable. We cannot afford the luxury of our personal feelings. WE HAVE NO "RIGHTS." If we do, we'll lose them in the fire of our *great tribulation*! Our testings will last as long as it takes to change our mind, attitude, and actions. Can we walk around in the furnace without complaining? Can we sing and dance in the fire? Can we shout praises in jail at midnight? Ah, beloved, there is *purpose* in affliction. There is *purpose* in trial. There is *purpose* in suffering. There is *purpose* in tribulation!

Well has George Hawtin written: "I would to God that all God's elect might see that everything everywhere is working tirelessly and endlessly to produce *sonship* in those who are the *called according to His purpose*. Everywhere! Everything! Temptations, tears, heartaches, unfaithful friends and brethren, loss of property, loss of business, perils, hateful neighbors, fiery furnaces, dens of lions, rugged crosses, and isles of exile! *All things! All things! All things*, too numerous to mention, are working for the good of God's elect, and are adding, though unseen now, an exceeding and eternal weight of glory to us."

We who have endured our share of the persecutions of Christ shall be abundantly blessed of the Lord to receive our inheritance in the kingdom of God. "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." As we look beyond the present, with its trials and tribulations, we will see the glory of the fullness of the kingdom of God that is yet before us. The darkness of this present world, with its evil, ignorance, beastliness, and violence, is rapidly fleeting. The new morning, with the fullness of the light and glory of God and His kingdom spread upon the face of all nations, is ready to dawn upon the whole earth. It is time for a new and unprecedented *move of God*! *All* the moves of former days have grown old as a garment and are now weak, anemic, feeble, exhausted, impotent, languishing and ready to pass away. The next move of God in the earth will be the *manifestation of the sons of God* and the hour for this manifestation draws nigh.

One morning a couple of cowpunchers went out on the range to bring in a wild steer from the mountains. They took along with them one of those shaggy little gray donkeys — a burro. Now a big three-year old steer that's been running loose in the timber is a tough customer to handle. Nevertheless, these cowboys had a technique for handling this steer. They got a rope on the steer and then they tied him neck and neck, right up close, to the burro and let them go. At first, the burro had a bad time. The steer threw him all over the place. He banged him against trees, rocks, and into bushes. Time after time they both went down. But there was one great difference between the burro and the steer. The burro had an idea. He wanted to go home! And no matter how often the steer threw him, every time the burro got to his feet he took a step nearer the corral. This went on and on. After a week, the burro showed up at the corral. He had with him the tamest and sorriest-looking steer you ever saw!

The thought of this little burro, being overpowered and abused can encourage us when we find ourselves struggling with difficult problems or people in our lives. We often feel tied, "right up close." If we could only have some slack! But our Father had a purpose in tying us to our

problems. He knows that the faith of the son of God in us will enable us to hang in there! No matter how often we are thrown, our tenacious spiritual nature will enable us to get to our feet and take a step nearer to God's victory! We may be abused and hurt. But just think of the tremendous outcome — that we might eventually stand before the throne of our Father — an *overcomer* indeed! You see, my beloved, God's techniques make sense after all!

If you will look closely at the scriptures you will see that it has never been God's purpose to save His people *from* tribulation, but to bring them *through* tribulation and *out of* tribulation victoriously on the other side. Consider the case of Daniel. He was a man of God who lived among a people who hated God and hated His people. Daniel was also a man who prevailed with God in prayer! Yet God arranged for him to be thrown into a den of lions. While this was going on, Daniel was no doubt praying earnestly for deliverance. But what did God do? He didn't stop the enemies of Daniel! He allowed them to throw Daniel into the den with the starving lions! However, God delivered Daniel *by being with him in the lion's den!* God stopped the mouths of the lions, and as a result the God of heaven was magnified throughout all the kingdom of Babylon!

We cannot dictate to God the way that He will deliver us, or to what extent He is going to allow us to be thrust into the fires of tribulation. God is sovereign! He ordains for every son to be tried just as the firstborn Son was tested by the devil in the wilderness. No matter how difficult the situation, God is ingenious and has a thousand ways to glorify His name through our tribulation that we have never even thought of!

Another example of this is that of the three Hebrew children who, during the time of the Babylonian captivity, were thrown into the fiery furnace for refusing to bow down to the idol statue of the Babylonian king. Could God have prevented them from being cast into the furnace? Of course He could! But instead He allowed them to be bound and thrown into the flames. These young men did not dictate to God how He should deliver them, or even whether He should deliver them. They knew that the greater evil from which they needed to be delivered was that of disobeying and dishonoring the Lord! They were more concerned about being delivered from this sin than being delivered from the fiery furnace! They were willing to die rather than reproach the name of the Lord within themselves. But there was *one in the midst!* Ah, today my beloved, there is *one in the midst* of us who walks with us in all our troubles! He is there, always there, for He is the one in the midst of each of us. It is the Christ! He is the Lord of the fires! He is the Creator of the lions! All is in His omnipotent hands, and He dwells within every son of God. Oh, the wonder of it! We do know and testify that every happening in our lives is freighted with divine purpose. Many of God's elect today are passing through pressing and trying times, yet we praise God for all the processings and dealings by which we are made overcomers. Truly the Father is bringing us into new dimensions of faith, wisdom, love, and the image of God! We know that we stand on the threshold of a divine breakthrough into higher realms of life and glory! We must press through tribulation. We must learn God's purposes and His ways. God's intent is not to take us **out** of pressure, but to lead us by His Spirit and bring us **through** pressure. "Yea, though I walk **through** the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: **for Thou art with me...**" What a wise and strong and glorious people we shall be when the work is completed!

"He turned the sea into dry land: they went **through** the flood on foot...for Thou, O God, hast proved us: Thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net; Thou laidst affliction upon our loins. Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went **through** fire and **through** water: but Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place" (Isa. 66:6,1-12).

Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. Who passing **through** the valley of Baca (weeping) maketh it a well; the rain also filleth the pools. They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God" (Ps. 84:5-7).

"Our fathers understood not Thy wonders in Egypt...He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up: so He led them **through** the depths, as **through** the wilderness. And He saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy"(Ps. 106:7-12).

"To Him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for His mercy endureth for ever: with a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm...to Him which divided the Red Sea into parts...and made Israel to pass **through** the midst of it...but overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea...to Him which led His people **through** the wilderness..." (Ps. 136:10-18).

"And I will bring the third part **through** the fire, and I will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: and they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God" (Zech. 13:9).

"But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel. Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passeth **through the waters**, I will be with thee; and **through** the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: and when thou walketh **through** the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour..." (Isa. 43:1-3).

"They returned again...confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must **through** much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:21-22).

God is forming His Son and building His kingdom in our lives! If you desire Him to construct His nature in your life, then you, O child of God, must learn this one simple and sublime truth: In every situation and circumstance, in every difficulty and problem, in every test and trial, in all trouble and tribulation — God *will* bring you **THROUGH!**

Chapter 18

Companions In Tribulation

continued

"I John, who also am your brother, and *companion in tribulation*...was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9).

Most people have the idea that tribulation means wrath, judgment, torment and vengeance. The Greek word is *thlipsis*, meaning "pressure." It is derived from the word *thilbo* that means "to crowd, to be pressed upon in a narrow place." Ray Prinzing wrote, "Pressures are used to PRESS US INTO THE KINGDOM! Trying to pray ourselves out of these distresses only defeats their very purpose. But when, in the midst of our pressures, we pray that God would bring us *deeper into Himself*, then these very straits have served their purpose — for they have channeled us *into Him*."

Another brother has written, "For many years scientists have been aware that the gem of gems, the diamond, was fashioned in deposits of carbon by extreme pressure of the earth's inward forces. This was demonstrated some years ago when General Electric announced the development of a 'successful synthesis of diamonds' which took pressure of more than 1,500,000 pounds per square inch at temperatures of 5,000 degrees Fahrenheit for hours at a time. The principle of pressure is found in every aspect of natural life, for it holds the secret power. Coal, produced by pressure upon an accumulation of dead leaves and vegetation, operates huge factories and supplies energy to millions of homes. Raging torrents wear crevasses and form beautiful waterfalls. Stored reservoirs of water generate mighty dynamos.

"Life itself depends on pressure! A butterfly can only gain strength to fly when it is allowed to push itself through the walls of its cocoon. Even the minutest seed must burst to bring forth new life. Pressure applied at the right spot can stop the flow of blood from an arterial cut and save a life. Strength is developed through pressure. You would not receive any water from the faucet or sufficient gas to warm your home or cook a meal if it were not for pressure. Underground pressure can cause a mighty artesian stream of life-giving water to gush forth! The thought of pressure applies also in the spiritual realm. If extreme pressures are needed to form a diamond, can we wonder that God allows the heat to be turned on when He desires to develop jewel-like qualities in us?" — Don Bruce, Springs in the Desert.

There are gems of varying quality, depending upon the amount of pressure applied and the length of time subjected to that pressure. What intense pressure and heat are required to make a diamond! In the kingdom of God there are spiritual gems, the Lord's "jewels," of varying worth in the kingdom depending upon the measure of the processing. Some brethren today don't believe in processing — just the finished work. Jesus did indeed offer up Himself once for all for our redemption, but one has to be extremely naïve to believe that that *finishes the work in us*! Thank God, though we are forced to say with Paul, "We are pressed out of measure," we need not despair as we keep our eyes upon Jesus, the Captain of our salvation.

He is our forerunner who went into the wilderness to be tempted, tried, tested, pressed by the devil — and He returned from His wilderness experience IN THE FULLNESS OF THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT OF HIS SONSHIP! He has left us the example that we should follow Him, suffer with Him, and then reign with Him!

JOHN'S TRIBULATION ON PATMOS

When on Patmos John said that he was our *companion in tribulation*. Let us look for a moment at the historical background of John's tribulation. According to the church father, Irenaeus, who had fellowship with those who had personally known the apostles, the book of Revelation was written during the great persecution which had taken place "not long ago, but almost in our generation, toward the end of Domitian's reign," between the years A.D. 93 and 96. This is the view which was overwhelmingly held by the early church, and I believe it is the correct one. This is the almost unanimous testimony of all the great church leaders, from the second century onward.

The Preterist theory, which attempts to assign the date of the book of Revelation to the persecution under Nero, who died in the summer of the year A.D. 68, breaks down on every point. Nero's persecution was restricted to Rome, and there is nothing to show that it ever extended to Asia Minor. Furthermore, the persecution under Nero was not on the grounds of religious belief. He wished to avert from himself suspicion of the crime of having burned the city of Rome, and therefore attempted to implicate the new sect called "Christians." He certainly would not have reached into far-away Asia Minor to imprison Christians there for burning Rome! This was A.D. 64, and there is no proof that his fiendish cruelties to the infant church continued to his death four years later. On the contrary, the martyrdoms under Domitian between the years A.D. 93 and 96 were due to a refusal on the part of Christians to worship the emperor as divine. The ground of persecution, therefore, indicates the reign of Domitian, and not that of Nero. In addition, there is no evidence that Nero *banished* Christians — he put them to death! But banishment is distinctively known as a form of punishment inflicted by Domitian and his persecutions did indeed reach into Asia Minor.

The epistle of Paul to the Ephesians (one of the seven churches of Asia), written in A.D. 61 or 62, abounds with tributes to the *love* then existing among the Ephesian saints. It is an epistle of high spiritual vision, with no hint of departure from the love and life of the Spirit. Timothy was still ministering in the Ephesian church in A.D. 68. Yet, when the Ephesian church is addressed by the Lord in the book of Revelation, He says, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy *first love*" (Rev. 2:4). This rebuke by the Lord obviously belongs to a time later than Paul's epistle and Timothy's ministry! The condition of all the seven churches in Asia, as described in the book of Revelation, implies that they had been in existence for some considerable time. They had a history behind them that had developed with time into distinctive and entrenched characteristics. Errors had become deeply rooted and widespread. Also, they were experiencing martyrdom on a scale that would not have been happening in the days of Nero.

Patmos is a lonely, barren, rocky, volcanic, sun-scorched island in the Aegean Sea, some seventy miles southwest of Ephesus, the city in which John had been living and ministering for some years. The island is about ten miles long and six miles wide, with hills rising to about a thousand feet. On account of its dreary character, the emperor Domitian used it as a place of banishment for prisoners. The distinguished archaeologist, Sir William Ramsay, tells us that John's banishment was characterized by inadequate food, shelter, and clothing — he slept on

the bare ground. He also suffered the stinging lash and perpetual physical restraints placed upon him by a military overseer.

To this day only a handful of people eke out an existence on Patmos, where there is a dingy grotto with a cave where tradition says John lived and wrote the book of Revelation. Today most of the people who live on the island of Patmos are fisherfolk. The island is also a secluded paradise for tourists. But when John was banished there for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ, it was no paradise! There were no restaurants and no plush beach resorts. There were no air-conditioned hotels with carpeted conference rooms where Spirit-filled business men could give their testimonies of how God had blessed them and made them millionaires. It was a place of long, lonely nights and cold ground, where rats scrounged for food and nibbled at the toes of the sleepers. There it was that John was exiled and the heavens opened unto him!

John was in the isle of Patmos "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." That is how the King James Bible reads, but that is not quite correct. The Greek word is *dia* which means *through*, not *for*. The true meaning is that John was "in the isle that is called Patmos, *through* the word of God." In other words, God *sent* him there! The Roman emperor Domitian didn't send him there. The devil didn't send him there. GOD sent him there! John was on Patmos through the word of God! Does that not speak to us that we, also, are where we are today by divine appointment? All our steps are ordered by the Lord! The infinite wisdom of God's mind cannot be ascertained by these carnal little heads of ours. We must banish our childish theology and bring our minds into harmony with the mind of Christ. We must peer through the mighty telescope of God's wisdom as it looks through the vast universe of good and evil until heavenly light bursts with blazing brilliance upon our inquiring spirits and we see with crystal-clear vision that God is in all things, and is responsible for all things, the simple and mundane as well as the great and the heavenly, the so-called evil things as well as the good. Oh yes, beloved, if you are in the upper room with its rushing mighty wind, its flaming tongues of fire, and its irresistible Holy Ghost power, God arranged for you to be there! And if you are breaking stones under the blistering heat of your far-away Patmos, God has put you there! It was God who chose your parents and the date and place of your birth. God selected the area where you would be raised, your associates, your friends, and your enemies. God arranged everything that has come into your life, the good and the evil. All the happenings of our lives are ordained by our Father to further our growth and development in Him. He knows exactly what is needed to make us what He purposes, and it is He who issues the orders that determine our destiny.

I have heard again and again that the name Patmos means "the place of my killing." That may be so, but after extensive research I have not found any etymological (the study of the origin and history of words) evidence for it. The only hint I have found concerning a meaning for Patmos is from Cruden — he says Patmos comes from a root which means "to be crushed or squeezed." That certainly corresponds with the word *tribulation* — PRESSURE! John on Patmos said, "I am your brother, and *companion in tribulation*." It should be evident to all that John was not, in type, *killed* on Patmos, but he most certainly was *crushed, squeezed, and pressured!* And such has been the history of God's called and chosen elect!

For the elect of God, called to sonship and the kingdom of God, the pressures are increasing, not diminishing. Travail is upon us, as upon a woman with child. To the woman in pain, ready to be delivered, the doctor commands, "Press! Press! Press!" And to you who read these these lines I exhort, "*Press on*, dear ones, for a *son* is about to be birthed!" Through great travail and pressure the Manchild shall come forth and we shall enter into the kingdom of God as kings

and priests to reign with Christ. Then all the earth, all men, and all nations shall behold the glory of the Lord on a level it has never been seen before! The many-membered son, the complete Christ, the many sons brought to glory shall bring forth mighty deliverance in the earth! Only those who are brothers and partakers with the exile of Patmos in the tribulation and patience of Jesus shall win the kingdom of heaven. To him that overcomes, and to none but him, will the King give to sit down with Him in His throne. The watchword is — **PRESS!**

The idea that the "Great Tribulation" is going to be poured out upon the *world* is a stupidity that contradicts *every scripture passage* on tribulation in the whole New Testament! Perhaps we have been casual in reading the very words of the Lord Jesus to His own, "In the world ye shall have *tribulation*: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn. 16:33). Mark the connection of thought! He clearly did not say, "On this earth the world is going to get the tribulation. I will surely rain out upon the unbelieving, misguided, sinful and rebellious masses of earth the fierceness of my wrath and the fury of my judgment. But be of good cheer, precious little ones, for *you* will not be partakers of this tribulation — I will come and evacuate you to heaven before that great and terrible day of the Lord comes." No such optimistic tantalization as this! The testimony of the Lord standeth sure, "In the world YE shall have tribulation." YE!

Tribulation simply means "pressure," and great tribulation mean "great pressure." Everybody, on some level, experiences pressure in this world. Pressure, in modern medical terms, is called *external stress factors*. Physicians now recognize the great importance of *internal stress*, caused by reaction to external stress factors, in causing and aggravating a host of diseases. In *this world* all of us are subjected to a host of stresses — just as Jesus said! Examination of the blood of a person experiencing internal stress will reveal the presence of abnormal toxic chemical compounds that are formed as a result of his emotions of frustration, resentment, anger, hate, anxiety, worry and fear — which result in a number of diseases. The cares of *this world* have turned many peoples lives into a pressure cooker. Not to speak of war, persecution, or martyrdom — just the strain of everyday living in our modern society is steadily growing worse because of financial problems, higher taxes, inflation, recession, joblessness, terrorism, the disturbing world situation, responsibilities, sickness, hospital bills, rebellion in the home, drugs, street gangs and a host of other conditions.

The distractions and pressures of "this life" are too numerous to mention, we are all faced with them every day, but when they so **overwhelm** us, so mar our lives with anxiety, stress, fatigue and distraction that we find ourselves so distressed and depressed that we are not able to gather ourselves together and walk in the joy, peace, and victory of the kingdom of God — then we have not discovered that HE THAT IS WITHIN US IS MIGHTY AND HAS **OVERCOME THE WORLD!** When we live in the consciousness of the *outer man* we are burdened with cares, pressured, tense, irritable, discouraged, hopeless, enticed by the flesh, in no spiritual frame of mind. But when we truly find the reality of the Christ within, learning to wait in the presence of the Lord, thinking with a spiritual mind, and begin to live out of the *inner man*, I testify to you that the Spirit of His Life flows out of our innermost being and then, with no special ado, even without seeking or asking, just exposing ourselves to the transforming power of His life, and the transcendent excellence of His mind, the spirit of our sonship graciously sweeps through our being, quickening the mind, cleansing the emotions, washing away the tension and frustration, breaking in the sweetness of His presence the relentless demands of the flesh, rolling back the brassy heavens, bringing glorious victory!

Ah, "In the world ye shall have *pressure!* But — be of good cheer — take courage, be confident, certain, undaunted, enheartened, inspired, invigorated — for I HAVE OVERCOME

THE WORLD!" The mighty Christ is raising up within the life of every son of God in this new kingdom day of the Lord the victory that **overcomes the world with all its pressures!** HE overcame the world in the body of Jesus of Nazareth, and now He is doing the same within us! Praise His name!

There is a poem by Louise S. Pridgeon that expresses this so beautifully:

Pressed out of measure and pressed to all length,
Pressed so intensely it seems, beyond strength;
Pressed in the body and pressed in the soul,
Pressed in the mind till the dark surges roll.
Pressed by foes, and a pressure from friends,
Pressure on pressure, till life nearly ends.
Pressed into knowing no helper but God;
Pressed into loving the staff and the rod.
Pressed into liberty where nothing clings;
Pressed into faith for impossible things.
Pressed into living a life in the Lord,
Pressed into living a Christ-life outpoured!

All across the land today we hear the radio and television preachers convincing vast multitudes of naïve and gullible babes in Christ that the saints of God should have the best of everything. They should have instant healing, the most lucrative businesses, the finest homes, the most prestigious positions, the most expensive cars, the finest clothes, and freedom from want or pressure of any kind. Why, they will even bless our billfolds for ten dollars and assure us that, if we will give them one hundred dollars, we will get one thousand in return! Then, wonder of wonders, when these highly favored saints have lived their lives in ease and luxury, they will fly away to heaven at last with nothing to do and all eternity to do it in. And if the great and terrible tribulation should come while they are still on earth, they will be immediately evacuated by way of rapture to spend seven years sitting on a cloud with Jesus eating pork chops, or some other such foolishness. Let all who teach these fairy tales hear the voice of eternal truth ringing clear above all other voices, "In the world *ye shall have tribulation*: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world!" I hear Christ warn His beloved saints in these awesome words, "Yea, and A-L-L that live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer persecution*." To all who would reign with Him upon His throne He says, "*If we suffer*, we shall also reign with Him." To those who seek the glory, power, and honor of the kingdom of God He declares, "Ye must through *much tribulation* enter into the kingdom of God." And Paul adds his voice of admonition, "And not only so, but we *glory in tribulations* also: *knowing that tribulation worketh patience...*"

One well-known television preacher was bombarding the air waves with the tearful complaint that he was being "persecuted" by the press. And what was the cause of his persecution? Why bless your heart, the press had discovered that while pleading a financial emergency and making impassioned appeals on his show for millions of dollars to keep his work from collapsing, he was, at the same time, secretly purchasing an elaborate beach house in California, and Rolls Royce and Mercedes automobiles for his personal use at a cost of almost a half million dollars, not to mention the expensive furs and diamonds accumulated by his wife. Persecution indeed! I am making no mistake when I tell you that this man was not being persecuted for righteousness' sake, nor for the faith of Jesus, nor for the word of God, nor yet for the kingdom of God — rather, he was being persecuted for foolishness' sake, and that is stating it kindly. Over the last forty years there has been a bumper crop of these worldly-minded deceivers, and I tell you the truth when I say that such know nothing at all about the

path of sonship and conformation to the image of Christ that comes only by the correcting and transforming ministry of suffering, persecution, tribulation, trial and testing.

The shallow Christians and the hireling ministry of the church systems know absolutely nothing about the divine principle of the refining, purifying fires of suffering, or the oil and wine of revelation and life that flow out only through the tremendous pressing and crushing of tribulation and trouble. As long as men's eyes are blinded to the great and glorious purposes of God for His sons in the ages to come, they will be looking for a spiritual life of ease and a short-cut to glory, remaining blissfully ignorant of the supernal blessings of suffering with Christ. When believers are deluded by the popular but erroneous notion that they have been saved to escape this sin-cursed world and spend eternity shouting and dancing up and down Hallelujah Boulevard to the rapturous music of harps and the fluttering of angel's wings, then indeed there would be little purpose in suffering during this present time at all, for even if saints were no worse off for their suffering, they would be no better either!

When the eternal Father through His matchless grace reveals to the child of God that it is His Master Plan for the ages to come to effect a universal reconciliation, restitution, and restoration through the agency of a royal race of kings and priests who through trial, suffering, and fierce tribulation have experienced within themselves the sorrows and pressures of this dark world, thereby learning infinite compassion and unconditional love for every anguished, tormented, pain-wracked, enslaved soul of man, then all our tribulation is freighted with divine significance! When we clearly see the sublime and incontrovertible truth that it is through much tribulation that we are conformed into the image of Christ the King-Priest, to reign and work with Him in the plenitude of His wisdom, the perfection of His holiness, the fullness of His understanding, the intensity of His compassion, the infiniteness of His love, the beauty of His justice, and the omnipotence of His power, every son having the mind of God, discerning all things, knowing all things and having the perfect nature, character, and ability to carry out the intricate and infinite will of God, then all our tribulation will redound to the glory of God and the eternal blessing of all creation! Among that perfect, omnipotent race of king-priests there will be no carnal minds, no fleshly actions, no emotional responses, no selfish desires, no self-serving, no weakness, no limitation, no mistakes, no dissensions, no disobedience; but with justice, wisdom, understanding, compassion, righteousness, love and power shall they shepherd the nations, and ultimately the vastnesses of the unbounded heavens until all things everywhere are subdued unto Christ, and Christ shall present a perfect kingdom to the Father.

Now since such glories are in store for the sons of God, can any man longer question why our all-wise heavenly Father should take such pains to bring His sons to perfection? None knows better than He exactly what is needed to transform His sons from corrupt and carnal creatures of the dust to beings of divine understanding and heavenly glory. I have often said that I have strong confidence in the ability of my heavenly Father to bring me to perfection and maturity as a son of God. My Father is a great son-raiser! He was a colossal success with His firstborn! Anyone who can raise a Son like Jesus Christ knows exactly what He is doing and can surely handle you and me, my precious brother and sister! "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing *many sons* unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect *through sufferings*...wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him the name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Heb. 2:9-10; Phil. 2:9-10).

Beholding the glory of Jesus Christ we can understand why the Father takes such infinite care to bring all His sons to perfection! Would you dare to imagine that any of the presidents, prime ministers, senators or members of the parliaments of this present world system would be found fit candidates to straighten out the mess this world is in, bringing an end to crime, poverty, ignorance, violence, fear, deceit, greed, war, broken homes and hearts, sickness, pain, and death, restoring all into God again? Ah, the ages to come will be given into the hands of God's *choicest sons* — saints fully developed, perfected through suffering, matured through trial, proven through testing, beyond the reach of corruption, greed, selfishness, limitation, or any such thing. For twenty long centuries the Father has been meticulously qualifying and forming His government for the ages to come by the work of the Holy Spirit in His elect. The hour for the presentation of this government of His sons is nigh at hand!

This great work of perfection is done by the Holy Spirit leading us through the counsels, corrections, and disciplines of the Father. As the pressures and persecutions of this world system come against those who are moving on in the Spirit of God, the very test and fire is our purifying fire! It purges out the dross, making us smaller and smaller in our own eyes, and meek and humble in the mighty life of God being wrought in us. As we surrender more and more to Christ in us, it makes our natural man perish more and more until he is completely dead so that Christ alone can come forth in us.

There is a natural law in human experience that proclaims the means by which the sons of God shall be made manifest. When we want to temper a piece of steel, we place it in the fire and heat it until it is red hot. When it is almost at the melting point, we plunge it in the cold water. It almost instantly becomes hard for perfect use. So God, when He brings us forth as His sons, places us in the furnace of trials and testings, bringing us to the melting point. When we are tested to the breaking point, then He plunges us into the refreshing cold water of the River of Life. Then we become the manifest sons of God!

Not one son of God can escape the process! You can be a nice sweet Christian and go to heaven when you die without suffering or tribulation. But you cannot be a *son* apart from chastening and tribulation! You can be saved by grace and blessed with all the free gifts of God without testing and trial. But you cannot *reign* with Christ apart from being perfected by the things you suffer! And, matters not how much revelation we have, you and I still need to be purified; we need to be heated, beaten and pressed! Sometimes when the word of the Lord comes to us our understanding is unfruitful, it speaks nothing to us, there is simply no light. There is no light until one day God places His hand of dealing upon us and so orders our circumstances that we are brought under a certain kind of pressure. Under this pressure we turn to the Lord and suddenly His word to us gives light! Oh, we must have the dealing hand of God! Under pressure and bruising we turn to the Lord in a deeper, more intense way, and the Spirit moves mightily on our behalf to guide, comfort, encourage, rebuke, teach, correct, counsel, reveal, instruct, develop, strengthen, mature and perfect us. In all this the Spirit operates and we learn the ways of the Father! There comes the expression of His grace and glory and power in our walk. Then not only are we blessed, but the heart of the Father is satisfied, and through us creation will be touched by God!

COMING OUT OF GREAT TRIBULATION

Life on this earth is filled with affliction, reverses, calamities, heartbreak, disappointment, trouble, suffering and tribulation — everything that breaks and processes and molds the character of God into our lives. People often say, and sometimes even those called to sonship say, "I don't know why God allowed all this to happen to me!" Ah, that's an easy thing to solve!

He lets it happen because we *need it!* When it happens we don't think we need it, it seems that God is unjust or has turned against us or forsaken us. We are like little children. My father used to tell me, when he gave me a threshing with his razor strap for some act of disobedience, "Son, this hurts me more than it hurts you. I do this because I love you!" And under my breath I was muttering, "Oh, yeah! I'll bet!" I couldn't believe that! It took me many years to understand the heart of my father, but after growing up into a responsible and mature manhood, having children of my own, at last I understood. That which appears to be unneedful and unjust becomes our crown and our glory when the process is finished and at last we *understand!* Since we are now His sons, we ought not be surprised at any of the processings which He brings our way, but rather see the hand of our Father in all these things, knowing that in His own mystical and divine way He is working it all for our good and for His glory!

The apostle Peter expressed the truth of it this way: "Beloved, do not be amazed and bewildered by the fiery ordeal which is taking place to test your quality, as though something strange — unusual and alien to you and your position — were befalling you" (I Pet. 4:12, Amplified). "THINK IT NOT STRANGE," the King James Version says — do not be amazed and bewildered, do not be astonished, do not be alarmed or incredulous as though the experience is foreign, unwarranted, unexpected, abnormal, a surprise. It is not an accident — it was PLANNED. It is not a surprise — it was PURPOSED.

People enter into this path of sonship and I hear them saying, "I've never had trouble like I've had since I came into this walk!" Of course you haven't. That's the way it's supposed to be! The higher the position, the more rigorous the training! "I had it better back in the church system," they moan. I wouldn't doubt that one little bit, because God is not at this time interested in either Babylon or the world. His purposes lie with those He has selected, drawing them out and beyond the course of this world's religion, and placing within them a divine call, a sense of destiny which must be fulfilled. You wonder why things are so difficult, why all hell breaks loose, why as soon as one door opens another door closes, you wonder why you have all the troubles, trials, difficulties, problems, and tribulations, while the way of the religious is not so. Brother, you're in the furnace — Jesus is being to you what He promised He would be — a REFINER'S FIRE! You are in the crucible of His purpose.

How long will this continue? I would like to promise you some respite, but I dare not. The Psalmist says, "The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, PURIFIED SEVEN TIMES" (Ps. 12:6). Seven is the number of perfection! It reveals the great truth that God's own nature will be produced in the fire. He will heat up the furnace until you have been perfectly cleansed and purified, nothing remaining but HIMSELF. That which the Lord is receiving unto Himself cannot be of an inferior quality to Himself. The gold — ah, it is HIM. The silver — it is of HIM. How marvelous is the grace by which He has birthed us out of His own Spirit, making us "partakers of the divine nature" (II Pet. 1:4). It is like the grades in school, the farther along you go the harder the lessons become!

How long, think you, would it take a workman with a hammer and chisel to crush the ore and extract the gold from the rocks in which it lies so closely embedded? But if they are flung into the great furnace, and fires fanned to torrid heat and the draught roars through the burning mass, eventually a great glowing stream of pure fluid metal, from which all dross and rubbish are parted, flows into the waiting mold. This is a parable of what God will do for us! At first the surface of the melting metal may be dark and lurid — deep orange red, over which a flickering flame shall pass; but, as the process is pursued, the color will become lighter, the dark fumes will pass off, and the metal shall bear the appearance of a highly polished mirror, reflecting the beholder's face. The process may be long and hot; BUT THE RESULT IS SURE!

Those who love the Lord and long to see His purpose fulfilled in their lives, are willing to accept Him as a refiner's fire, as a thresher of wheat, as a presser of olives, as a crusher of grapes, and as a scourging Father! We accepted Him as Saviour, Baptizer, Healer, and Blessor; now we are accepting Him as the Lord of the fires! Our Father has made us willing to embrace the means He uses to perfect us. He perfects us in the crucible of adversities. The tribulations He sends us are not punishments for past failures, but divine tools to conform us to His image. Paul's thorn in the flesh, Job's loss of all his possessions, family, and health, Joseph's betrayal by his brethren, his being sold as a slave, and later his being falsely accused and thrown into prison, were all for a divine purpose.

Taken to the isle of Patmos, John was made to see a "great multitude" of saints which no man could number, from every nation, kindred, people and tongue, standing before the throne of God and before the Lamb. Each was clothed in a white robe and held a palm branch in his hand. The white robe speaks of purity; the palm branch denotes victory. Being made pure by the inwrought righteousness of Christ also brings victory over self! Asked by one of the elders, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, with palms in their hands, and whence have they come?" John answered, "Sir, you know." And the elder said to him, "These are they which have come out of GREAT TRIBULATION; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Each of these white-robed saints had to experience *great tribulation*.

I may be wrong, but it seems to me that these are the very people who had been followers of Jezebel, the false prophetess, the false ministry of the church systems, who committed spiritual fornication and ate spiritual food that was defiled by idols — by false images and conceptions of God. Were we not all there at one time? To these the Lord Jesus said, "Behold, I will cast her into a bed (of trouble), and them that commit adultery with her into *great tribulation*, except they repent of their deeds" (Rev. 2:22). It is interesting to note that the term "great tribulation" appears only twice in the book of Revelation, and neither time does it apply to the *world*. In both cases it has to do with the Lord's own people! Jesus said he would cast the spiritual fornicators of the church age into *great tribulation*, unless they *repented*. What do you suppose would be the purpose of the great tribulation? Why, bless your heart, would it not be to influence and motivate them to *repent*! And then John sees a great multitude that has *come out of great tribulation*. A wonderful transformation has taken place in them through the process of the great tribulation. They have now "washed their robes" and have "made them white in the blood of the Lamb." They were already God's people, and were not now washed from the filth of the flesh they walked in before they were saved, rather, they were washed from the *defilement of religion and religious systems*! As a result of their going *through* that great tribulation, God's purpose was accomplished in their lives. Cleansed and purified by the Lamb, they were transformed and brought very near to His throne of love, grace, and power.

Let us understand clearly just who these white-robed saints of God are! They are the redeemed of God who have washed their robes from the defilement of the false doctrines, empty rituals, fleshly methods and carnal programs of the church systems of man. White robes in the book of Revelation denote "the righteous acts of the saints" (Rev. 19:8). It is the righteousness of Christ with which they are clothed, resulting in righteous, truly *spiritual acts* manifested out of their lives upon this earth. All of them have endured the strippings, purgings, prunings, threshings, refinings, and purifying dealings of God and have been thoroughly chastened and corrected by the Father. They are seen coming out of this great tribulation clothed in the white robes of Christ's righteousness and waving palm branches of victory and praise to God! They are a righteous people, and they are a joyful, praising people! The Lord has led them through the processings of His Spirit, which made them pure and righteous in God's sight while they walk this earth in the midst of worldly sin and religious corruption. These

are the ones "coming out" of "the great tribulation" having their robes washed in the blood of the Lamb! Praise God! It is His own harvest! How many are there? "A *great multitude* that *no man could number*." It is the "great" tribulation because of the "great" multitude! No man can experience more than his own tribulation. This "great tribulation" has lasted throughout the two thousand years since Christ came and began to form His body in the earth. All through the age He has called out people after people, company after company, from the apostate church systems of their day, and now, praise His name, there is a great multitude that *no man can number*!

It should be obvious to every spiritual mind that the great multitude that no man can number is not the same company as the 144,000 that *can be numbered*. Not that 144,000 is a literal number, but it is the number of *divine government* ascribed to a select called and chosen company who reign with Christ upon His throne. As the spirit of revelation and understanding floods our minds, we are left without question as to the meaning of all this. Notice, now, the *position* of God's kings and priests. To him that *overcometh* to be a son of God is granted to sit with Christ **in His throne**, even as Jesus overcame and is set down with His Father in His throne (Rev. 3:21; 21:7). The *Manchild* is caught up to God and **to His throne** and rules all nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 12:5). The *144,000* stand with the Lamb **on mount Zion** (Rev. 14:1).

To correctly unlock this term, "mount Zion," we need to go back and consider the shadow. Israel was the whole nation; Jerusalem, the capital city. And while Jerusalem comprised all the governmental class, yet in Jerusalem there was only one who, with his household, dwelt on mount Zion. He was the king! His was the highest pinnacle of glory attainable. But that Zion was only a shadow of the true and heavenly mount Zion to which we are come (Heb. 12:22). And of this mount Zion the Spirit testifies, "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it" (Ps. 132:13-14). David was king over natural Israel. Christ is king over spiritual Israel. David dwelt on the natural mount Zion. Therefore Christ dwells on the spiritual Zion! And this spiritual Zion is composed of those who have reached the very highest pinnacle attainable in Jerusalem: those who, like king Saul of old, are head and shoulders above all others: those who have followed their Lord all the way from mount Calvary to mount Zion! By way of a modern example, the city of Washington, D.C. today is the seat of our government, yet the White House is the highest pinnacle one can attain in Washington. The man who dwells there, like David of old, has reached the very highest pinnacle of power and rulership attainable in the natural. In like manner, the spiritual mount Zion is the "little remnant," the *Manchild*, the 144,000, the kings and priests, the ones who have attained the highest pinnacle of majesty in the spiritual realm and sit with Christ upon His throne! Though there is a *great multitude* on different levels of the governmental realm in the heavenly city of God, yet only the *kings* of the kingdom sit upon the throne and reign from the heavenly mount Zion!

You will notice especially that the *overcomer sits on Christ's throne*. The *Manchild* rules the nations **from the throne of God**. The *144,000 reign with the Lamb from the heavenly mount Zion*. The "great multitude," however, are not "on" the throne — they are "before" the throne of God and of the Lamb! Neither do they "reign," but they "serve" God day and night in His temple, and He that sitteth **on the throne** shall dwell among them. They are a blessed company indeed! They are the vast multitudes of the redeemed out of the age who have walked with God in a pure walk in the Spirit. And, while they are a redeemed and sanctified and spiritual people, they are *not* the sons of God who reign with Christ upon His throne. They have not taken the spiritual steps that cause them to fully grow, mature, and progress all the way in God to become kings and priests. They have not attained to the measure of the stature

of the *fullness* of Christ. Yet, they are the Lord's own people, precious in His eyes! He who sits on the throne of the Lord — Christ and His many brethren — dwells among them; they dwell in the wonderful, rewarding, sustaining presence of the King of kings and the Lord of lords!

"Therefore they are *before* the throne of God, and *serve* Him day and night in His temple: and He that *sitteth on the throne* shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither shall they thirst any more; neither shall the sun (the illumination of the outer court) light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is *in the midst of the throne* shall FEED THEM, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Rev. 7:15-17). *Blessings* are lavished upon this holy people who have "come out of great tribulation" and have "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

No saint of God can *escape* the Great Tribulation! You will not be raptured out before it comes, for it is already here! It is not some horrible judgment of vindictive wrath and unrestrained vengeance poured out upon the nations, my friend; it is God's own process of discipline and purification for ALL WHOM HE IS REDEEMING AND TRANSFORMING INTO HIS IMAGE AND LIKENESS!

Chapter 19

In The Spirit On The Lord's Day

"I was *in the spirit on the Lord's day*, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia" (Rev. 1:10-11).

Every word of the book of Revelation is freighted with divine significance. Each individual word, when studied with understanding, is a *key* to the message of the book. Each word has a spiritual meaning and is an expression of the language of God. No word in this book means what the carnal mind thinks it means, but each word, when illuminated by the spirit of revelation, unlocks something of the mysteries of God in the understanding of the spiritual mind. Then you understand how important each word is!

The book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ has been, by the carnal mind, a book of intimidation, browbeating, threatening, tyranny, terror, and disquietude; a book of ignorance, bewilderment, perplexity, and confusion. And yet, when understood by the spirit, it is by far the most inspirational, instructional, and kingdom impartational book in all the scriptures! I have never been more helped, had more questions answered, and got a world view and a kingdom view of *my life*, and the outworking of God in creation, than through the opening within my spirit of the truth of the book of Revelation.

For centuries the book of Revelation has held an interest for everybody from prophets to ditch diggers. After one fashion or another, all have believed that the book held within it the spiritual meaning behind events happening in the world. Many and varied have been the predictions and prophetic outlines based upon the things found written in this text. In every case, however, given enough time, the forecasts of the most noted teachers, and would-be prophets, have been proven *wrong*. This is not because all were false prophets, evil men, or deceivers, but rather it demonstrates just how difficult a task it is to interpret a writing as complex and filled with symbolism as the book of Revelation. It simply cannot be done with the natural mind!

Why are there so many different interpretations of the book of Revelation? There are three primary systems of interpretation in the church systems known as the *Preterist*, the *Historicist*, and the *Futurist* schools of thought. The *Preterist* view teaches that the whole book was fulfilled in A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem and the ending of the Old Testament law, priesthood, and sacrificial system. According to this view every mention in the New Testament of the "last days" and "end time" refers to the cataclysmic events that brought the end of the Old Testament era and order, and the establishment of the new spiritual order of the church age. Others subscribe to the *Historicist* interpretation, viewing the Revelation as a symbolical history of events throughout the church age, from the days of the apostles all the way down to the end of the church age. These see in the symbols of the Revelation events such as the rise of the Papacy, the Holy Roman Empire, the scourge of Islam, the Protestant Reformation, The French Revolution, and many other things. Most evangelical Christians today embrace the newest of the three schemes — *Futurism*. The *Futurist* theory teaches that the entire book of Revelation, from chapter four on, is yet future, to be fulfilled during a seven-year period of

"Great Tribulation" at the end of the church age. In addition, there are hundreds of differing applications of the symbols and events within each of these three schools of thought!

Why so many views? I think the answer to this question is illustrated in a little story I read. Three people were visiting and viewing the Grand Canyon — an artist, a pastor, and a cowboy. As they stood on the edge of that massive abyss, each one responded with a cry of exclamation. The artist said, "Ah, what a beautiful scene to paint!" The minister cried, "What a wonderful example of the handiwork of God!" The cowboy mused, "What a terrible place to lose a cow!" And then Haddon Robinson tells the story of a Colorado resident who moved to Texas and built a house with a view of hundreds of miles of range land. "The only problem is," he said, "there's nothing to see." At about the same time a Texan moved to Colorado and built a house overlooking the Rockies. "The only problem is," he said, "I can't see anything. The mountains are in the way." The story is also told of a mole that once pushed its head out of the ground and said to a bird who was swinging and singing on the branch above it: "What are you making such a noise about?" Said the bird: "Oh, the sunshine, the trees, the grasses, the shining stream, and the white clouds on the mountainside. The world is full of beauty!" "Nonsense," said the mole; "I have lived in this world longer than you have, and I have gone deeper into it. I have traversed it and tunneled it, and I know what I am talking about, and I tell you there is nothing in it but fishing worms."

The lesson in each of these stories will cause us to stand assured of this fact: WHAT ONE SEES DEPENDS UPON WHERE HE SEES IT FROM! Everyone has his particular vantage point, perspective, position, or frame of reference. It has become my experience, however, that in order to comprehend, at least in part, the infinite depths and majestic heights of truth revealed in the book of Revelation, we must leave the customary paths trodden by natural learning and intellectual effort, to explore the realms hitherto kept secret, and walk the avenues where man's spirit has seldom soared. If we now insist that all revelation and illumination of truth must be judged by the narrowness of our past tradition, better far it is that we turn our back now on all illumination and light that comes *by the Spirit* and join those tradition-ridden Pharisees who could never believe that Jesus spoke aught but blasphemy when He declared in the certainty of divine wisdom, "Before Abraham was, I AM." The book of Revelation is a book that defies the wisdom of man! The natural man can never understand the things of God! Whatever viewpoint we take that originates from any pinnacle of *human intellect*, from any compartment of the *imagination*, from any kind of *speculation* of the carnal mind, or from the musty *traditions* of man's religious creeds, will completely miss the view from the lofty heights of the **spirit of truth!** Awe-inspiring truth fills the pages of the Revelation and it is certain none could ever understand them but *by the Holy Spirit!*

The book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ will never be plumbed by the human intellect! Someone has asked, "Was there not a *key* sent with the book, and has this been lost? Was it thrown into the Aegean Sea?" "No!" answers the Spirit of Truth. The *key* was sent along with the book, and it has been allowed to lie rusty and unused, while all kinds of false keys and picklocks have been tried, and tried in vain, until men have come to look upon the book as an unintelligible enigma, only meant to puzzle and confuse. But the *true key* has all along been visible enough! And the attention of men has been loudly called to it! It is Christ who is giving the revelation. The revelation is *of* Christ and *by* Christ. Christ is the *author* as well as the *content* of the revelation. These things man can never know unless they are *revealed!* No human wisdom could foreknow these mysteries; no human mind could understand them. "Who do *men* say that I am?" Jesus asked His disciples. They answered first one and then another. "But whom do *you* say that I am?" Peter responded with that immortal answer, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" And Jesus said, "Flesh and blood hath not *revealed* this unto

thee, but *my Father* which is in heaven — in the realm of the Spirit!" In like manner, we have heard what *men* say the Revelation means. Now it is high time to hear what *the Spirit* says it means!

John was *in the Spirit* in the day of the Lord when he received the revelation! *The Spirit* was his vantage point, his perspective, his position, his frame of reference. So many are looking today in the natural for the events of this book to come to pass, but John was *in the Spirit* when he saw the vision, and he was *in the Spirit* when he wrote the book — he wasn't in the natural! He was in a realm beyond the natural, and beholding events in a realm beyond the natural. These things are written in a language that only the spiritual mind can understand! A natural mind produces a natural concept. It should be obvious that only a person who knows French is able to read a book written in French. A Frenchman is the most likely person in the world to understand the most difficult treatise in the French language. In the same way, the book of Revelation was written **in the Spirit**, out of the mind of the Spirit, in the language of the Spirit, and it requires a spiritual unfoldment to understand it! Only the man who lives and walks in the Spirit can receive from it. You must be a citizen of the land — the heavenlies — where the language of the book is known. You must read and understand it in the language in which it was written — not the Greek language, but the language of the Spirit of God! We must be quickened by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God for the message to be comprehended. A spiritual book must be spiritually discerned!

No word given to a prophet from the Lord by the Holy Spirit can be truthfully understood or interpreted unless the same spiritual understanding is given to the reader by the Holy Spirit that gave it originally to the prophet. God's elect in this hour is being given the ability to "*Hear what the Spirit saith,*" and it is the same anointing wherein it was spoken and written. The book of Revelation, like any other part of the scriptures and prophecies, must be "spiritually" understood. Understanding came to the disciples of Jesus when He "opened unto them the scriptures." Before that their natural understanding was unfruitful. They didn't have a clue! They read all the scriptures and never saw Jesus there until He "opened" the scriptures to them. And it wasn't a doctrine, it was *spiritual illumination* that burst forth within their hearts!

The term "in the Spirit" is much more profound than it appears in the English translation. The Greek expression means "to become" or "became." What John relates here is that he *became in Spirit* or *came to be in Spirit*. He received an entrance into a realm that was much deeper and more intense than his world of outer consciousness — beyond the material realm. He came into the realm of heaven, the omnipresent dimension of Spirit. Heaven is the home of all spiritual and celestial beings — not a geographical or astral location, but a dimension of life, mind, consciousness, being, and reality. The purpose of the Revelation is to reveal to us what takes place when one enters into the realm of the Spirit, to live and move and have his being in the Spirit. When we enter into this new realm we experience new things happening to us. These things have repercussions, effects, and manifestations in our outer man!

Many years ago Albert Hughes penned the following words of keen spiritual insight: "The vision will be understood only by the spiritual man. The natural man will meet with many difficulties as he seeks to know the book. No human intellect or natural ability will be sufficient. Only the spiritually discerning will ever discern. The book has a language all its own, a language fully foreign except to those whose conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour. Only those in whose mind is the light of glory will ever understand these sublime symbols, this precious phraseology. Only *in the Spirit* is such triumph possible! Physically, John was in Patmos; spiritually, he was in the fullness of the Holy Spirit! That which John experienced at Patmos was something beyond his conversion. It was a new

consciousness, a complete communion. He was in tune and in touch with the infinite so that it was with the most perfect ease that God revealed His plans!

"John was a translated man, a transformed man. Only the Spirit can do this! When this takes place in any life, we hear and see things not possible at any other time. John was told to write what he heard and saw, a most difficult task indeed! And to get others to believe you when you do write, is even more difficult. For nearly two thousand years, men have been disputing concerning what John wrote. How can men who have never seen and heard, judge the writings or the discourses of those who by the Spirit have both seen and heard? The book is a mystery certainly, but not a mystery which cannot be understood. It is a *revealed mystery*, revealed to those who have been enlightened. This mystery can never be known by the natural man, with all his natural powers, but it is a mystery which is blessed to those whose minds and hearts have been touched by the Divine Spirit. May that Spirit who makes all revelation understood, come to us (in consciousness) and make plain this Word, this Voice, this Vision, this Personality. May we meet with Him who was dead, but is alive again, until He makes us glad with the joy of His countenance, until our faces are lighted with the light of His eternal glory, until our hearts burn within us with the fullness of His reality, leading us ever onward and upward until we see Him face to face, and become like Him by seeing Him *as He is*" — end quote.

John was *in the Spirit* when he received the great Revelation of Jesus Christ! Now that sounds like a mystical term. But everybody has a *spirit*. We are not human beings trying to be spiritual; we are spiritual beings in a human body! Spiritual realities seem so foreign to many of the Lord's people because of the dominance of the flesh. The carnal mind is so busy "carnalizing" the word of God which is *spirit* and *life*, that it thinks that spirit and life is "spiritualizing" things that were meant to be natural! We must enter with *our spirit* into *His Spirit* to grasp the depths of this book! While the hand of John was used to write the visions and revelations he received, only the Holy Spirit fully understands and can impart what John saw and wrote unto us. In our human frame we can only see the *letter*, the *outward form* of the visions John saw, and our natural mind is without understanding.

The folly of trying to interpret spiritual realities with the carnal mind is illustrated by a humorous story that is told about a Popish and Jewish debate. According to the story, in the middle ages, the Pope decided that all the Jews had to leave the city of Rome. Naturally, there was a big uproar from the Jewish community. So the Pope made a deal. He would have a theological debate with any person selected by the Jewish community. If their representative won, the Jews could stay. If the Pope won, the Jews would have to leave Rome forever.

The Jews realized they had no choice. They looked around for a learned champion who could defend their faith, but no one was willing to volunteer. No one felt that they could equal the Pope's vast knowledge and overwhelming eloquence. Finally they picked a man to represent them — an old rabbi named Moishe who had become half-witted and spent his life sweeping the synagogue. Being old and slightly addled, he thought he had less to lose, and he agreed. He asked only for one condition for the debate. Not being an eloquent man like the Pope, and not being proficient in Latin, he asked that neither side be allowed to talk. The Pope agreed.

The day of the great debate came. Moishe and the Pope sat opposite each other for a full minute without making a move. Then the Pope raised his hand and showed three fingers. Moishe looked back at him sadly, shook his head, and raised one finger. The Pope waved his arms in a circle around his head. Moishe pointed to the ground where he sat. The Pope pulled out a wafer and a glass of wine. Moishe pulled out an apple.

The Pope stood up and said, "I give up. This man is too good. The Jews can stay." An hour later, the cardinals eagerly gathered around the Pope to find out what happened. The Pope said, "I've never met a man with such keen spiritual and theological insight. No matter what I said, he had an answer that reminded me of how little I know. First I held up three fingers to assert that God was to be found through the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He responded by holding up one finger to remind me that, even though He has manifested Himself in three ways, there is still only one God, and we both know His name. Then I waved my arms around me to show him that the greatness of God is written in the heavens. He responded by pointing to the ground, reminding me that God was in the midst of us through the presence of the Holy Spirit. I pulled out the sacramental wine and wafer to show him that God's Son absolves us from our sins. He pulled out an apple to remind me that God has been dealing with sin as far back as the garden of Eden. He had an answer for everything! I cannot ask people with such deeply spiritual leadership to leave Rome. They can stay!"

Meanwhile, the Jewish community had crowded around Moishe, amazed that this old, almost feeble-minded man had done what all their young, eloquent scholars had insisted was impossible! "What happened?" they asked. "Well," said Moishe, "first he said to me that the Jews had three days to get out of town. I told him that not one of us was leaving. Then he told me that this whole city would be cleared of Jews. I let him know that we were staying right here." "And then?" asked a woman. "I don't know," said Moishe. "He took out his lunch and I took out mine, and it was all over."

The natural mind is just as inept at understanding the language of the Spirit, as Moishe and the Pope were at understanding one another's sign language in this story! When the things of God are interpreted by carnal reasoning and human intellect, only foolishness and confusion can result. We have already noticed that John was "in the Spirit" when the Voice spoke to him, and only when we get into the "same Spirit" can we understand the things he saw and recorded. The same Spirit that wrote the book must also interpret it! And when we see it in the Spirit, the truths therein have much more meaning and significance for us at this time. As members of God's Christ, our walk is seen in the book of Revelation, including our full deliverance and victory over the flesh, sin, the devil, sorrow and death. As we are coming to understand in the Spirit and by the Spirit the book ministers to *our spirit* encouragement, inspiration, understanding, wisdom, power and life! When the Revelation is studied by the natural intellect, it *kills*. When the Revelation is studied in the Spirit, it brings *life*. All teaching from God must come by the Spirit! Once we catch but a glimpse of these heavenly and divine truths and supernal glories in the Spirit, we are never again satisfied with the simple-minded mythologies that have been passed to us through so many pulpits and so-called experts over the past hundreds of years. As we walk in the Spirit we peruse the pages of this book with a sense of destiny and the certain knowledge that God is really going somewhere with all that has happened, is happening, and will happen in the future!

The seven trumpets, for example, are a striking spiritualization of the plagues the Lord sent upon Egypt in the book of Exodus. As we look at these plagues we see that they are likened unto the literal plagues upon Egypt, but we know that the book of Revelation is a *spiritual book of spiritual truths and spiritual experiences* to be perceived and received only by the Spirit. Can we not see by this that the *spiritual plagues* come upon the *spirit of Egypt* within each of us to bring the release of our spirit from the dominance of the carnal mind that we may march out of the bondage of the flesh and enter into the full realization of our inheritance in our promised land — *Christ!* Is that truth not infinitely more blessed and meaningful than literal plagues falling on the nations of earth! Truly *these plagues* bring THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

That is why the Lord Jesus repeats seven times the admonition, "He that hath an ear, let him *hear* what the Spirit saith!" Those are the same significant words Jesus always spoke on earth when He gave a parable with a *deep spiritual meaning*. Only the spiritual mind could understand it! None of the learned elders, scribes, lawyers, rabbis, Pharisees or Sadducees could "get it"! They missed it every time, just like Moishé and the Pope, and went away shaking their heads in confusion. Once we are spiritually familiar with the message of books like Zechariah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah we're not afraid of terms like blood, locusts, fire, and all the graphic illustrations by which God shows us the spiritual dynamics of what He is doing.

In like manner, John by the Spirit gives us graphic depictions of the spiritual dynamics of the process by which the kingdom of God comes to pass in our lives and in the earth. But these are entirely missed by the carnal understanding! You look at the stars at night and they appear as so many little twinkling dots in the heavens. But with a telescope you can zero in on them and captivate the depths of what is out there, and it becomes evident that their glory far exceeds what the naked eye can perceive. In the book of Revelation God is giving us a behind-the-scenes, backstage, spiritual view of the drama of the processes of His dealings in the lives of His people.

The plagues of Egypt were sent upon the kingdom and people that held God's people, Israel, in bondage. The plagues in the book of Revelation are, therefore, related to God's *spiritual people* — for the message is sent to the *church*! It is Jesus talking to His *body*! The plagues in the book of Revelation represent those dealings God sends into *our lives* to break the bondage of Egypt, the spirit of *this world*, the controlling of the *flesh*, the dominance of the *soul*, the ruling of the *carnal mind*! God is breaking the power of every kingdom within that rules us, usurping the life of the *spirit*. Our Father is bringing us out of our Egyptian bondage by a mighty and an outstretched hand! And what mighty shakings, earthquakes, and cataclysms take place in our earth as He does this! He is bringing us "out" in order to bring us "in" to the fullness of our inheritance in Christ!

Charles Weller shared the following story, which he attributed to Des Walter, from Australia. There was a man from a very primitive country that came to the USA. He had no knowledge of the technology that was about him, not even how a car would work. He was given keys to a car to use in his travels across the country. But everyone took it for granted that he was a driver, so no one explained how the car worked, except to say that the car would make his traveling faster and easier. In the morning he proceeded with the keys to the car. He figured out how to get in and put the keys in the ignition. He played with the steering wheel, adjusted the seat, stepped on the pedals, but nothing happened! After considerable waiting, he got out of the car and started pushing it. It was very hard work.

Finally, he came to a hill and jumped in the car as it quickly sped down the hill. He was gaining speed and believed that surely this is what the man meant when he gave him the keys to the car, assuring him that it would make his trip much faster. But the car stopped at the bottom of the hill, and there was a hill to go up which required great effort. He was about to abandon the car when a stranger, who had seen the whole thing, came by to talk with him. The man laughed a little, listening to the plight of the man and with loving eyes said, "Let me show you how it works." He showed the man the engine and what it could do. Then told the man to get in the car and let the engine do the work. The stranger was right and the man was carried away by the power and might of the engine.

You see, beloved, the real "key" to the car was in *knowing how it worked*! And there is a "key" to the book of Revelation! Like the poor man in the story we have been playing and fiddling

with it, trying to figure it out; but there is a wonderful "key" that opens it up and makes it work! That key is not a system of interpretation, not a method of analysis. The key is the *illumination of the Holy Spirit*! If you try to play football by basketball rules, you will wind up in confusion and chaos. It can't be done! Somebody gave us the wrong rules about a hundred and fifty years ago and told us we are playing basketball when we are playing football. We've been trying to play football by basketball rules! We've been trying to understand the book of Revelation by the rules of the carnal mind, by human understanding, by other prophetic books of the *Old Testament*, by outward world events, when the game-plan of the book is *spiritual* and *internal*! So we force this book to fit into concepts that we have been taught, and we have had to speculate, conjecture, surmise, imagine, assume, and theorize about the incredible events John saw, trying to make them fit into the rules of this natural world, when all the time it is *heavenly things* that are being revealed! John never saw a thing until he was caught up IN THE SPIRIT INTO THE HEAVENLIES! The Lord is giving His elect in this hour a shift in our perception, we have been crying out mightily to God to deliver us from every inherited tradition, and He is enabling us to start all over again *in the Spirit* until we see the glory of God's Christ in every chapter and line of the Revelation!

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are *spiritually discerned*" (1 Cor. 2:12-14).

We can find a parable of this in modern science. There are whole ranges of color, the scientist tells us, which our physical eyes cannot perceive. True, we can see all the colors of the rainbow, ranging from red at the one end of the spectrum to violet at the other. But now we are assured that this is only a comparatively small fraction of the colors which really exist; that beyond the red rays at one end of the spectrum there are the infra-red, beyond the violet are the ultra-violet, and out beyond these again whole unimaginable reaches of color which we never see at all, because our eyes as at present constituted cannot get hold of them. In short, what we do see is only a tiny segment of the whole! If this is true of our physical eyes, is it not also true of the inner eye of the spirit? In days past, in our babyhood walk in God, we apprehended something of eternal spiritual realities; we have seen, even if through a glass darkly, something of the marvel of the kingdom of God and the beauty of the King! But our past spiritual spectrum — how poor a fraction of the whole! And beyond the best insights we have had in this dark, shadowed existence of time and flesh and limitation and tradition and religious teachings of the old-order church systems of man, what reaches of glory are now being opened for us in that *higher world of the kingdom of heaven*! All our questions are being answered here, line upon line, precept upon precept, as the Father teaches us *by His Spirit* the mysteries of His purposes!

Consider now, though one might study and search forever, trying to figure out the enigma of the symbols of this wonderful book of Revelation, he would never arrive at the correct interpretation, for the carnal man sees through carnal eyes, and having eyes he sees not, neither does he understand. There is therefore only one word of advice I can give. Do not try by much study to figure out the marvelous mysteries of God's word, but CONCENTRATE ON CHRIST. HE is the truth, and beside HIM there is no truth! Our knowledge of God and the things of God depend entirely upon where we look. Paul penned these words to the saints in Colosse and they are just as true today as they were two millennia ago: "IN HIM are HID *all the treasures* of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3). Christ Himself is the great treasure house

where all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed and stored up. IN HIM, and in Him alone, are to be *found* all the rich blessings and mighty powers and celestial realities which wisdom and knowledge bestow! This book is about the revelation of Jesus Christ — but we will neither discover nor experience that unveiling by applying the human intellect to the written words of this book. We can only see, know, and experience His unveiling within ourselves through intimacy of fellowship and vital union WITH CHRIST! It is only in the Spirit and by the Spirit that we can see Him and know Him. The Revelation is ultimately not a book — it is the experiencing of the very person and life of Jesus Christ within ourselves!

The book of Job is a book of deep spiritual revelation. The natural man can never understand the things of God! This truth is proclaimed in Job 32:8 wherein we read, "There is a *spirit* in man: and the *inspiration* of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Inspiration — that doesn't speak of just a mental state, it speaks of emotion, passion, quickening, illumination, interior thinking. God is *in-spiring* His sons! People wonder sometimes where we get our ideas from and the depth of understanding of God's word and purpose. We're *inspired*! I'm not talking about myself, I speak of all the elect of God who see and hear by the Spirit! You could never discover these truths by study, although study is a part of the process. The truth must appear to us *in our spirits* as something we *see, know* and *understand* beyond our senses, beyond the mind, beyond the seeing of the eye or the hearing of the ear. The truth appears out of the rolling discourse of God's voice within us! **That is inspiration!** It is the in-breathing of God and the understanding and knowledge imparted out of His very spirit within us. The things we write and speak are inspired by heavenly light! They do not originate out of any part or aspect of the earthen vessel, but purely and completely out of the treasure within the vessel.

We have often missed the truth because we relied on our intellect to interpret to us the scriptures, instead of looking to the Teacher sent from God, to do His work, and perform His ministry. Even Spirit-filled Christians depend mostly on commentaries and books by the hundreds, written by men, and often men void of the Holy Spirit, as their source of information and understanding of the scriptures, and the *spirit of truth* is relegated to a back room in their minds, and rarely consulted about anything the scriptures have to say. God's called out elect, who are walking in the Spirit in this new day of the Lord, have reinstated Him to His proper position and allow Him to fulfill the ministry He came to do. Now don't think I am against books. I am not. I have quite a large library myself! I use books. If I were opposed to writings I would not be sending out this article. Many people have been helped by what is written, but far too many saints think that through Bible study, and by searching the scriptures alone, they can come to an understanding of the things of God, and acquire a knowledge of the truth. But if we are really studying the Bible, in the light of inspiration and revelation, this is what we will find, for this is what the Bible teaches: apart from the revelation of the *indwelling Spirit*, there is no way that we can search out, nor understand, the things of God and His ways!

Hear what the inspired apostle said: "O the depths of riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how **unsearchable** are His judgments and His ways **past finding out**" (Rom. 11:33). How can we ever search out the unsearchable, or find that which is past finding out? Ah, it is the *mind of man* that is unable to search out and find out the things of God! It is impossible by human means or methods, but not impossible with God, for with Him nothing is impossible. There is a way, His way, and that is by the working of the *indwelling Spirit of Truth*!

The sons of God today are putting on a *new mind*, even the mind of Christ! Every son of God is relinquishing, abandoning, signing away, repudiating, disclaiming, and renouncing their own human, carnal mind! The eye is the figure of knowledge and understanding. The apostle Paul penned these meaningful words: "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory,

may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the **eyes of your understanding** being enlightened; that ye may **know** what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1:17-18). The phrase, "the eyes of your understanding," reveals that spiritual sight or spiritual understanding is an ability or function of the *mind*. Without mind there can be no understanding! A man's understanding corresponds precisely to the condition, development, or quality of his mind.

Every created life form possesses mind and the understanding of the creature is limited by the quality of its mind. Quality of mind is, basically, an inherited characteristic. For instance, a cat thinks like a cat, knows as a cat, understands as a cat, and acts like a cat because it was *born* a cat, therefore possessing the brain and mind of a cat. We used to have a cat in our home. I noticed that this cat would come and sit in the living room while I watched the evening television news. While I am very interested in news, the cat had absolutely no interest at all! He couldn't care less! It is not that he didn't see the pictures flashing across the screen. He saw them, all right, but he didn't understand them, so he just curled up on the carpet and went to sleep. Politics, economics, weather, murders, war, terrorism — none of this had any meaning to him whatsoever. It is simply impossible for cats to understand things human! Humans are of a different and higher order than cats. Cats may see men, and observe their movements, yet there is no common ground of knowledge. The cat has no comprehension of what it sees. It discerns only things pertaining to its own realm. It has positively no understanding of the ways of man, or of the meaning of his movements, or the significance of his words, or of the intent of his actions. Cat minds function on the level of cat nature, while human minds function on the level of human nature.

In like manner, God is of a different and higher order of life and nature than are humans. The mind of man functions on the level of human nature, whereas the mind of God functions on the level of divine nature. There is no common ground of knowledge or understanding between the two! Therefore, the natural man is totally incapable of comprehending that which pertains to the realm of God. For natural minds to comprehend things spiritual is equally as impossible as for cats to understand things human. And so, until humans receive of *God's Spirit*, the Spirit that *knows* and *understands* the things that pertain to God, it is impossible for them to have any understanding, either of God, or of His word, or of His will, or of His ways. With what truth did Paul write to the Corinthians: "For who could really understand a man's inmost thoughts except the spirit of man himself? How much less could anyone understand the thoughts of God except the very Spirit of God? We have now received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit of God Himself, so we can *understand* something of God's generosity towards us" (I Cor. 2:11-12, Moffatt).

And then after men receive the Spirit of God, the depth of their knowledge and understanding is wholly in proportion to the measure of the indwelling Spirit and the growth and maturity of the mind of the Spirit within them. Jesus was a man, but God was in Him! "In Him dwelleth *all the fullness* of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). He grew in stature and in favor with God and man until He received the Spirit of the Father *without measure* (Jn. 3:34). In Christ dwells all the fullness of God! And therefore He had and has all the discernment and knowledge and understanding of heaven! But we faltering mortals cannot claim what Christ possessed until we have grown up into the measure of the stature of the *fullness of Christ*, conformed to His image, transformed into His likeness. We, upon being born again, regenerated, our spirit quickened by His Spirit, awaken to our identity as actual sons of God, yet babes: "Babes in Christ." And the understanding of newborn babes, spiritual though they may be, the offspring of God though they are, is limited in the extreme! They cannot have a deep knowledge or

comprehension until they have been filled with the mind of God; until they have grown to spiritual maturity, *the spiritual mind being fully developed within them!*

We will never, in this age, be fully able to comprehend the boundless power of the mind of *man*. The natural mind, though it understands not the things of the Spirit, is capable of astonishing wonders! All the marvelous inventions of the world have proceeded from the mind of man, yet the natural mind *receives not* any of the things of God! As heaven is higher than earth, so are God's ways higher than man's, and God's thoughts higher than man's. The man who receives of God's life is renewed in the *spirit of his mind*; that is, he takes on a new mind originating in the new spirit-life, so that he thinks and acts as an entirely new creation, a new man, a new kind of creature. As he follows on to know the Lord he finds that his darkened mind completely gives way to this new creation mind which is the MIND OF JESUS CHRIST. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," Paul admonishes. The mind that was in Jesus was the Father's mind! It is like a brain transplant. If surgeons today were able to take out your brain and transplant mine into you, you would become, in spite of a different body, — **ME!** You see, all my accumulated experience, knowledge, and wisdom, or lack thereof, would be transferred to you! Because He was fully possessed of His Father's mind, Jesus was able to say, "I and the Father are one." "I speak as my Father speaks." "It is not I that doeth the works, but my Father who dwelleth in me." The mind that was in Christ Jesus is freely given to every man who believes into His name that he might be **one with Christ and one with the Father**. Let us never forget that in those glorious ages to come it will be the mind of our heavenly Father that will rule the universe. The Father has decreed that He will rule the universe by HIM whom He has chosen; and those sons, the many-membered Son, every one will be possessed with the Father's mind. As the hands and the feet of a healthy body act in harmony with the head, so every member among the sons of God act in harmony with the Head, even Jesus, because ONE MIND DWELLS IN THEM ALL!

Chapter 20

In The Spirit On The Lord's Day

continued

"I was *in the spirit on the Lord's day*, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia" (Rev. 1:10-11).

I've heard a lot of different definitions of what the *Lord's day* is, and all the explanations I've heard lead me to believe that not very many people have been caught up in the Spirit. I have been caught up in the Spirit, and the things I saw and heard were the same realities I read in the book of Revelation! With the brush of the Holy Spirit and the paint of the word of God I hope to create a picture on the canvas of your understanding. The real world, the eternal world, the world that will never pass away, God's world, the kingdom that flesh and blood cannot inherit, can only be seen, touched, and experienced by the *spirit man that you are*. It is *in the spirit* that we connect with this invisible, divine, heavenly, eternal world!

"I John, was *in the isle* that is called Patmos...I was *in the spirit* on the Lord's day" (Rev. 1:9-10). Praise God for that "in the isle," — "in the spirit"! Physically, John was in Patmos; spiritually, he was caught up into the heavens of God's Spirit! The "was" is from a Greek word which means "became" or "came to be." "I John, *became* in Spirit on the Lord's day." What do you suppose John was in before he was in the Spirit? Someone says, "Well, he must have been in the flesh!" No — I do not believe that John was in the flesh. Paul clearly tells us, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you" (Rom. 8:9). The way this reads in the Greek is that as long as the Spirit of God is *constantly* dwelling, abiding, motivating, and controlling us, we are *not in the flesh*. I don't believe the beloved John was in the flesh! He was, however, in his *soul*.

The soul is the mind, will, emotion, and desire of man. John was in his own mind, his own will, his own emotion, and his own desires. There is nothing wrong with that! These were not ungodly or corrupt, but neither were they the Spirit of God or John's own spirit. We need to think *spiritual sense* about these things! The "flesh" is the realm of *sin in my members*. It is a lower realm than the soul. I am acting in my soul when I drive my car, chat with my neighbor, play with my grandchildren, or go to a concert. I am in no way acting *fleshly* — that is, out of a sinful nature. Now, if while driving my car I deliberately run someone down, or, if while chatting with my neighbor I lie to him or insult him, *then* I am *in the flesh*! But when I am doing very natural things I am not sinning. I am merely moving in my soul life. There *is* something wrong with walking after the flesh, for "the *works of the flesh* are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like..." (Gal. 5:19-21).

To become "in the Spirit" is to ascend into a higher realm! It is to consciously rise from your soul into His Spirit, from your own mind into His mind, from your own thoughts into His thoughts, from your own will into His will, from your own emotions and desires into those of the

Lord Himself. There is nothing wrong with playing with the grandchildren, going out to eat, attending a concert, feeling weary, or thinking about the work you must do tomorrow. Jesus hungered and thirsted, grew weary, worked in a carpenter shop, rode a donkey, and attended some very lavish banquets! When Jesus needed a piece of wood for a table He was building, He didn't pray, shake, speak in tongues, fall on the floor, and seek a vision for instructions about selecting the right board. That's why He had a soul — for the plane of natural, everyday living. I have met people who thought they had to "hear from God" before they could go to the store!

God gave us a mind fully capable of making such decisions and carrying out our normal physical, business, and social activities. He gave us emotions capable of enjoying love, beauty, music, travel, recreation, and many other things. But that is not the dimension of the *spirit*! It is possible, yea, desirable, to walk in both realms at the same time! It is by the soul that I drive my car, but I may also drive it *in the spirit*. Now if you find that difficult to believe, you should see the *spirit* some people drive their cars in! I have often done my business, social activities, and physical labors while at the same time being overwhelmed by the presence and power of God! I have walked into a store while caught up in a heavenly realm, and was still able to buy a loaf of bread and walk out again. No one knew I was in the Spirit except me! I have received revelations *while* brushing my teeth, but I didn't require a revelation *to* brush my teeth. You see the difference!

In the spirit there is a sensitivity to God, the sensation of life and light, the consciousness of His presence, the revelation of His voice and His will, and the reality of a higher *state of being*. Bennie Skinner told of a man who went into an office and the gentleman there had a plaque on his desk that said, KEEP LOOKING DOWN. The man said, "Sir, don't you have that saying backward — aren't we supposed to KEEP LOOKING UP?" The gentleman replied, "It depends on your perspective, on where you are. If you are living above the things of this world, if you are seated in the heavenlies, then you can **keep looking down**. But if you are burdened down, overwhelmed by earthly things, and walking in the lowlands of the flesh, then you must **keep looking up!**"

John came to be "in the Spirit." It is a blessed thing to be in the Spirit! God is making a spiritual man today! When God formed Adam of the dust of the ground, he became a living soul. Adam was sinless when he came from the hand of his Creator, and he lived and walked in the dimension of his soul. It is natural to live in the soul realm! It is not sinful or wicked — just natural. You don't have to do a thing to get into the soul realm. We were all born into this world in that realm! But Adam *did* have to do something to fall down into the **flesh realm** — he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He disobeyed the word of the Lord to him! He partook of the fruit of a lower realm. He *sinned*! That is just the difference between "flesh" and "soul." You have to sink to a lower level to be in the flesh. In the flesh is a dark realm, a rebellious realm, a sinful realm, a wicked realm of selfhood, corruption, and unrighteousness.

The soul can be beautiful! What can be more beautiful than the innocence of a child, though they know nothing of the spirit? It is the soul that enjoys traveling to far-away places with strange-sounding names, quaint cultures, and exotic vistas. It is the soul that is moved by the strains of beautiful music, that stands transfixed before a colorful sunset or the majesty of mountain peaks. The soul may be lifted up to touch and partake of the high realms of the Spirit of God! In such a moment the sweet singer of Israel exulted, "Bless the Lord, O my *soul!*" And in the Magnificat the virgin of Galilee cried out, "My *soul* doth magnify the Lord!" The soul can also sink into the domain of the flesh and revel in base things, for "the *soul* that sinneth, it shall

die." But the soul itself, of itself and by itself, is neither evil nor spiritual. It is just the soul. The soul is incomplete and seeks union. It finds union with either the flesh or the spirit! When it walks after the flesh, it dies. When it walks after the spirit, it lives!

"The first man Adam was made a *living soul*; the last Adam was made a *quickening spirit*" (I Cor. 15:45). It is in conscious union with Christ that we become "in the Spirit." This was John's "rapture"! In this rapture John became a *spirit-man*. He became one who *heard*; one who *turned*; one who *saw*; one who became *as dead*; one who was *quickened* by the right hand of the One in the midst of the candlesticks. His own consciousness, life, identity and reality were swallowed up in the vision of Another! And the whole subsequent vision of the book of Revelation is in that holy Light!

THE LORD'S DAY

"I was in the Spirit *on the Lord's day*..." The whole church world today is waiting for the day of the Lord. And many in this word of the Kingdom are also waiting for the day of the Lord. But John wasn't waiting for the day of the Lord! He "became," or "came to be," as the Greek expresses it, *in* the day of the Lord! It seems to me that if John "became" in the day of the Lord two thousand years ago, you and I can "come to be" in the day of the Lord right now!

It was on or in the Lord's day that John was in the Spirit. In the New Testament days the Roman emperor was deified and claimed to be God. The day that a man became the Roman emperor was called "The Emperor's Day." And all the time that the emperors reigned over the Roman empire the people of the empire were required to observe that day as "Emperor's Day" That was the day when the emperor was crowned. On that day the Romans acknowledged that "Caesar is Lord! Caesar is God!" But then the Christians came along and they refused to acknowledge the emperor as Lord, or as God. They said, "Jesus Christ is Lord! Jesus Christ is God! He has risen from the dead, He has ascended up far above all heavens, He has been given the name that is above every name, all power has been given unto Him in heaven and in earth, He has been exalted to sit on His Father's throne, He has been crowned as King of kings, and Lord of lords — King of the universe. Jesus Christ is King! Jesus Christ is Lord! This is the LORD'S DAY!" To know Christ in living reality and walk with Christ in the Spirit was to be in the Lord's Day!

Here is how John came to be in the day of the Lord. He says, "I became, or came to be, *in the Spirit*." It was "in the Spirit" that he was in the Lord's day! It is not by arriving at a date on the calendar, but by living and walking in the Spirit that we enter into and experience the day of the Lord! Many people are looking into the outer world to see the coming of the day of the Lord. They watch world events, calculate times and seasons which they imagine point to the signs of the approach of the day of the Lord, and study the prophecies of the Bible for an understanding of the ages so that they can recognize the day of the Lord. But it was only *in the Spirit* that John perceived that he was in the Lord's day. The day of the Lord is a realm above in the Spirit, and when we come to be in the Spirit we find ourselves in the day of the Lord!

Jesus lived *in the Spirit*. He *always* lived in the Spirit. He *walked* in the Spirit. He *talked* in the Spirit. He ate, drank, slept, worked, and ministered in the Spirit. Thus we plainly observe that all true *spirituality* is lived out in *practicality*. We're talking about a very practical daily walk! Ah, my beloved, do not childishly wait for goosebumps to tell you that you are *in the Spirit*! We can be in the Spirit without any goosebumps, feelings, or emotions of any kind. We can be in the Spirit while in the fire that has been heated seven times hotter. The three Hebrew children found themselves in the Spirit in the fiery furnace! Daniel knew what it was to be in the Spirit in

the lion's den! Noah experienced being in the Spirit on an ark in the dark, swirling waters of the deluge! Jesus was in the Spirit hanging upon a cross on Golgotha's hill! John was in the Spirit on the rocky desolation of an isle called Patmos! Do you see it, my brother, my sister? Being in the Spirit has absolutely nothing to do with chills and thrills or electric currents running through our body. Singing, dancing, and shouting are no evidences of being in the Spirit! Loud and emotional preaching does not mean the preacher is in the Spirit. Being in the Spirit is not a feeling, not an emotion. It *can* be an emotion, but it may not always be a favorable emotion! I thank God for wonderful feelings and blessed experiences of all kinds. I will not turn any of them down! But that is not what it means to be in the Spirit!

If all hell breaks loose and my whole world crashes down around me, I am still in the Spirit as I walk in the stability and victory of the Christ within. John came to be in Spirit in the day of the Lord. He didn't come to be in flesh, moaning and groaning, demanding to know why God allowed this to happen to him. He knew he was a spirit-created man, he knew he was a son of God, he knew that he was destined of God. His exile to Patmos was not punishment for disobedience, it wasn't due to a lack of faith, it wasn't because he had failed God, and it wasn't that God had failed him. Oh, no! John was right in the center of God's will on that horrible island, and there he gave himself to *be in Spirit*. I'm sure he didn't *feel* very spiritual! He was hot and sweaty, he had no shave cream, no shower, no soap, no deodorant or toothbrush, no laundromat, and he was lonely and destitute. If he identifies with his flesh, he's a dead man! But he came to be in Spirit. With this scene filling our hearts perhaps we can approach with uplifted heads the heavenly wonders John saw that day on Patmos as he beheld things which carnal men can never understand. In the Spirit he was carried beyond the flesh, beyond the world of Patmos with its heat and flies and insects and scorpions and hopeless despair. In Spirit we see the invisible, hear the inaudible, and understand the incomprehensible! What man knoweth the things of God save the Spirit of God that is in him? In the Spirit we know the things of God, we see as God sees, understand as God understands, think as God thinks, speak as God speaks, act as God acts, and live as God lives. Oh, the wonder of it!

I now exhort all who read these truths to earnestly seek to *live and move and have your being* IN THE SPIRIT. These are things beyond the scope of the natural mind and beyond the power of the natural man. But there in the Spirit you are a new creation, no longer of the earth earthy, but one Spirit with the Lord from heaven. There in the Spirit you stand no longer in the dark world of natural men who live and walk after the flesh; you stand no longer in the insipid realm of vain traditions, carnal programs, and wanton harlotry of the apostate church systems; but you stand in the light, wisdom, power, and glory of the DAY OF THE LORD!

The day of the Lord is not a date on the calendar. It doesn't begin one day and end another. It's not a twenty-four hour day, a seven-year day, neither is it a thousand-year day. The day of the Lord IS. "God IS LIGHT, and in Him there is no darkness." That is the day of the Lord! It is the illumination of the light of God. The day of the Lord is a condition that takes place within a people. It is the light, the understanding that begins to dawn in our consciousness that elevates our awareness of God and the dimension of Spirit. It is the understanding of the Almighty! It is the revelation of God's glory, majesty, will and purpose. In Genesis God called the light "day" and Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12). Then He said, "Ye are the light of the world!" (at. 5:14). And the apostle Paul by revelation added, "But ye, brethren, are *not in darkness*, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the *children (offspring) of light*, and the *children (offspring) of the day*: we are not of the night, nor of darkness" (I Thes. 5:4-5).

What is happening is that understanding is coming to us. *Understanding is light!* Paul prayed for the Ephesian saints that "the eyes of *your understanding being enlightened*, ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1:18). God's called and chosen elect in this hour is getting understanding! We're understanding God! We're understanding His Spirit, His ways, His will, His truth, His plan, His purpose, His heart — so the day of the Lord is dawning in us! The Day Star is arising in our hearts and the shadows and darkness are fleeing away in the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Never have we understood as we understand today! How we rejoice in this day, that our eyes can see the things they see, our ears hear the things they hear, and our hearts understand the things they understand! The veil has been torn from our minds and from our hearts, and with clarity we see God's great plan and purpose in the earth, in the elect, and in the universe! We see both sides of the veil — the great cloud of witnesses all around us there in the realm of the spirit, and the visible company of overcomers walking here in this world in flesh bodies. And God is moving in both realms, preparing for the manifestation of *all His sons!* The true nature of all things is becoming *crystal clear!* For us, the day of the Lord has dawned! And it has dawned because we have "come to be in Spirit!"

Just as day and night co-exist on earth side by side, so the day of the Lord and the gross darkness that covers the people co-exist side by side. Just as Americans walk in the brightness of the noon-day sun at the same time that Chinamen slumber in mid-night darkness, so there are both children of the *day* and children of the *night* in the world today. Some men walk in darkness while other men walk in light! They may dwell in the same house, work at the same job, or sit next to each other in a meeting. Some men *abide* in darkness while other men *abide* in light.

The day of the Lord neither begins nor ends. It simply IS. God has never known anything but the day that HE IS! It begins *for us* at that blessed moment when, quickened by the Spirit of God, it consciously *dawns upon us*, just as the natural day begins when we arise and greet the dawn. The fact is, it has been day somewhere on earth all the while the veil of darkness hung over us as a shroud. Day has nothing to do with time. It has nothing to do with dates. It has nothing to do with the calendar. It has nothing to do with the ages. **It only has to do with your relationship to it!** If someone asks *when* the day of the Lord begins, I cannot answer. If you can fly at the right speed in an airplane you can stay in the day all the time. The sun will never set! Traveling home from Europe Lorain and I were in the day for twenty hours. The day of the Lord IS. Yet almost all Christians in the church systems today are talking about *when* the day of the Lord is going to come. It will come when they arise from their carnal-minded delusions and begin to walk fast enough *in the Spirit* to STEP INTO IT! That is how John got there, and that is the only way any man will get there!

I do not believe that the day of the Lord is Saturday, or Sunday, or any other day of the week. Sunday is nowhere called "the Lord's day" in the scriptures — it is always called "the first day of the week." Yet, in nearly every book I have read on the book of Revelation, the author has said that John was "in the Spirit on Sunday!" The Lord's day is not a time period at all! The Lord's day is a *state of being*. As we become "light beings," illuminated by the light of God's glory from within, we truly *become* the light of the world — the day of the Lord! That is what the "unveiling" of Jesus Christ is all about! It is taking off the veil from the glory of the Christ raised up in the lives of His many brethren. That is in process right now! We are now *being changed from glory to glory* by the Spirit of the Lord! Christ is being formed in us! The kingdom of God is being established in that earth which *we are!* This, my beloved, is the Lord's day!

Oh, we are seeing with such clarity today! The day of the Lord is a state of being that God's elect is entering into right now! Have you wondered why you are able to see the deep mysteries of the kingdom of God, while those about you are void of understanding? Have you questioned why the wonderful truths of reconciliation, sonship, and the kingdom of God burn brightly within your heart, while they are meaningless to other believers? Have you pondered why the great plan and purpose of God in this hour is so clear and obvious to you, whereas others reject it with hostility? I will tell you why! The day of the Lord has *dawned* in your land! The Sun of Righteousness has arisen and when you awaken in the Lord's day you can see all things as they really are. You are able to see backward and forward, for the Lord's day is an eternal day, having neither beginning nor ending, and in this day all things are revealed! For some strange reason it is difficult for men to believe that the day of the Lord is nothing more nor less than the *glory* of the Lord Jesus Christ. They would rather have a date on the calendar, a time period with a beginning and end, than to have the *glory of God* within themselves!

As we step into the Spirit in the day of the Lord something happens. Great and marvelous changes occur. There is divine activity that is taking place within us and out from us. Something is happening *to* us, something wonderful is happening *in* us, and marvelous things beyond our understanding are happening out of us! As we ascend in the Spirit all creation is being affected! The events in the outer world are not things that are "just happening." Heaven casts its shadow upon the earth, and the great spiritual things that are taking place within the heavenlies of God's sons are producing an effect in the earthlies. My brother and sister, there is a strange and wonderful thing happening today, and John saw it in Spirit while on Patmos. "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with *fire of the altar*, and cast it into the *earth*: and there were *voices*, and *thunderings*, and *lightnings*, and an *earthquake*" (Rev. 8:3-5).

This is a scene in the heavenly temple of God which we are! As the sweet odor of our prayers and praise and worship ascends before God from the golden altar within us — there is produced an effect! The prayers of the saints! The prayers, praise, and worship of God's elect in the heavenly realms of God's Spirit are not a useless exercise, they are part of God's cosmic purpose. Ah, we have missed the importance of our ministry unto God in the Spirit! We have thought prayer was for "getting things" from God, blessings and benefits for us and for our loved ones. That is part of it. But the spiritual priesthood ministry of God's elect in the heavenly temple of God which sheds itself in prayer, praise, and worship, is an important function in the redemptive and reconstructive and restorational purposes of God! There is a relationship between the decrees of God, the prayers of the saints, and the deliverance of creation. As our prayers and praise and worship ascend in the Spirit, the *very coals from the altar that released the fragrance of the holy incense of our spiritual ministry is CAST INTO THE EARTH!* The spiritual and divine fire of God which takes a cold, hard substance (incense) and transforms it into a spiritual fragrance that wafts its way to the throne and brings pleasure to the very nostrils of God, is cast into the earth realm and *mighty powers are released* in the earthlies! There are *voices* as the word of the Lord is released, and *thunderings* as the power of God is manifested, and *lightnings* as the illumination of God flashes within the consciousness of men, and a great *earthquake* as the carnality of man, and the kingdoms of man, are shaken to their foundations. Oh, yes! The earth realm of our own life, and that of the world about us, is powerfully transformed by the activity of the Spirit that comes out of the heavens of our spiritual ministry in the heavenly temple of God! As God moves us to minister

unto Him in the Spirit He is urging us to do what is necessary to enable things to happen in the way they are supposed to happen in the earth realm. As we pray, the fire from the censer of our lives is cast into the earth! That fire produces the day of the Lord! As we learn the holy purpose of our ministry in the high realm of the Spirit in these significant days, there comes that deep inner consciousness that somehow we are participating in a tableau and drama of history! We are bringing the day of the Lord upon the earth!

No man can get into the Spirit in the Lord's day and all things remain the same. In the glory of God the face of Jesus Christ is revealed! He becomes revealed more and more. This is where and how John saw the revelation of Jesus Christ — *in the Spirit on the Lord's day!* May God grant understanding to all who read these lines to see the great truth that the day of the Lord will increase and increase in intensity and scope until all darkness everywhere is illuminated and all shadows pass away. The day of the Lord shall come upon *all men!* In the day of the Lord the haughtiness of man is cast down, and the Lord alone is exalted. The day is surely coming when the nations shall walk in the light of this day and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honor into it. The tabernacle of God shall be with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God. This is true of God's elect today! But it shall be true for all men and all nations, and God shall wipe away the tears from all eyes, and in all God's vast universe there shall be no more sorrow, neither pain, nor crying, and there shall be no more death; for all the things of man's day shall pass away and *all things* shall be made new! And there shall be no night there. These words are true and faithful (Rev. 21:3-5).

The firstborn sons of God *are* the day of the Lord, for upon them is risen the *glory of the Lord*, and they are the *light of the world*. Christ's presence is beginning to fill the whole earth and the glory of the Lord is risen upon a people. This is not a fancy or a fallacy, this is the sovereign work of God in the lives of those who have been called to this Day. This is the very truth, the very understanding as the Spirit has made it known unto His chosen people, that we might know the counsel of God for this very Day. Though multitudes continue to walk in darkness, the darkness of the world of the carnal mind and of the carnal religious systems of men, **you** shall walk in the Light! Many stubbornly cling to those things which are passing, to the former orders and moves of God that have ended, the relics of a former season of glory, but those whose hearts have responded to the call to sonship are taking hold of those things that are new. The former heavens are being rolled up like a scroll and set aside. There is a new order, a new heaven and a new earth for you today, saints of God! The sun has risen higher in the heavens and this Day is brighter than it has ever been!

Ascending in the Spirit we have stepped into the day of the Lord! We must go forth and lead the way for all who will follow. The day of the Lord begins with those who are *enlightened*, cleansed from all error, bondage, and carnality, and clothed upon with the glory of Christ's presence, mind, and nature. The day of the Lord begins with those who have eyes to see the true purposes of God for this hour, and commit themselves to walk therein. There is glory and power and rejoicing and praise ahead for those who walk in the light of this day of the Lord! This is the day of deliverance, not bondage. The bands are broken. Christ is conqueror! He reigns! We are not expecting the antichrist nor the great tribulation, for we have met the Christ, we have heard His heart, we have beheld His glory, and have been made one with His purposes. His hosts are invincible, and we are those hosts. Our coronation draws nigh. We are the city foursquare, the heavenly Jerusalem, and mount Zion where Jesus the King is ruling and reigning. The kingdom of God is within us! His glory overshadows us! His light emanates from us! Those who are born of this word of the kingdom are now standing on kingdom ground.

THE VOICE AS A TRUMPET

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a *great voice, as of a trumpet...* and I turned to see *the voice* that spake with me" (Rev. 1:10,12).

No sooner was John in the Spirit in the Lord's day, than he heard a voice behind him. It was the sound of the voice that gripped his attention. John responded to the voice and *turned, was changed*, to see the voice. The voice comes to turn us around, to change us! It will change our thoughts, our perceptions, our understanding, our purpose, our form, our substance, our very state of being. Hearing the voice did not cause him to get in the Spirit, but being in the Spirit John was able to hear the voice! Those around him who were not in the Spirit in the Lord's day *heard nothing*.

This great voice, this majestic voice, this voice of power and authority was as the voice of a trumpet. Let us understand what a trumpet is. By the Spirit we understand why John reacted so swiftly to the voice as a trumpet, for the trumpet speaks of a *prophetic tone* in which the Lord appears in the midst of His people. John hears that prophetic tone in the Spirit! Many of us have heard that prophetic tone! There is a time in prayer, in meditation, in waiting upon the Lord, in the moving of the Spirit, in the sovereign operations of God in our lives, when we become aware of the prophetic spirit, and in that prophetic spirit the Lord Himself is descending into our experience and speaking, unveiling something of Himself. It is beyond the letter of the word! It is beyond a mere blessing! It is the Lord Himself, and we hear a word in the Spirit that can only be heard in the Spirit, and behold a glory that can only be seen in the Spirit.

John understood something that few today understand — when you hear the trump **the Lord is descending out of heaven!** (1 Thes. 4:16). Let us, then, who are coming to maturity in our understanding, stand together with John on that blessed day, and looking through the eyes of inspiration know once and for all that the Lord descending from heaven *in the sound of a trumpet* is not a future eschatological event, but a present reality to all the blessed elect of God who come to be "in the Spirit on the Lord's day!"

John turned to see the voice that spake with him! He turned to *perceive* the voice, to *discern* the voice, to *understand* the voice, to gain the *knowledge* of what the Lord was saying and doing in the voice. When we hear the voice of God it's never where we expect it to be — it requires a *turning* to see the voice! When we think we know what God is doing, and we have His ways and His will and His word all figured out, He speaks in a new way never heard before and we must turn from the norm of our spiritual experience to hear and see Him. The presence of the Lord is so fresh, so new, so transcendent, that it always demands a turning!

The voice John heard was the voice of the resurrected, ascended, glorified Jesus Christ! Once he heard the voice everything changed and wonders began to unfold. Before he heard the voice John was describing his own situation on Patmos. As soon as he heard the voice the visions of glory began! The voice commanded him to write the things he saw in a book and send it to the seven churches. There is not a man on earth who is qualified to speak God's word until he has heard the voice of the Son of God! And no word uttered by man will ever be effectual in the lives of the hearers until that word is energized to go forth as a *Living Word*.

There is a tremendous value in words even in the natural realm. All words are either creative or destructive. All that happens every day in the world is accomplished by the power invested in words. All the business and transactions of men and nations are carried on by the power of

words. All the political and economic ideologies that have shaped movements and determined the course of history and the destiny of billions of people and races and empires have first issued as words which form their consciousness within the minds and wills of men, who then actively create out of them the external form and substance of them. The whole Communist empire, for instance, with all its institutions, tyranny and powers, was inspired and produced out of the energy of *words* spoken and penned by a man by the name of Karl Marx. Words printed or written on paper are powerful enough to imprison or put to death a man, or to release him. Words on paper are powerful enough to join a man and a woman in marriage, or to separate them by divorce. Mere words on paper are sufficient to make one exceedingly wealthy or to make one penniless, to start a war or to bring peace, to establish a kingdom or to dissolve an empire. Everything works and moves by and through the power of words! All words spoken form some level of consciousness within man which in turn forms the world you live in. But none of these words produces *life* unless it is enriched by the *spirit of life* from God! Many words gender death.

The mystery of God is not far off in heaven somewhere. GOD IS THE WORD AND THE WORD IS GOD! Furthermore, THE WORD IS THE SPIRIT AND THE SPIRIT IS THE WORD! "The *words* that I speak unto you, *they are spirit*, and *they are life*" (Jn. 6:63). Words are the most powerful things in creation! All things, visible and invisible, were created by God's word. "And God *said*, Let there be..." (Gen. 1:3). "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made" (Jn. 1:1,3). We are *born again* by the word of God! "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the *word of God*, which *liveth* and abideth for ever" (I Pet. 1:23). The Living Word is the LIVING CHRIST!

Christ is the perfect speech of God. When the invisible and unknowable God desired to reveal Himself and communicate Himself to mankind, He placed the substance of Himself in His Word, and made that Word flesh, and caused that Word made flesh to dwell among men and speak as God to men. Christ the Word contains the pure essence and power of Life! The words of Christ will form the consciousness and sense of HIS BEING WITHIN, and of His world, so that you may live in it forever. The presence of Christ places us in a position to hear the voice of God! This is the voice we want to hear, not just any voice, but the voice of the Living Spirit. I have witnessed many men *speak* and *preach* the words of scripture with great persuasion and nothing happened. There is no "magic" or "mystical" power in the words of the scriptures! The only power they have is that they testify of CHRIST THE LIVING WORD! They point to HIM WHO IS THE LIFE! When men come to HIM they live! One can preach great sermons and *die*. But when one hears the dynamic living voice of the Son of God transformation takes place! The same Living Word that by its almighty power brought creation into existence was made flesh and dwelt among us. The Word was not made a book. The Word was not made a teaching or a doctrine. The Word was made *flesh, divine substance in human form, the Son of God!* That is the Word that John heard! And that is the same Word we hear today in the Spirit! That Word is the voice, the living voice of the Christ within every son of God. The same Word that came into this world and conquered sin and death in the person of Jesus Christ is being raised up in you and me in these days!

Here, Christ's voice, as John heard it, is compared to a **trumpet**. Later John said, "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first **voice** which I heard was as it were a **trumpet** talking with me; which said, **come up hither**, and I will show you things which must be hereafter" (Rev. 4:1). Notice this trumpet-voice told him to come up higher, so he could see the things God wanted to show him. God's trumpet-message is always to come up higher! It is sent because that is the great need of the saints and of all mankind, to come up

into the higher realms of the Spirit, for we cannot see the glorious spiritual truths, nor behold the wondrous heavenly things, from the lowlands of our carnal mind and childish religion. Normally we "hear" a voice, but John said of the trumpet-voice that penetrated his spiritual consciousness, "And I turned to **see the voice** that spake with me, and being turned, I **saw** seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks **one** like unto the Son of man" (Rev. 1:12-13). The One who spoke with a "voice" as of a "trumpet" was **in** the trumpet-voice, and it was **in the message of the voice** that this glorious One was revealed. I do not hesitate to tell you that this was the revelation of Jesus Christ as He appeared to John **IN THE TRUMP OF GOD!**

"God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the **sound of a trumpet**" (Ps. 47:5). When a rising time is due for God's people, it may be said that God is "gone **up**," as taken from the lesson that He moved in a pillar of cloud and fire to lead His ancient people, Israel. "With the sound of a trumpet" signifies that His voice is being heard. God's **voice** and His **trumpet** are one and the same! It is the sounding forth of His word! Many messengers (His many-membered body) add volume to the sound of that trumpet. Another passage speaks of "His voice as the sound of **many waters**" (Rev. 1:15). John also tells us that waters means multitudes of people! (Rev. 17:15). So God's trumpet-voice is sounding through many people, "many waters." "And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the **voice of a multitude**, and as the **voice of many waters**, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Rev. 19:5-6). John heard coming from the throne (divine authority) a message which he said was a voice of a "multitude," of "many waters," and of "mighty thunderings." It was one trumpet-message with many voices adding volume to it! It was **one message**, but being trumpeted by many voices, so that it became as the voice of a "great thunder." This shows the beautiful unity between Christ the Head and His many-membered body!

The trumpet bespeaks of a clear word of God from the Spirit-appointed and Spirit-anointed messengers, His ministers. Trumpets are words, clear words, living words! The trumpet of God is His voice, His voice from heaven, His voice in the saints; even the voice of the Holy Spirit through the consecrated messengers of God. The trumpet is the revelation of the Lord speaking through His people in an oracle of the Spirit. The sound of the trumpet is simply the **PROCLAMATION OF A MESSAGE!**

With a simple knowledge like this we should have no trouble at all in understanding that our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, the Logos of God, is Himself the trumpet, the message, the revelation! In type, Jesus is the trumpet of God, delivering a clear sound, a living word, introducing us to the reality of the perfection and incorruptible life of which He is the beginning. Praise God, it is the Lord Himself who comes in the trumpet-message, and at the sound of His voice we are **caught up** with Him to share the glory of His sphere of life. The Lord Himself descends out from the highest realms our heavens (spirit) into the lower realms of our earth. We are the creatures God is creating to express His nature, power, and glory unto creation. His purpose for coming out of the realm of spirit into our earth is to catch our whole being up into the realm of spirit, to swallow up all death into **HIS LIFE!** And He accomplishes this by coming to us **in a trumpet message!** It is the **word** that changes us!

Too numerous to mention have been the things God has taught us as we have walked in the light of His ever-increasing truth. Our minds have often been staggered by the wonderful things we have seen and heard and our ambitions have been raised as we have gazed into the promised land of the Spirit and have seen the innumerable and wonderful glories that lie before us in the fullness of our sonship. We are undoubtedly standing at the threshold of a new

dimension in God, a higher realm in the Spirit, and a new level of experience. Like John, we have heard a voice as a trumpet! When we come to a time like this, many will refuse to go on. There is some strange thing inherent in all men that makes them reluctant to leave the security of their fixed abode to press forward into the challenge of the new. They feel that they have journeyed far enough and that the effort to press into the new and more wonderful realm is too great a risk. We tend to become rigid, settled, self-confident and crystallized, fixed in our gaze and in our pose. In order for us not to miss the next phase of the unfolding revelation of Jesus Christ, God has to sound a shrill trumpet into our hearts that we might be alerted. God is saying and doing a NEW THING! It is time to go forward! It is the hour to arise to the battle and possess our land, our full inheritance in God. It is time to leave the first principles of the doctrine of Christ and GO ON TO PERFECTION! It is time to put on the mind of Christ and be transformed by the renewing of our mind! It is time to live and not die! "Come up hither!"

The trumpet-message is alerting our minds to the fact that the sons of God who are being prepared to restore creation are not just ordinary Christians with ordinary experiences. We have tasted the earnest of our inheritance, and it is now time to arise and enter an entirely new realm of experience in God. I speak of the realm which is in truth the realm of the fullness of God, the realm of incorruptible life and glory, the realm of the kingdom with authority and power. Furthermore I am convinced that those who have ears to hear the sound of the trumpet in this hour, and the willingness to "come up hither" as the Spirit commands, will attain to the glory of that new realm while the rest of the church world goes on as usual in the old realm and on the old planes. Jesus is the revelation of this realm of which I speak because He came forth as the Pattern Son and He speaks a clear sounding word. He is the pattern of this heavenly sonship and He is the Alpha and the Omega of it! He is the beginning of the new creation of God, but you and I are following the forerunner, and just as He trumpeted a clear sounding word, you and I are going to trumpet a clear sounding word to the elect in this generation.

Let us take heed to how we hear, and how we speak and what we speak! The order of man is passing. How? BY THE SOUNDING OF THE TRUMPET! By the very word of our mouth, because of HIM who speaks out of us! We might compromise the message and bear a message of appeasement to the old order of the religious systems, but what would that accomplish? If a trumpeter blows an uncertain sound, how will you know to prepare? If the trumpeter has no message, how is he going to speak? "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand" (Joel 2:1). God has commanded us to blow a trumpet in Zion and sound an alarm in His holy mountain! Our job is to sound an alarm in Zion, to awaken His elect, and let them know that THE DAY OF THE LORD IS HERE!

God has a trumpet-message that is sounding forth because it is time for His people to move into new territory. May God grant us wisdom and understanding that we may apprehend the mystery of these things. The trumpet-voice John heard that day on Patmos later *becomes* the *seven trumpets* sounding through the Revelation! The seven trumpets are like the seven eyes, seven horns, seven stars, and seven spirits — they are the seven-fold fullness of God's trumpet-message, the declaration, proclamation of the process of His victory wrought out experientially within each of us! Seven angels sound the seven trumpets. Who are they? THEY ARE THE LORD! Know this, and you will possess a great key to the book of Revelation. It is the Revelation of Jesus Christ! So when someone shows up under a symbol, doing something that originates with God, who do you suppose it is? Why, bless your heart, IT IS THE LORD! He said in chapter one, "Behold, I come quickly." And throughout the book He comes, and He comes, and He comes, and He continues to come! He comes as a trumpet-voice. He comes as a Lion. He comes as a Lamb. He comes as seven spirits. He comes as seven angels. He

comes as a mighty angel. He comes as the Son of man. He comes as horses galloping out of a seven-sealed book. He comes as a star coming down out of heaven. We could go on and on. But when an action originates out of God and out of heaven, under whatever symbol is used — IT IS THE LORD! It is the Lord coming to purge us, refine us, thresh us, perfect us, transform us, change us, mature us, and conform us to the image of the Son! As the trumpets sound within the lives of God's people we begin to experience the fullness of all that God is! There has never been an expression of God at this level in the earth at any time except in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, for He is the firstborn among many brethren. But now there is a people that has been sealed unto the day of redemption, and when God begins to loose the seals, sound the trumpets, and pour out the vials, it will bring forth a many-membered expression of God at the same level of God's fullness. This is the revelation of Jesus Christ!

"And the angel which I saw...sware by Him that liveth for ever and ever...that...in the days of the *voice of the seventh angel*, when he shall begin to sound, the **mystery of God should be finished**" (Rev. 10:5-7). The words, "**In the days** of the voice of the seventh angel," and the words, "begins to sound," speak volumes to me because the complete sounding of that trumpet involves a process in time and shows us that our change which comes with the sounding of the seventh, or last, trumpet is not to find its total consummation in one specific moment. There is the obvious implication of a prolonged sounding extending through various periods and dealings. Yet at the initial sounding, the "mystery" of God's purpose for His elect shall no longer be hidden. Ah — methinks I have heard this trumpet, for the mystery of God has been revealed in the midst of the saints in these days! When the seventh trumpet sounds a wonderful thing takes place — the **Manchild** is birthed, caught up to the throne of God, and rules the nations with a rod of iron!

In the days when the voice of the seventh angel with his trumpet-message begins to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished. The mystery of God is *God manifest in the flesh*! "Great is the *mystery* of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3:16). This is also the mystery of Christ, that God was in Christ, and now God in Christ is in us! Paul elaborates upon this mystery in these words: "How that by revelation He made known unto me the *mystery*; which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be *fellow heirs* and of the *same body*, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel" (Eph. 3:2-6). When you follow the word "mystery" through the writings of the apostles it is clear that the mystery is the *body of Christ*. In Ephesians 5:31-32 it is the mystery of the *union* of Christ the Head with Christ the body in all the fullness that that means. It is time, my beloved, for the mystery of God to be finished! *Finished* means completed or consummated. In the days of the voice of the seventh angel THE BODY OF CHRIST SHALL BE FINISHED! Not just quantitatively, but qualitatively. That trumpet signifies that the Lord's elect, the sons of God or the body of Christ, have all been transformed into His image and likeness and grown up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! Christ the Head and Christ the body shall be joined in the blessed union of *fullness*. The **mystery** of God manifest in the flesh will be finished!

The seventh trumpet signifies that the hour has arrived for the sons of God or the body of Christ to come forth in birth, into full and complete manifestation! This corporate Christ, Head and body, this Manchild company, shall rule all nations with a rod of iron. Caught up to God and His throne — into His authority! In the days of the voice of the seventh trumpet-message the mystery shall be finished, the body completed, the long and tedious work of preparation of God's sons shall at last be consummated. The trumpet has begun to sound! There is an acceleration of God's revelatory word, an intensified trumpet-message, a clear sound of the

revelation of Jesus Christ! Listen, my friend, for the sounding of the trumpet-voice within your spirit!

If you can hear this trumpet sounding above the hue and cry of rapture, antichrist, mark of the beast, great tribulation, denominationalism, sectarianism, mansions over the hilltop, cabins in the corner of gloryland, pie in the sky, religious programs, rituals, ceremonies, endless meetings, coverings, bishops, cunningly devised fables, money raising schemes, false prophets, false healers, lying signs and wonders, carnal health and wealth prosperity doctrines; if you can mount up with wings as eagles and soar high above all this carnal, confused, frustrated clamor of noisy gongs and clanging cymbals, and hear the distinct, plain, unmistakable sound of this last trump, then it can be said to you: Blessed art thou, overcomer, Manchild, hundred-fold, firstfruits; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven!

The seventh trumpet is the final redemptive message and when it is finished sounding God will have made a man in His image! What tremendous truths are being blown on this redemptive trumpet! Let not any man rob you of the greatest sound that man has ever been privileged to hear! A sound with such a high and holy pitch, with tones so deep and profound, that only the Spirit can reveal its message to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Do not miss what the Spirit is saying; gird up the loins of your mind with the truth that will fully redeem you, spirit, soul, and body!

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks **one like unto the Son of man**, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and **His voice as the sound of many waters**. And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength" (Rev. 1:10-16).

Chapter 21

One Like Unto A Son Of Man

On an outwardly dismal day on far-away Patmos the blessed apostle John sits in holy contemplation. Suddenly the earth seems to sink away beneath his feet. The horizon recedes. John's spirit seems to be liberated from the shackles of time and space. He is taken out of contact with the physical world about him: he is "in the spirit." He sees, indeed, but not with physical eyes. He *hears*, but not with physical ears. He is in direct contact with the spiritual realities of the heavenly world! He is alone...with God! He is wide awake and every avenue of his spirit is open to the direct communication coming from God in the spirit. John is told, "Write the things that thou seest in a book." Now, isn't it interesting that he not only wrote the things he *saw*, but also the things he *heard*. So the "seeing" is not seeing with the natural eye, it's seeing in the realm of the spirit! You can "hear" in the realm of the spirit and in hearing you see, that is, you *understand*.

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet. And I *turned to see the voice* that spake with me..." (Rev. 1:10,12).

What kind of *turning* did John do? Did he physically turn around? John was *in the spirit*, so his turning was a spiritual turning! His turning was an inward turning! It doesn't mean he physically turned around, it means he turned from beholding things in the earth realm to beholding things as they are in the heavens of God's Spirit. John began to hear by the Spirit and see by the Spirit — his perception and vision raised to a higher dimension. His eyes and ears were opened to all things spiritual and heavenly! He turned in the same way we mean when we say that someone has "turned to the Lord." We don't mean they changed the position of their body or tilted their head in a certain way to gaze into the sky. It is a spiritual turning, an inward change. John was changed in his spirit, lifted into a new awareness, quickened to hear and see the things that come from the Spirit of God! I have *turned* many times during the years of my walk in God. More than fifty years ago I first heard the Voice that John heard, and I turned from my Pentecostal realm to see the Voice, to embrace a new experience and dimension in God! Since that blessed day, each time we have heard the Voice out of the Lord's on-going revelation of Himself, we have turned to hear as we are supposed to hear, and to see as we are supposed to see.

I am terribly at a loss for words to express the glory of what John *heard* and *saw* when caught up into the Spirit. He heard a voice as a trumpet, and said, "I *turned to see the voice* that spake with me." "Turned" is the same word which is translated *converted* in Acts 3:19. There is a conversion that takes place in our lives before we can see the voice that speaks with us! There is a turning from all that is not the Lord Himself! We are not just turning or being converted from the ways of the world, or from religious traditions and forms of godliness. In the life of every son of God there is coming a turning even from those legitimate things God has given us — from seeking and glorying in *our* ministries, *our* gifts, *our* callings, *our* positions, and *our* blessings. We are being turned to the Lord Himself! It is when we behold Him in the Spirit and by the Spirit that the great work of God is finished in us to transform us into His image and

glory! "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. 3:18).

"And being turned, I saw *seven golden candlesticks*, and *in the midst* of the seven golden candlesticks one like unto the Son of man" (Rev. 1:12-13). The candlestick realm is the church realm! THAT'S WHERE THE MESSAGE IS! The message is not out there, not from Christ in some far-off heaven somewhere, not from an angel from heaven, not from Christ outside of us. The message is *within*. The voice of the Son of God is the voice in the churches, within those in the churches who are walking in the Spirit and seeing and hearing by the Spirit. Weren't nearly all of us in the churches when first we heard *the Voice*? It's among us! It's in our midst! The kingdom of God is *within you*! The Spirit of the Son is *within you*! God dwelleth *in you*! The Holy Ghost is *within you*! The word of Christ dwelleth richly *in you*! The anointing abideth *within you*! The voice of the Son of God is heard from *within*!

Have you ever turned to *see a voice*? John turned to see the Voice! He didn't turn to see the man, or the woman, or the prophet, or the angel — he turned to see the Voice that spoke to him. Until we grasp the eternal importance of the voice of the Son of God we will never turn to see the Voice — not the vessel the Voice speaks through! God has spoken through men and women and angels and jackasses and clouds and bushes that burned and were not consumed. God is bringing us to the place where we do not demand to hear God speak in a certain way or through a particular vessel, but our sole and all-consuming desire is to hear the voice of the Son of God and see Him in His revelation, whatever it be. When God speaks it matters not whether He speaks through a man or a woman, or through a white man, a black man, a Chinaman, or through a jackass. It makes no difference how educated or uneducated, how polished or unpolished, how desirable or undesirable the instrument. There are people who refuse to receive the word of God unless it comes through a particular apostle, prophet, writer, or ministry. If you are not approved by their organization, their board, their apostle, their bishop, or their little religious clique called a "fellowship," they will not receive the word of the Lord from you. You must have the right credentials! Only *their* ministry is the chosen vessel, and if God wants to speak He will speak through *them*. He can't speak through anybody else! I have no hesitation whatever in telling you that such an attitude is immature, carnal, sectarian, fleshly and devilish. All who are truly walking in the Spirit as sons of God are keen in their *hearing*, listening for the voice of the Son of God, for whosoever hears the voice of the Son of God shall *live* and *not die*, saith the Lord.

The sons of God also are able to see. "And I turned to see the voice that spake with me." And what a surprise! "And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks." We would expect John to see a *person* — but when he turned he saw seven golden candlesticks. "And *in the midst* of the seven golden candlesticks one like unto the Son of man." These are wonderfully significant words! The One John saw was not seated on a golden throne in heaven, He was not standing in a rainbow before a waterfall, He wasn't standing on a mountain top, He wasn't standing in the doorway of a great cathedral. Oh, no! He was standing in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks! Would to God that all His people everywhere really knew where this One is! He is standing *in the midst* of the churches. He is *in the midst* of the Lord's people, *in the midst* of the body of Christ. And He is right there *in the midst of you*, my precious brother, my sister. "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; He judgeth among the gods" (Ps. 82:1).

The seven golden candlesticks are the seven churches, and a Voice was speaking out of the midst of the seven churches. It is necessary to see the church before you can see Him who is in the church. There are some people who have no use for the church. They say that God has called them out of the church. I understand what they mean, but they are wrong. I have been

called out, too. Many years ago I received the distinct and powerful call to "Come out of her...that you be not partaker of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4). That is the Spirit's unmistakable call to come out of *Babylon*! Babylon, among other things, is the *religious system* that *calls* itself "the church." It is not the church! The church is the body of Christ! Babylon is an imitation, a usurper, an impostor, a harlot man-made system that masquerades as the church. Oh, yes, we have been called out of Babylon, but we are still in the body of Christ! If you have truly been called out of the church, then you are severed from Christ! I esteem the body of Christ. I honor the body of Christ. I have a great love for the body of Christ, which *is the church*. The Lord Jesus Himself loved the church, and gave Himself for it, that He might present it to Himself a *glorious church*, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

Come now, my beloved, and let us SEE THE CANDLESTICKS — for when you see the candlesticks you will also see **one like unto the son of man in the midst of the candlesticks**. Come, and let us behold where He dwells! Would you not think it strange should someone come to your house, get out of their car, put their hands over their eyes, grope their way up the walk to your door, knock at the door, and when you answer the knock they should say, "Oh, I don't want to see your house — I just want to see you!" Wouldn't you think that a little peculiar? Wouldn't you secretly consider that person a little "flaky"? Some of God's people are just like that! They don't want to see what God dwells in. They avoid all contact with the candlesticks. They want to *hear the Voice* without *seeing the candlesticks*! It can't be done, my friend. Here I am, 67 years of age, short, gray, and bald. Sometimes I wish I was 30 years old and tall, dark, and handsome! But I can't do anything about that. I'm sure I could make a few improvements on this house I live in. A face lift, a toupee, and some "Just for Men" hair color might take ten or fifteen years off of my appearance. But it would still be the same old house. And if you want to meet me, or hear me speak, the voice you hear will come out of this tabernacle that you see. This is where the voice resides. This is where the life is. In like manner, there is no way that you hear the voice of the Son of God apart from the tabernacle — the body — He lives in!

We may not like some things about the present state of that body, including our own condition, but it is **His body**, nonetheless. Someone says, "Oh, I don't want to see the man, I just want to see the Lord!" It is true, we know no man *after the flesh*, that is, on the natural level, after the carnal consciousness. But let me make it very clear — you have to see the man *in order* to see the Lord! I can only see Christ in you by seeing you. And I can only hear Christ out of you by hearing you! "Behold, the tabernacle of God is *with men*." Another says, "If I could find a perfect church I would be a part of it." Well, then it would no longer *be* a perfect church — you would mess it up! God is bringing us to the place in this important hour where we are willing to look at each other in spite of our weaknesses, mistakes, errors, spots, blemishes and wrinkles until He finishes His work in us and gets rid of them out of our lives. Ah, yes, the Lord whom ye seek is coming swiftly to His temple as a refiner's fire and fuller's soap, and He shall purge and purify the priesthood of His house! In the meantime the Lord is still speaking out of His temple and it is impossible to *hear the Voice* without *seeing the candlesticks*! We must be able to hear the voice of the Son of God even if there are imperfections in the vessels. In the midst of the church, which is His body, there is One like unto the Son of man. If we look with the pure, anointed eyes of the Spirit — we will see *Him*!

SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS

"And being turned, I saw *seven golden candlesticks*" (Rev. 1:12).

It is of special interest to note that the seven candlesticks are not merely candlesticks — they are "golden" candlesticks. The seven-branched candlestick of the tabernacle was constructed according to the word of the Lord given to Moses. It was made of *pure gold*, of a solid piece weighing a talent. Since gold is symbolic of deity, or the divine nature, this candlestick would absolutely have to be something emanating from God. In fact, it would have to be God Himself represented in the candlestick because it was made of solid, pure gold. It was not made of shittim or acacia wood overlaid with gold, as other parts and furnishings of the tabernacle were, which symbolized human flesh overlaid with divine nature, or anointed with the Holy Spirit of God, for the pure gold represented God Himself who was going to be the "lightbearer" or "candlestick" that would illuminate our tabernacle or body. This piece of furniture must absolutely be something beyond our human nature, beyond our outer, physical, fleshly being or our soulical life. Yet it must be something that would dwell in our tabernacle and give us life, illumination, and power with God!

There is no doubt about it — the golden candlestick represents our *regenerated spirit*! The church is not made up of outward, carnal, fleshly people — the body of Christ is composed of men and women who have been quickened, raised up, made alive *in their spirits* by the life of God Himself! "The *spirit of man* is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly" (Prov. 20:27). "For Thou wilt *light my candle*: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness" (Ps. 18:28). "In the beginning was the Word...that was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (Jn. 1:1,9). We know that our mortal bodies have not yet been quickened and glorified, and our souls are still in the process of being quickened and transformed, but in our spirits we have already been quickened, made alive, raised up and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus! Now, we also know that there were problems in the seven churches of Asia in the book of Revelation! There was sin, carnality, error, pride, and a number of negative conditions. The Lord admonished and rebuked the churches for these conditions! So — how could "pure gold" and only pure gold serve as the symbol of the seven churches? The answer is quite simple. The candlestick is not the symbol of the outer man of soul and body, which are merely human and mixed, weak and polluted. The candlestick is the symbol of the *inner man*, the *new creation man*, the *Christ man* after the Spirit! That is where Christ dwells within us and lightens our candle! That is where the light of God and the life of God are in us!

May the Lord enable all who read these lines to see clearly by the spirit of wisdom and revelation that our spirit and God's Spirit are truly ONE SPIRIT. "He that is joined unto the Lord *is one spirit*" (I Cor. 6:17). Often we try to understand the truth of God on a carnal level. We must see as God sees! For instance, the scripture says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a *new creation*. Old things *are passed away*, and behold *all things are become new!*" (I Cor. 5:17). When we look at our lives and find old things that have *not* passed away, we might conclude that we are not in Christ, and we are not a new creation! Would we not have to be *perfect* to fulfill this scripture? Another scripture that will kill us, when understood with the natural mind on the outward, human level, is, "He that is born of God *does not commit sin.*" According to this passage it is *impossible* for a born-again person to sin! So immediately I come under condemnation. I must not be born again! How could I be born again, because I certainly do miss the mark! And not only does it say that he that is born of God does not commit sin, but it adds, "Neither *can he!*"

We must have a revelation that he which is born of God is *our spiritual man*. It is the *inner man* which is "renewed after the image of Him that created him." My body is not yet born of God! My soul is not yet born of God! But deep in the inner recesses of my being my *spirit* has been born of God! You see, my beloved, it has nothing to do with my outward, human, fleshly life. It

is not the Adamic life that has been born of God! It is *Christ* who has been born again in the womb of my life, and it is *Christ* who is *now my life*. If any man be *in Christ* he is a new creation! That's where the new creation is! My outward human weakness, failure, carnality and defeat have nothing to do with this *inner reality*. Christ *in me* is my hope of glory! My spiritual man is *who I am*. Christ is being raised up in us! Christ is complete. Christ is pure and holy. Christ is sinless. Christ is *my regenerated spirit!* My regenerated spirit is a *new creation*. In it, old things are passed away and all things have become new! My regenerated spirit is born of God, it does not sin, neither indeed *can it!* THAT IS WHO I AM. THAT IS WHO **YOU ARE!** And that is the "gold" of the **GOLDEN CANDLESTICK!**

ONE LIKE UNTO A SON OF MAN

"And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one like unto the Son of man*" (Rev. 1:12-13).

The apex of history was the day John saw Christ as He really is! Let us consider with holy reverence how this mighty One who stood among the candlesticks, proclaiming, "I am Alpha and Omega," was something more than the gentle and lowly Jesus of Nazareth. John states with great clearness that he, being turned, saw one LIKE UNTO A SON OF MAN. Now, the King James Bible, as quoted above, says that John saw one "like unto **the** Son of man," but that is not how the Greek reads. There *is no* definite article in the Greek, it does not say "**the** Son of man" but "one like **a** son of man." The Diaglott reads, "and in the midst of the Lampstands one *like to a Son of Man*." Young's Literal says, "and in the midst of the seven lamp-stands, one *like to a son of man*." The Amplified Bible renders, "and in the midst of the lampstands one *like a Son of man*." The Concordant Literal New Testament translates, "and in the midst of the seven lampstands One *like a son of mankind*." The Wuest Translations reads, "and in the midst of the lampstands one *like a son of man*." We could go on and on, practically all translations consistently translate the Greek text correctly as "**a** son of man" instead of "**the** Son of man."

Now I know this fact will dismay a great number of preachers, teachers, and writers who, like me, have taught that since Jesus is "the" Son of man, this one "*like unto the* Son of man" is His many brethren, conformed to His image. There is truth there, but our truth must be pure, focused, and undistorted! So what is John really seeing, and what is he really saying? Let us take note that what John saw was a vision, a picture, a representation, and what he saw was someone who was "like a son of man" or someone in *human form*. It was a personage that bore the likeness of a man — head, hair, eyes, mouth, hands, legs, feet — all in the form of a man. Yet, this One he saw was something more than an ordinary man! He saw One in such surpassing majesty that words almost failed him when he tried to describe what he saw. This One was great, grand, illustrious, brilliant, radiant, awesome, imposing, overwhelming, glorious, and sublime! He had the features and appearance of a man, but there was an aura, a stature, a glory and a majesty of His person that transcended that of any natural man!

Who was this remarkable person whom John saw that day on Patmos and describes so vividly? Was not this person the same One who took Peter, James, and John up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them? For at that time His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light, "exceeding white as snow" (Mat. 17:2; Mk. 9:3), much the same as they appeared when John saw Him in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. Yes, this is preeminently none other than our Lord Jesus Christ who has been raised from the dead and glorified with that same glory He had before the world was, and who dwells in the light which no man can approach unto. Saul on the Damascus road and John on

the isle of Patmos beheld the glory of the Son of God out of the realm of the Spirit, and it blinded Saul's eyes and caused John to fall at His feet as dead. How do we know this is Jesus Christ? After seeing Him in His glorified body, and falling at His feet as dead, this One identified Himself to John with these words: "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. 1:17-18). After all — this is **the revelation of JESUS CHRIST!**

ONE IN THE MIDST

It will greatly aid our understanding to see that there is an *individual* or *personal*, as well as a *corporate* sense of this "one in the midst" of the candlesticks. We know that Christ is one, even Jesus Christ; and we know that Christ is also many, even the body of Christ. In like manner there is the one Son of man, even Jesus; and there is also the many-membered Son of man, even the sons of God. Each of these, in a unique way, walks "in the midst" of the candlesticks! It will be a great blessing to your heart to understand how the Lord Jesus, the Son of man clothed in the garment of His priesthood, with eyes of discernment like flames of fire, with burning feet of judgment like unto brass heated red-hot in a furnace, and the two-edged sword of His living word flashing out of His mouth, walks *in the midst of each of us and all of us* whom He has redeemed!

The seven-branched candlestick of the tabernacle was made of a talent of beaten gold. It was the lightbearer of the holy place! There was no other light, either natural or artificial, in that holy place. The light of the outer court was the natural sun, and the light of the most holy place was the blazing Shekinah — the *glory* of the God of Israel! But in the holy place the light originated from an *indwelling oil*, the light came from a silent and fragrant power *within the candlestick*. In the midst of this precious, beautiful, and perfect light-giver stands a glorious One in the likeness of a **man**. This One is *walking* in the midst of the candlesticks! (Rev. 2:1). The throne is not seen. It is Jesus and the churches alone with each other. It is Jesus under the figure of the priesthood of old that was responsible for the state of the candlesticks. Here is the Lord Himself, the high priest of our profession, and those who walk with Him in the Spirit, tending, trimming, replenishing the lamps!

Aaron, he and his company, under the old covenant, were appointed to look after the seven-branched candlestick, and this they were to do throughout their generations. They were to order the lamps, evening and morning, which were to burn continually without the veil of the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation. And these outward things served till the seed Christ came in His new covenant, who abolished all those outward tabernacles and candlesticks and lamps and lights in the outward worship, and the outward priesthood as well. And in the generation of Christ in the new covenant, the members of His body have become the temple of the living God, and the candlesticks and lamps and lights of the holy place of the Lord! In the book of Revelation He calls the seven churches the seven golden candlesticks, which is a perfect number, the completeness of the redeemed of this age. And Christ, the high priest, doth enlighten the candle, which is the spirit man, in the candlestick. And Christ walks in the midst of these candlesticks in His heavenly fine linen, and heavenly golden girdle; and His hair as white as wool and snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass, as if they were burning in a furnace; and out of His mouth goes a sharp two-edged sword; and His countenance is as the sun shining in his strength. Here is Christ, walking in the very spirits of new creation men, whose spirits He has lighted with His holy and divine and eternal fire, who are destined to be transformed not only in spirit, but also in soul and body; here He exercises His offices, for He is a king to rule in their hearts, and a priest to reconcile all things

within them to the nature of God, to save the soul and redeem the body, that He may offer His people to God without spot or blemish!

It was not the candlesticks themselves, which had called unto John. It was the One *in the midst* like unto a son of man. How intimate, how strengthening, how illuminating that expression — "in the MIDST." The voice of God called to Moses "out of the midst" of the burning bush, and later "out of the midst" of the cloud. The fourth man walked free with the three Hebrew children "in the midst" of the fiery furnace. God dwelt "in the midst" of the camp of Israel. God dwells "in the midst" of Zion, and He that dwelleth "in the midst" of *thee*, is mighty! It is the place which Jesus took as the Master of His disciples. It is the place He took after He rose from the dead. It is the place which He occupies as the Spirit sent down from heaven. He is the Lamb "in the midst" of the throne, and of the elders, and of the four living creatures! The tree of life is "in the midst" of the paradise of God!

"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, **there am I in the midst** of them" (Mat. 18:20).

My beloved brethren, I am as much opposed to religion and man-made, organized, carnal minded, fleshly religious systems, as any man alive today. This has been my passion since that blessed day when the voice of Christ bade me "Come out of her." At the same time I recognize the church as the body of Christ! I thank God for *the church*, the seven golden candlesticks! Many of the Lord's people have confused religious Babylon and the church. So many groups today, even "sonship" and "kingdom" groups want to perpetuate the system of Babylon. All who are truly called to sonship and coming into that sonship have ears to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches! The leading of the Lord in our lives has been two-fold. First, we seek to fellowship with all the Lord's precious people, regardless of what level they are on. They are all HIS, and if we can touch them and bless them in any way, that is our joy. That is how the firstborn Son of God walked!

Second, we *cannot, dare not* fellowship the Babylon system. The Spirit of the Lord has drawn a clear distinction between the Lord's *people* and the *system* so many are involved in. This is clearly revealed in the book of Revelation! There were seven *carnal churches*, yet the Lord walked in the midst of them! Then there was that great city, Mystery Babylon the Great, out of which He called His people and which He burned and destroyed with fiery judgments! We can and will fellowship any redeemed child of God — but we will not fellowship their carnal systems! As a result much of our fellowship is limited to a "one-on-one" basis, and with small groups of saints, after we get past those who won't *fellowship us* because they perceive us to be heretics! At the same time we are not opposed to meetings or gatherings of the saints. The Spirit does indeed move upon some to meet, worship, and share together. And, when such gatherings are by the Spirit, and not controlled by either the spirit or system of Babylon, we are happy to partake. And we do!

On the other hand, we do not put a premium on meetings. My walk with God would in no way be hampered if I never attended a meeting! I would not fall into sin or error, or backslide. My spiritual growth is not meeting oriented. I do not *have* to attend gatherings in order to stay spiritual and follow Christ into sonship. But when gatherings are appointed of the Lord, on a regular or occasional basis, there is a mutual benefit derived from the presence and power of Christ "in the midst." We condemn none who attend meetings, nor do we condemn those who don't. Nor do we praise either group. We have learned from many years of walking in the Spirit with God's people that the Lord deals with every man in His own unique way and according to

His purposes for our spiritual growth and development — and His will for us in these areas is subject to change from time to time!

To know the Father's will for our walk *today* — that is the issue! And then to abide there with no condemnation either to ourselves or to others whom the Lord is leading differently. Often those who sense they have grown beyond the need for gatherings look down their noses at those who still find the need to meet. In like manner, those who are part of active church groups look with disdain upon those whom the Lord has called into a walk of separation, whom they cynically characterize as "Lone Rangers," who have "left the body," and are "spiritual elitists" who are "no good to anyone." Let me go on record — so far as I am concerned both groups are yet carnal and think as men, not discerning the Lord's body! We are called to love one another, to discern by the Spirit the Father's purpose in each one, to esteem each better than ourselves, and to release all our brethren to God for His sovereign dealings in their lives, whatever His plan for them is! Anything less than this is not sonship or kingdom! I refuse to take sides with either group, but seek to edify all the Lord's elect, to present every man perfect in Christ. And I will fellowship with *both*! Furthermore, I can tell you by personal experience and by the wisdom of the Lord that there are sons of God in both camps who in their growth in the Spirit, in their love, in their righteousness, in their humility, in their maturity in the ways of God, and in their effectiveness in the kingdom of God are not one whit behind any man or woman of the other persuasion! No *one way* of doing things has a corner on God's purposes in this hour! Get off your hobby-horse, my brother, my sister, and discern *by the Spirit* what GOD is doing! Oh, yes, I have a witness in my heart that CHRIST IS IN THE MIDST OF THE CANDLESTICKS! This is what the revelation of Jesus Christ is all about — it is the revelation of God's Christ personally, corporately, and universally!

In chapters two and three of the Revelation we see seven conditions within the seven churches, good and bad, positive and negative, commendable and reproachable. The Lord is in the midst of every one of these conditions! He walks in the midst of the churches, in the midst of their love, strength, patience, righteousness and faithfulness, and also in the midst of their weakness, faults, failures, carnality and rebellion. The Lord is there in the midst of every condition! Aren't you glad the Lord walks in the midst of our condition? Thank God! If He didn't get into the midst of our condition we would be of all men most miserable and altogether hopeless.

The Christ of God walks in our inner being. He is walking to fulfill every promise made to every generation. We are a portion of the church age and we are a portion of the seven golden candlesticks and He who walks among them! We have an *identity* in these same situations today. None of the seven churches are out of existence — they represent the seven-fold condition of the church throughout the age. Every generation has had these same conditions mentioned there manifest in them! Just search them out. They are there! The identifying marks of each church is still in the earth today, and most of us could quickly identify them! The negative conditions represent conditions of carnality and error, of fragmentation and separation from the life of the Spirit! They are things that *must be overcome*. The positive conditions are blessings and privileges and attainments that *must be apprehended*!

Christ is walking up and down in the midst of the candlesticks. These candlesticks are the light of the Lord in the churches! They are the seven-fold spirit of God, the seven lamps that burn before His throne. This light is what is walking up and down in the midst of the candlesticks. To walk up and down means to be present in light form among us! He walks in spirit form, and the seven angels are His lighted word, the anointing of life in the midst of His people. HE IS

WALKING! He has the keys of death and of hell! He is loosing the prison houses and setting the captives free!

He is walking!
He is walking in bright clothing,
In the garden of my heart;
And the spices of His presence
Cause refreshing scents to start!
And His Spirit winds have blown them,
To the ends of all my earth;
Walking, talking, living message,
Of the New Creation Birth.
Irene Lindsey

Thank God for the One *in the midst*, yet we must avail ourselves of His wonderful presence and power! A message comes to mind — it is the story of the house of the heart and the various rooms in the heart of one who has come to know the Lord. There was a particular room at the bottom of the stairs, right off to the side. There the Lord said to this believer, "Here I will meet with you each morning." The believer said, "Lord, you would take time to meet with me every morning?" And He replied, "Yes, I will meet you right here in this room." And so, morning after morning, just as the sun was rising, they held their intimate communion, that blessed fellowship. The believer grew in the knowledge of the grace and ways of God and his spirit was enriched and his life blessed. But then, in the press of things through the tyranny of the urgent, there came a morning when he overslept. He had to get to the office and rushing down the stairs he forgot about the meeting. It grew to be a habit. Weeks and months went by and that quiet time was forgotten. Then one day as he reached the bottom of the stairs in his usual hurry to work, he noticed that the door was ajar and the light was on. He stepped inside to see what it was. There was Christ, sitting, waiting for him. He said, "Lord, what are you doing here?" The Lord said, "Have you forgotten that I told you I would meet you here every morning?" He said, "Lord, you mean that you have been here every day waiting for me?"

Beloved, have you heard your Lord's voice calling you to come apart with Him, to leave everything and every one that hindered you, and come into a higher place of revelation and separation unto Himself? Have you kept your Lord waiting while you fulfilled the demands of the world, or while you pampered your flesh, or while you did something that *you* wanted to do, instead of doing what He wanted you to do? Have you heard Him chide you because you neglected Him, because you were not giving yourself to intimacy of fellowship and communion, because you were not seeking His presence and glory, because you were not ascending into the heights of His Spirit to know Him in His fullness?

When you heard His voice in these and other ways, have you risen up eagerly and quickly and hastened to your Lord? Or have you asked Him to wait for a more convenient season? Did you have some "church work" which you felt was very important because some souls were looking to you for help? Did you tell your Lord to wait until you could leave them, or finish what you were doing? Many times, it is so! Not always in words do we tell Him to wait, we just go on with our "work," fulfilling the responsibilities thrust upon us. We are going to respond and obey, we are going to arise and commune with Him, we are going to seek Him with all of our heart, we are going to follow hard after Him, we are going to pursue the vision and lay hold upon the prize of the high calling, we are going to *be* sons to Him, but not until a more propitious moment when we have finished what we are doing!

I do not hesitate to tell you, precious friend of mine, that it is *alone with the Lord*; it is when the clamoring voices of *this world* and of our *own minds* have been silenced; it is when the strife and opinions of the flesh have ceased; it is when all our religious works have been abandoned; it is when earth has receded and heaven and eternity have drawn near enough for us to see the unseen, that the voice of the Lord is heard in our spirits and His presence is known and His beauty appears. It is in such separation and communion that we tread the courts of the Lord, that the fragrance of His life envelops us, that we are strengthened and equipped to fulfill the will of the Father in this new day of the Lord! Our Beloved is calling us to that secret meeting place within ourselves, until in union with Christ we arise to express and manifest the glory of His kingdom in the earth!

So little of His presence has been realized by those Christians who fill, Sunday after Sunday, the pews of the harlot church systems, that even many who are baptized in the Spirit have more fear of the power of the adversary than they do have of the knowledge of the majesty and presence of the King of Glory. His presence is not always best known in the realm of soulish worship, with its clapping, dancing, and shouting, which excites a religious fervor that in most cases does not proceed from the Spirit. Praise God for the reality of rejoicing in Him, but many have discovered that they thought God was only in the Cathedral, so He called them out from there. We thought God was in the great revivals with signs and wonders and miracles, so He separated us from this. We thought the presence of God could be conjured up by much singing, clapping, and shouting, so He sent fiery trials, stripping, and separation even from this. We so enjoyed and sought the atmosphere of worship until we discovered that we had become worshippers of worship, rather than worshippers of God! So He brought a dealing even in that realm. Finally, isolated and all alone, then He says, "Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art..." (Gen. 13:14). "I am with you IN THIS PLACE, perhaps obscured by the shadows, but I am here *in the midst* of you, working within to conform you to my image, and bring you forth in my likeness." Though we share an existence apparently filled with nothing but the mundane happenings of the routine, YET CHRIST IS PRESENT AND ACCOMPLISHING GREAT AND MIGHTY THINGS WITHIN! Stripped of all the religious crutches we have leaned upon we find that the great work of God in sonship is performed in that most holy place within — in our very *state of being*! God reveals Himself to the humble in the lowliest of disguises, but the proud who never look beneath the surface, fail to find Him even in the greatest of His manifestations.

We see the Head of God's Christ supremely victorious, waiting until the body comes to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, unto a *perfect man*, so that His enemies become His footstool. The Head is victorious, triumphant, and crowned! But this glorious work He began will be carried forth until His whole body, even the feet, shall rise to the place of authority and power that He has. Now in these appointed days there is coming forth a body of people, raised up by the Holy Spirit of God, that is not content to let Satan and the carnal mind rule here on this earth. These are crying out for deliverance from every enemy and all the bondage of corruption within themselves. These cannot be satisfied until they see the kingdom of God coming with power into the earth! They know not how this can be done, for it truly looks impossible! None of the religious or revival realms of the past have accomplished this. But having heard from heaven they gladly embrace the hope! The Spirit of God is now revealing truths that have been hidden from ages and from generations. Hope is springing up in the hearts of the saints, God's called out ones, and they are seeing that we can follow Jesus into that which is beyond the veil, into the Holiest of all, into the fullness of God. These are looking not to die, but to live; not for eventual victory in heaven, but for victory right here on this earth.

I know that some say that we are not passing through the tabernacle in our experience, moving from the outer court to the holy place, and on in to the most holy place. They tell us that we are already in the most holy place and that all that remains is for us to *come out* from behind the veil to be revealed and minister to the lower realms. But let me tell you something. No priest could come out of the most holy place until he had *passed through* all realms of the tabernacle and entered in beyond the veil. All of this represents an *experience* in our lives! We can't leave the outer court until we have thoroughly *experienced* the outer court! Nor can we go beyond the holy place until we have completely *appropriated* the reality of the holy place. So-called "positional truth" won't do here! Now I know God has given us boldness to enter in beyond the veil into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus, but I can assure you that I have yet to meet the brother or sister who has fully *experienced* and *appropriated* all that the most holy place is! Do me a favor, my brother, and *don't come back out of there* until the most holy place is **what you are!** Should you come out in your present state of limitation you will have little to add to the lower realms, nor will creation be set free. And that is the truth!

Ricky Evans has shared this pointed and challenging word: "We have no desire to argue with any who feel they have already come into fullness. Yet, if what they have is fullness then we are greatly disappointed. We do have a desire to come into the reality of full sonship as displayed by our precious Lord. He showed us what it really means to walk in the Spirit without measure! All others have shown us what it is like to walk in the Spirit by measure and we have seen, in our own lives as well as others, what sad failures we can be in the realm of measure. Oh, but our wonderful Lord would not have us sit down in defeat. Oh no! He showed us in His humanity that we can indeed move from measure to fullness and live a life of victory free from all failure by walking in the measure we have and increasing our capacity for more of the life of God which dwells in us.

"There are many today who have learned all the right terminology of "kingdom" and "deeper" teachings, and have assumed they have arrived at such a place in their walk. They *assume* themselves to be in Tabernacles, in the Third Day, and behind the veil, because they have read the books and heard the tapes. They have had an emotional stir which has caused them to think they have entered into the depths of a new dimension. But friend, all the knowledge and emotional stirring means absolutely nothing as far as the reality of our growth in God! You may go to a football game, or a baseball game, and you may know all the statistics of the players involved. You may know all the rules of the game. You may get caught up in the emotions of the players, the excitement of the crowd — but that will not make you one of the ball players! If you were to be actually put into a uniform and placed in the game you would quickly find all your emotional excitement and all your knowledge does not mean you can actually play the game." And so it is in the kingdom of God!

Can our finite minds comprehend even in a measure what this shall mean, to walk in that **state of being** that the resurrected, ascended, glorified, enthroned Head-Christ is now in? That is what the most holy place represents! Even in the days of His flesh the firstborn Son of God had absolute dominion over the elements, the beasts, the birds, over the most powerful devils and the worst diseases. And finally He was victorious over death itself, the last enemy to be destroyed for each of us. Some claim now to have already conquered physical death, while they are still afraid of a mad dog, fasten their seat belts on the highways, and continue to eat three meals a day to keep themselves alive. Precious friend of mine, death is the last enemy to be conquered! But fall it must, before the mighty power of God working through the inChristed, His body. And Jesus said that the works He did, we would do also, and even much GREATER WORKS (Jn. 14:12). This power is not offered to us for us to gratify our carnal appetites for bread made from stones, nor for sensationalism, nor for financial gain, nor to build a kingdom

for ourselves. Jesus was tempted with all these things, and He overcame them. And so will all those who today follow the Lamb to the heights of mount Zion! What a destiny! How marvelous the plan of God! How glorious the path of those who walk the path of sonship to God! There is "One in the midst" and He that is in the midst of thee *is mighty!* The "One in the midst" is the One who speaks to the churches, the One who by His word and power raises up the overcomers to the realm of His throne!

Although He is spoken of as "one like unto a son of man," yet this glorious One identifies Himself as Jesus, who is, indeed, **THE SON OF MAN!** Jesus constantly referred to Himself as "the Son of man." This expression occurs over eighty times in the Gospels, and the intriguing thing is that it is always on the lips of Jesus. Stephen used it once (Acts 7:56), and the people once asked whom Jesus meant by it, but these are the only recorded occasions when anyone used it of the Lord other than Jesus Himself. But He used it constantly. It is found in all four Gospels.

Most Christians read right over that, thinking it means Son of God, though it says He is the Son of man. This does not mean that He was a descendant of Adam, the fleshly man, nor even that Mary in some mysterious way contributed to His genetic makeup. Someone says, "But don't the scriptures say that Christ is the *seed of Abraham* and the *son of David*? How could He be the seed of Abraham and the son of David if He was not the offspring of these men?" The answer is very simple. The inferences in scripture that Jesus was the seed of Abraham, or the son of David, do not speak of Jesus' flesh or human life! All who are "in Christ" are classified as being the "seed" of Abraham (Gal. 3:29), though their outer human substance was in no way derived from Abraham! To the Jews, who piously traced their lineage back to Abraham, Jesus said, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. Ye are of your father, the devil." He certainly was not appealing to their flesh in denying their relationship to Abraham! He meant that they were not of the *nature*, the *faith*, the *righteousness*, the *spirit* of Abraham! And when He told them they were of their father, the devil, He did not mean they were physically begotten by the devil personally and physically planting a demonic sperm in the womb of each of their mothers! He wasn't talking about flesh at all! John the Baptist was Elijah, according to Jesus, but I do not see that he was *physically* or *humanly* Elijah. He came in the power and spirit of Elijah! We are seeing *spiritual realities and relationships* here — not natural!

In solemn truth we may search the Bible through and we will not find that the "second man" was in any way derived from the "first man." Jesus was not conceived by the union of divine sperm with Mary's human egg. Mary's life was Adam's life, and if Mary contributed anything at all to Jesus' life He would then have been from the fallen Adam and would have Himself been of the first man Adam. By that one man Adam *all* were made sinners, and in Adam *all die* and *are dead*. Jesus would, therefore, have *needed a Saviour* instead of *being* the Saviour! Nothing is more certain than this — Adam cannot redeem Adam! The fallen cannot *perfect himself to redeem and restore himself*. The very thought is an absurdity! I have heard men say that when Jesus says, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last," He means that He Himself was both the first man Adam who sinned and the last man Adam who redeemed. I do not hesitate to tell you that this is not only an *improbability* — it is an *impossibility!*

The supreme evidence for the *virgin birth* is Jesus Himself. He is a fresh start! He is a new kind of man! The first Adam came into the world by the creative act of God. So did the second man, the last Adam! The only difference is that the first man came from the hand of God *whole*, as a full grown *adult*, whereas the second man was formed as an *embryo*, then planted in the womb

of a woman to develop and be born into the world as a *baby*. "The second man is the Lord from heaven." Jesus said, "The *Son of man* came down from heaven." In the natural, people do not come down from heaven in a physical body, so we can't imagine Jesus coming down from heaven like that! And of course, He didn't; He came down through Mary. Mary was a *surrogate mother*! Today there are so-called "moral" or "ethical" questions about the use of surrogate mothers, but really there is no moral issue at all. God Himself used a surrogate mother for His own Son and sanctified it in the eyes of the whole world! This was God acting for man. It was not man acting for God. This was God taking the initiative. This was God stooping down to man, not man reaching up to God. In Jesus Christ, God entered into human life in a new way!

The first man is of the earth, earthy, the record states; the second man is the Lord from heaven! The first man fell by sin, marred his image, lost his dominion, forfeited his inheritance, becoming a poor, miserable, degraded creature, in his consciousness ignorant and godless, the impotent plaything of circumstances, and weak and helpless to the last degree. The second man *knew no sin*, was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and walked even upon this earth in a realm higher than the heavens. Have you never wondered how the second man became the Saviour of the first man if He Himself *was* the first man? How could the fallen man *become* the Saviour *without* a Saviour? If Jesus was like us in that He needed a Saviour, but was somehow able to *save Himself without a Saviour*, and then save others, then mankind really needed no Saviour at all, for they could have, like Jesus, simply saved themselves! Such reasoning is spiritual tomfoolery and theological drivel.

What, then, does Jesus mean when He calls Himself the "Son of man"? He means that He was born from the *realm* of true manhood, formed in that *state of being* in which the first man dwelt *before he sinned*. Jesus stepped right out of that *prophetic, spiritual, creative dimension* where the word of God proclaims, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." He was the *second man* to be fashioned in that *realm of true manhood* which is the image and likeness of God in a physical manifestation. He is the second representation of God; He is the last Adam because the image of God as seen in the first Adam, disappears in Christ! His image and representation of God actually destroys the image as represented by the first Adam! The first Adam becomes superfluous and obsolete. Because the second man, the last Adam *replaces him*! Being the second man of GOD'S MANHOOD CREATION, He is called "the Son of man" or the offspring of GOD'S MANHOOD IDEA. The first man Adam stepped forth out of the Creative Mind of God's Idea of Manhood, and Jesus was the second man to proceed out of that Creative Manhood Idea of the Father. As the second man He is thus the SON OF MAN, the second of an Order, the second revelation of the image and likeness of God in man, birthed from the Manhood Mind of the Father! *This man*, being tempted in all points like as we are, yet *without sin*, is THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD RESTORED IN MAN! From that position of sharing our humanity, while not inherently partaking of our sin and death, He became the perfect sin-offering for us all. He also became the new Federal Head of the race of redeemed mankind!

What is an image? An image is something which is formed, a representation of something, a likeness. A true image would be that which correctly depicts the appearance, form, substance, nature, character, and being of whatever it stands for. A true image of God would have to be a true expression of who and what God is! Today we have many false images of God! These, whether idols, concepts, ideas, actions, or theological creeds are manufactured out of the carnal minds of men according to their own darkened understanding. So we have in carnal-minded men a distorted image of God! Many preachers portray God as vengeful, vindictive, unforgiving, unmerciful, judgmental, demanding, laying heavy yokes upon His followers, taking

away our salvation the moment we slip or fall into sin, consigning all who die outside of Christ to unending torture in hell fire, and many other hideous, monstrous images. But, blessed be God! Jesus Christ brought a true and correct image of God, by faithfully walking out the true and divine **manhood**.

Jesus expressed the concept of true manhood when He said, "I and my Father are one." The Jews took up stones to stone Him, for they perceived that He was calling Himself God. They were unable to discern the *image*, the *divine state of true manhood*. The Jewish leaders felt He had no right to take this position, but here is something vitally important to understand. He was not going around telling everybody He was God to exalt Himself in any carnal way. He was teaching man and restoring the knowledge of man's true relationship to God and His purpose. By teaching that God and man are really *one*, He was showing that the value of every created person was GOD HIMSELF. It didn't matter that the truth of our real nature had been hidden, covered, and buried beneath the load of sin and its consequences. What is happening in this hour is that a great light is dawning in the consciousness of man by regeneration, the quickening of the Holy Spirit, lifting people's eyes beyond what they can see to discover the reality of **Christ within**, to identify with that holy thing which is called the **Son of God**, and which is just as truly the **SON OF MAN!** It was in MAN, the highest of God's creations, that God placed the "invisible things of Himself" for display. Now we are being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ — the image of God that Christ gave. All the holy sons of God are becoming the image of God in the earth to reveal the heart, wisdom, nature, power, glory, and love of God to every order of the universe, worlds without end. Through these manifested sons all realms shall be blessed to see and touch and experience the image of God! This is the only way the visible can behold the invisible! ALL shall come to know Him! THIS IS THE PURPOSE OF GOD IN MAN!

Chapter 22

One Like Unto A Son Of Man

continued

“And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the candlesticks *one like unto the Son of man*” (Rev. 1:12-13).

The King James Bible, as quoted above, says that John saw one “like unto **the** Son of man,” but that is not how the Greek reads. There is *no* definite article in the Greek, it does not say “**the** Son of man” but “one like **a** son of man.” Practically every translation available translates the Greek text correctly as “**a** son of man” instead of “**the** Son of man.” Let us note that what John saw was a vision, a picture, a representation, and what he saw was someone who was “like a son of man” or someone in *human form*. It was a personage that bore the likeness of a man. Yet, this One he saw was something more than an ordinary man! He saw One in such surpassing majesty that words almost failed him when He tried to describe what he saw! This One had the features and appearance of a man, but there was an aura, a stature, a glory, and a majesty of His person that transcended that of any natural man!

As the spirit of revelation and understanding floods our minds we see that there is an *individual* as well as a *corporate* sense of this “one in the midst” of the candlesticks. We know that Christ is one, even Jesus Christ; yet we know that Christ is also many, even the body of Christ. In like manner there is one Son of man, even Jesus; and there is also the many-membered Son of man, even the sons of God. This One like unto a son of man is preeminently none other than our Lord Jesus Christ who has been raised from the dead and glorified with that glory which He had with the Father before the world was. Yet this One is also all the holy sons of God who are conformed to His image, filled with His fullness, bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, word of His word, life of His life, and spirit of His spirit!

THE PERFECT MAN

Understand this and you will understand a great mystery. *Spirit* is that aspect of God by which He is able to *individualize* Himself. As Norman Grubb once pointed out, the word “individual” comes from the Latin *individuus* which means **un**-divided. Most people seem to think that it means the exact contrary! It suggests separateness to them, as though being separate or divided from every other human being makes them an *individual*, but they are mistaken. Individual means un-divided, showing that each human person is undivided from humanity in that he is a perfect expression of what humanity is. Thus, in the higher realm of spirit life God has the power of *individualizing* Himself, that is, the bringing forth of another expression of **what He is** without, so to speak, breaking Himself into parts. God individualizes Himself as the *new man* within us, Christ; and so, when we are regenerated we are actually an individualization of God! God can individualize Himself in an infinite number of distinct beings, or units of consciousness and expression, and yet not be in any way separated or divided. God can do this because He is *spirit* and *life*. Inorganic matter cannot be individualized! It can only be broken up. Thus, if you were to tear off half a page of this article, and then tear that into small

pieces, you would have divided up the page. The remnant of the page would be smaller by the amount of paper torn off; and the whole page would be the sum of all the fragments. This is division — not individualization! Spirit, however, can be individualized; it can be produced into another form without in any way subtracting from, or diminishing, the original. This capacity of God is the process by which He is bringing forth a vast company of sons in His very own image! So your real self, the Christ within, the spiritual man, the new creation, is in all truth an individualization of God! This does not mean, of course, that you are an absurd little personal god. You are an individualization of the one and only God who was first individualized in the person of Jesus Christ. The Christ man within you is not “another Christ” or “another God,” but the manifestation of the life, mind, will, nature, power, and glory of the one and only true and living God — our Father!

Come with me back to Galilee two thousand years ago. This man Jesus is quite a preacher. He is considered by many to be a prophet. Rumor says that He even does wonderful miracles. But wait a minute! What makes Him so special? “Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers,” men ask. The hometown folks have known Him since He was in diapers. They’ve seen Him play and heard Him cry. They’ve seen Him with sweat-drenched clothes and dirt under His fingernails. Isn’t He just an ordinary guy from an ordinary family? “Isn’t He the son of that carpenter? Isn’t His mother Mary? Come to think of it, didn’t she get pregnant before marriage? Aren’t His brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas?” they ask. “And don’t His sisters still live in town? No doubt about it: this man is as human as anyone; He’s nobody special.” The people are right that Jesus is as human as anyone. But they’re wrong to think He’s nobody special! They look so hard at Jesus on the outside that they fail to see who He is on the inside! They look so hard at Jesus as a man, that they don’t see Him as God! Let’s not repeat that same mistake. But let’s not make the opposite mistake either. Let’s not look so hard at Jesus as God that we don’t see Him as a man!

The following has been widely circulated, I do not know who the author is, but it states some wonderful things about the *Son of man*. “Almost twenty centuries ago there was a Man born contrary to the laws of life. His death was contrary to the laws of death. He lived in poverty; He possessed neither wealth nor social prestige. In infancy He startled a king; in childhood He puzzled doctors; in manhood He ruled the course of nature, walked upon the billows as pavements, and hushed the sea to sleep. He had no cornfields or fisheries, but He could spread a table for five thousand and have bread and fish to spare. He healed the multitudes without medicine and made no charge for His service. He never wrote a book, yet all the libraries of the country could not hold all the books that have been written about Him. He never wrote a song, yet He has furnished the theme for more songs than all the songwriters combined. He never founded a college, but all the schools together cannot boast of having as many students. He never marshaled an army, nor drafted a soldier, nor fired a gun; and yet no leader ever had more volunteers who have, under His orders, made more rebels stack arms and surrender without a shot fired. He never practiced psychiatry, yet He has healed more broken hearts than all the doctors far and near. When He died few men mourned. But a black crepe was hung over the sun. Though men trembled not for their sins, the earth beneath them shook under the load. All nature honored Him. Corruption could not get hold of His body. The soil that had been reddened with His blood could not claim His dust. Death could not bind Him. The tomb could not hold Him. Behold *what manner of man is this!*”

One day in an humble home by a dusty street in the village of Nazareth God supernaturally inseminated a young virgin girl by the name of Mary, and Jesus, the only sinless human since Adam, was born into this world. It is hard for us to realize that in that babe was the life-energy that held the universe together. It is difficult for us to realize that as that boy, the firstborn Son of

God, grew in stature, the wisdom and the knowledge which was within Him would confound the wisest theologians; that the miracles He was to perform and the things He would declare, as He walked the earth, were to become living words whose vibratory capacity would change the minds of men, transform their lives, and alter the whole course of history and nations. Here is one who is perfect in thought, perfect in word, and perfect in deed. The fact of the matter is, He is the first perfect man who has ever been on this earth! Our Lord Jesus Christ is the *Perfect Man*. The sons of God who come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ are perfect men, and also *the Perfect Man!*

A lecturer was once talking about man's imperfection. He wanted to enforce his point, so he asked rhetorically for anybody in his audience who had ever seen a perfect man to lift his hand. No hand went up. Encouraged by this fact, he asked the question the second time. "Has anyone here ever seen a perfect man?" Still no hand was raised. After he had asked a third time, way back in the rear a little timid fellow lifted his hand. Surprised, the lecturer asked, "Have you seen a perfect man?" "I haven't exactly seen him, but I've certainly heard a lot about him," the little fellow replied. "Who in the world is he?" "He's my wife's first husband." No doubt he had heard a great deal about him! But if he had met him, I think he would have found out that he was not perfect. The first perfect man who lived on this earth is our Lord Jesus Christ. And wonder of wonders — Jesus was *normal*, the only *normal* person who had ever walked this earth!

My brethren — what a mystery the young child Jesus must have been to Himself! I suppose He was about thirty years of age before He was at all able to satisfy Himself as to *who and what He actually was*. The child Jesus must have made the discovery early in His life that He was like no other child in all Israel. "All seek their own," says the scripture, in condemnation of all the children of men. All were walking after their own desires and interests, after their own passions and lusts, after their own thoughts and ambitions. But the child Jesus must have seen and felt within Himself, with a holy wonder, and a divine joy, that, while all around Him, young and old, were doing their own thing, far deeper in His heart than His own things were the things of God, and the things of His neighbor. So early was this the case with Him that, at twelve years of age, He was able to say to His mother, "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about *my Father's business?*"

Jesus Christ, the second man, the last Adam, was the first perfectly obedient man. It is written of Him in His youth, "And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Lk. 2:52). The expression "increasing" means to CUT A WAY THROUGH AS A PIONEER. Jesus lived making decisions as no other teenager ever had. He hacked a way through the jungle of selfishness and sin, amidst a people who lived under the curse. He made decisions and choices based on light and truth, the first of His kind. Isaiah had prophesied this learning process centuries before: "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back" (Isa. 50:4-5).

The writer to the Hebrews impresses upon us the intense reality of Christ's humanity — His being *made like* unto His brethren, His partaking of flesh and blood *in like manner* as ourselves, His being tempted in all things *like as we are*. He leads us in spirit down into Christ's humiliation in the flesh, and speaks of the wondrous mystery of the agony there, as the *second man* and the *last Adam* was prepared and perfected for the redeeming, restoring, and glorifying work He came to do. Let us enter upon this holy ground with hearts bowed under a consciousness of our ignorance, but thirsting to know something more of the great mystery of *perfect manhood* which

is *manifest sonship*, first revealed in the life of Him “who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared; *though He were a son*, YET LEARNED HE OBEDIENCE BY THE THINGS WHICH HE SUFFERED; and being *made perfect*, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him” (Heb. 5:7-9).

There is nothing on earth that will increase your faith and add to your confidence in this walk of sonship to God like the knowledge that *manifest sonship* is nothing more nor less than **perfect manhood!** When God said in that long ago beginning, “Let us make *man* in *our image* and after *our likeness*, and let them have dominion,” it seems that God made a mistake. When He made him out of dirt — the dust of the ground — and made him with the kind of human body we have, flesh and blood, spirit, soul, and body, with all the appetites, desires, and weaknesses we have, all the frailty, all the ability for twisting, warping, and spoiling things; when He created us like that and then thought that in such a physical, human, natural, dirt-body *His image, glory and dominion could be manifested* — it seems that God was mistaken! Could that human creature limited like us rule the world and nature, the universe and principalities and powers, and all things?

The first man indeed was turned aside, so God said, “I will invade humanity and come down in the person of my Son, limit myself to a human, physical body just like man has, with all its appetites and passions, with all its possibilities of suffering hunger, weakness, and death, and I will demonstrate the character, the life, the love, and the power of God on the human level.” The sonship of Jesus was God manifesting Himself within the limitation of a human body! Christ could not fly, He had no halo, He could not see further than anybody else, He could not run faster than the other young men in His day, He got as tired as anybody else, He got hungry, fell asleep, they could spit on Him and finally kill Him. Yet in Jesus Christ you have the **perfect manhood** and that **perfect manhood** is **MANIFEST SONSHIP!** It is the perfect *manhood expression of God*, which is what Jesus called THE SON OF MAN. It is **man** in the image and likeness of God!

What is the importance of the incarnation? It means that the Spirit of God, the Word of God, God Himself, can live and express Himself in a physical human body. When God invaded humanity in the body of Jesus Christ, took upon Himself human nature and limitation, was made in the likeness, not of glorified flesh, but of sinful flesh, and for thirty-three and a half years lived, walked, worked, slept, and died in that body, manifesting God on the level of manhood, it meant that God can, by *His Spirit*, come in and as *our spirit* live in these human bodies of ours, living in us, loving in us, working in us, fulfilling righteousness in us, overcoming all weakness, limitation, sin, and death, ruling over all things through us, and manifesting the fullness of Himself, even though we are compassed about with infirmities, for He Himself was tempted in all points like as we are. Even though we suffer being tempted, He Himself learned obedience by the things He suffered. Even though we suffer in the weakness of our flesh, His back was beaten, His brow was crowned with thorns, His hands and feet were nailed to a cross, His side was thrust through with a spear, and He shed His blood. Yet, dying on the cross in agony with the spittle running down His face, and the mockers standing about jeering, God was living, loving, forgiving, healing, redeeming, reconciling, restoring, and manifesting in the man Christ Jesus!

Being mocked, God is living in Him. Asleep in the back of a boat, God is living in Him. Hungry, and He goes to a tree and finds nothing to eat on it, God is living in Him. Thirsty, crying for water upon the cross, God is living in Him. Dying, God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. Do you see what God did? He revealed that He is at home in human bodies, for *man is the image of God!* “The tabernacle of God is with man,” — not with angels, not with spirits —

with man! “We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” “The Word was *made flesh* and dwelt among us.” “Let the word of Christ dwell in you” (Col. 3:16). “The Father and I will come and make our abode — be at home — with you” (Jn. 14:23). Not to be a visitor, not to be a foreign power coming upon us and overwhelming us, making us do things we can’t control. Oh, no! The Spirit will “abide” with you forever, that is, as the Greek meaning indicates, He will dwell, settle down, be at home, to live naturally in you and as you! The Spirit will dwell in you without conflict, to flow through your mind normally and naturally. The word of God shall flow out of your mouth automatically and spontaneously. The works of God shall be manifest through you without fanfare, hype, or theatrics — in an ordinary, natural way. It seems much so-called prophecy cannot come forth unless the speaker starts to shake or change his tone of voice. Don’t you know that God was speaking through Jesus all the time? People try to heal the sick and cast out devils by creating some kind of an “environment” for the power of God to work, and by shouting commands in the name of Jesus, as though authority is in the volume of the voice! Don’t you know that because Jesus *had* authority He could but whisper, “Come out,” and the spirits obeyed His command? When God comes to dwell in us and we know that Christ is our life, it is not something foreign that has invaded us, it is the image and likeness of Him who dwells within our spirit finding expression through us normally and naturally as the tabernacle of His life, nature, power, mind, will and glory. Hallelujah!

Paul did not say, “For me to be spiritual and get into the 144,000 is Christ.” He said, “For me to *live* is Christ!” (Phil. 1:21). Living for Paul did not mean those supernatural moments when he was seeing visions, hearing voices, falling out under the power, and being caught up into the third heaven. It meant for Paul to walk from one town to another on the dusty roads with Christ walking in him and as him. It was speaking to people the mind, will and word of God, manifesting the love of God, and demonstrating the power of God in a normal expression of life. The image of God was not seen in Christ just on the mount of transfiguration, it was seen in Him sitting at meat with sinners, speaking the wisdom and love of God while eating a steak and drinking wine. Jesus was no more the Son of God when He ascended in a cloud than He was when He stooped and wrote with His finger in the dirt and, turning to the adulteress beside Him, said calmly and compassionately, “Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more!”

Sonship will be most truly and fully fulfilled in us when God can feel at home in us, without any strain, pretense, showmanship, or abnormality. When we are able to be *divinely human* and *humanly divine* we will know the power and glory of manifest sonship! The Christ of God can live in us, manifest His life, love, and power in us at the office, in the home, at the store, in the field, at school, on the airplane, in the street, in every relationship of life. Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding reception, healed blind Bartimaeus while walking down the street, multiplied the loaves and fishes during the course of a meal, healed the lame man in the synagogue, saved and delivered the Samaritan woman while sitting at a well, calmed the storm while riding in a boat, raised the daughter of Jarius in private in her bedroom, raised the son of the widow during a funeral procession — He never preached the gospel of the kingdom or did His mighty works during a “spiritual meeting” or by in any way acting “religious.” Christ lived normally, He demonstrated God naturally in every facet of His life, and simply went about “doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for *God was with Him.*” *That*, my beloved, is sonship! That is perfect manhood! That is *the Son of man!*

It all goes back to the creation of man. Jesus said, “The Father hath given Him (the Son) AUTHORITY. . .because He is the SON OF MAN” (Jn. 5:26-27). One might think it should have read, “because He is the SON OF GOD,” but it doesn’t say that. The awesome and universal authority of the Son is rooted in the fact that He is the **SON OF MAN**. Why was it necessary for

Jesus to be the “Son of man” to have authority on earth? That man should bear the image of God and have dominion over all things is the first announcement of God’s intention regarding man, and locked up in that wonderful declaration is a universe of meaning that does not reach the eye and that the mind has never understood. We must re-establish and re-define the purpose of our existence. Why are we here? The purpose of God in man has been blurred, distorted, and hideously mangled by the carnal teachings of the church systems!

Oh that men would awaken to the truth that God has provided the *answer* to humanity’s dilemma! “Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that MAN whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead” (Acts 17:31). I hope that we all have become aware that that MAN by whom God shall *judge the world in righteousness* is a **corporate man**. “But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. . .for the perfecting of the saints. . .till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a PERFECT MAN, unto the measure of the stature of the FULLNESS OF CHRIST” (Eph. 4:1,12-13). “Do ye not know that *the saints shall judge the world*? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that *ye shall judge angels*? How much more things that pertain to this life” (I Cor. 6:2-3).

God in His great purpose of redemption and restoration is raising up A MAN, the MANY-MEMBERED CHRIST OF GOD. He is preparing an instrument, a channel through which to rule, deliver, and bless. God has a MAN to fix creation’s problems! You see, beloved, when God injected Himself into the history of this world to save, lift, redeem and restore it, He could not do it as *God*. He had to do it as *man*. That is why God was *manifest in the flesh*, because anything that is done in a governmental way on this earth **must be done through man**. “Let *them* have dominion...” is God’s own sovereign edict and delegation of governmental authority. Man’s rulership of the earth and the heavens is built into the *constitution* which He framed for creation. For God, as God, to do the job would be *unconstitutional!* Man is God’s constitutional agent. To man has been given the stewardship of the earth and of the heavens! That is why there is now a perfected MAN *reigning in the heavens!* God remains the owner, but man is the manager and overseer — the judge, ruler, priest, and king! Jesus Christ had to come in the form of man, in the likeness of flesh, being made in all things like unto His brethren, because *nothing happens on this earth except through man*. The Captain of our salvation, the High Priest of our profession, The Head of the Christ-body, the firstborn Son of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords IS THE **MAN** CHRIST JESUS, not the **God** Christ Jesus; He is the SON OF **MAN**, not *God the Son*.

Now for Jesus to have anything to do with this dominion He had to become a man, for the dominion was given to man, and in order for Him to receive the kingdom, He had to be a man. As the eternal Word of God He could have nothing to do with this dominion, though it was through Him that all these things were made. But become a man He did, and through His life of obedience to the Father, by His holiness, His purity, His grappling with sin, pain, limitation, and death, and triumphing over it, He *qualified* to receive the kingdom and to be the ruling head of it, the King of glory. The man in God’s image has a divine and royal destiny to exercise authority and dominion in this world and throughout the unbounded heavens. He is to be lord and head of all! All that happens in the cosmos must take place under the direction of man! God created all things and then man in His image and likeness, as the *connecting link* between God and His creation, that through man in His image and likeness the *invisible God* might be *seen* and *known* and *touched* by the *visible creation*. The face of God would be revealed for all creation to behold, in the face of man! The likeness of God would be made known to the entire universe in and by man. The love, grace, wisdom, knowledge, power, and glory of God would be exercised

toward every creature and world and order throughout the vastnesses of infinity through the man in the image and likeness of God!

Jesus is the altogether lovely One. When He walked this earth in human form He was altogether unlike anyone who had ever lived since Adam was banished from Eden's fragrant garden. He was quite different in so many ways — many that perhaps you have never thought about. For example, did you ever notice that Jesus never withdrew a word or modified a statement in His whole life? Which of us can say the same! He never apologized for anything He said. Which of us can make the same claim? There was no misstatement, no half-truth. What He uttered was truth itself because HE WAS THE INCARNATE TRUTH. Did you ever notice that Jesus never sought advice? Even Moses the lawgiver had his counselors; and Solomon, the wisest of them all, had those from whom he sought counsel and advice. But Jesus had none! In fact, He never went to any school of higher learning. That which He had received of His Father He gave unto us. Occasionally, someone had the impudence to offer Him advice which was peremptorily refused on every occasion. Yet, does not the Bible say that in the multitude of counselors there is wisdom? Yes, when one is as ignorant as we are, so ignorant that we have no earthly cure for our ignorance, then, indeed, we need counselors! The *Holy Spirit* has now been sent into the heart of every son of God called to sonship as the "comforter" or "counselor," even the *spirit of truth*, who is leading us into **all truth!** Jesus is the pattern, the prototype of this sonship!

Jesus never confessed a sin. This is absolutely astonishing! It is axiomatic in the spiritual realm that the holiest of men have been those who were most conscious of their sin and guilt. Job was brought to absolute desperation when God appeared to him. Isaiah abhorred himself when he saw the living God, and said, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips" (Isa. 6:5). Peter said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man" (Lk. 5:8). And Paul said, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (I Tim. 1:15). Jesus confessed no sin for one simple reason: unlike any one of us He had none! He is the perfect man, the pattern and prototype of every son of God who is being conformed into His image!

Further, Jesus never bothered to explain any of His frequent ambiguous conduct. When word was brought to Jesus that Lazarus, His good friend, was sick, what did He do? Did He rush to his side to help him? No, He remained right where He was for three days, while Lazarus grew sicker and sicker and died. Then belatedly, He appeared and His appearance evoked from the broken heart of Lazarus' sister these reproachful and heart-rending words: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died!" No explanation. No apology. Not a word! "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" And then those immortal words before the tomb: "Lazarus — come forth!" Jesus just allowed time and the unfolding plan of God to justify all that He did. He had no motive to gain the sympathy, understanding, or adulation of men. Jesus was asleep in the back of a boat in the midst of a storm with waves breaking over the railings, filling the ship. "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" cried the distressed disciples. No word of explanation, just the command, "Peace! Be still!" and the waves ceased their raging.

Jesus never asked and never permitted prayer for Himself. You may recall the time in Gethsemane on the night before His crucifixion. He gathered together His apostles and asked them to pray. But note well, my friends, His words! "Watch and pray (for yourselves) that YE enter not into temptation." Why did He not ask for our prayers? Why did He never permit anyone to pray for Him? Why did He not even pray *with* His disciples? Why did He always go off to pray alone? Very simply — He did not *need* anyone's prayers! He did not need them and

He did not want them. Why? Because this Jesus of Nazareth is THE PERFECT MAN, MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD! As the Father hath life in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself. It is a deep mystery, beyond the comprehension of babes in Christ, but all these attributes of Jesus are the *marks of sonship*, the *sign of the Son of man*, the *evidences of spiritual maturity*, the very *destiny* of every elect saint who grows up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ!

Can you imagine Jesus, on the road to Samaria, sitting down on a rock by the wayside, calling to Peter, James, and John, saying, "Boys, I want you to come over here and pray for me. I really need to be ministered to today, I need help, I need your strength. Ever since we left Galilee the old devil has really been after me. This depression has hit me, and I want you to lay your hands on me and rebuke this thing. It started last week when the Father showed me that someone is going to betray me. I've been so upset ever since, Satan wants to use that to beat me over the head. Some other things have been bothering me lately, and this head cold isn't helping any. If I don't get the victory soon, I won't be able to minister in Samaria, but I know it's just the devil fighting me!" Do you think those disciples ever had to encourage Jesus, lay hands on Him, counsel Him, pray for Him, or minister to Him? Jesus said, "The SON OF MAN *came not to be ministered to, but to minister...*" Ah, there is the reality of the Son of man who is the Son of God! He did not come to receive life, but to give life! He *had life in Himself* even as the Father had life in Himself. Within that life, yea, that *indwelling life*, was every element of faith, victory, righteousness, wisdom, knowledge, and power He could ever need! If He needed courage, the courage was in the life! If He needed strength, the strength was in the life! If He needed wisdom, the wisdom was in the life! If He needed power, the power was in the life! This is a nature and a life that is not dependent upon anything without, for it is self-existent life requiring no sustenance; it is not derived from another, does not draw from anything, is abundant, unchanging, inexhaustible, all-sufficient *life*! This is the life of *sonship*, this is the stature of the *son of man*, man in the image of God! This is the goal of all who are appointed of the Father to be conformed to the image of the Son, to reign with Christ in the kingdom of God! How could anything *less than this reign with Christ upon His throne!*

My spirit rejoices today in thankfulness to my Father in heaven that many years ago He let me hear a secret from His own heart, a secret that few in our generation have understood. When He breathed into my listening heart, my whole being was charged and my entire life and ministry changed, for I could never be the same after hearing His words: JESUS IS THE PATTERN SON! JESUS IS THE IDEAL MAN! EVERY SON OF GOD SHALL BE AS HE WAS AND AS HE IS! "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29).

LIKE HIM? IN EVERY WAY? CONFORMED TO HIS IMAGE? IN ALL THINGS? EXACTLY LIKE HIM? Oh, our Father! Be pleased to open the eyes of Thy children that they may see to what a high and holy calling Thou hast called them in Thy Son! Ah, if Jesus did not change, then these sons must come to the place where they do not change. If Jesus never apologized, because He never misspoke or did any wrong, these sons must also come to the place where they do not offend in word or deed. If Jesus received all His wisdom and knowledge from the indwelling Father, these sons, too, must receive all wisdom and knowledge from the Father within. If Jesus did not sin, these sons must not miss the mark. If Jesus never needed to be encouraged, these sons must become so triumphant in His life that they encourage all men, but need not to be encouraged themselves. If Jesus did not need to be prayed for or ministered to, these sons in His likeness, grown up into the fullness of His stature, reigning upon His throne must also have reached that place where they need not to be continually ministered to, but they minister and pour out their lives for all. If Jesus always had victory, if Jesus always was full of

faith, if Jesus always did the will of His Father, if Jesus lived every moment by the life of the Father, then these sons must also live victoriously by the indwelling life of the Father!

THE PATTERN SON. THE IDEAL MAN. THE PERFECT MANHOOD. THE SON OF MAN. How awesome! "LIKE HIM." What a challenge! What were the strong points of this Pattern Son? He didn't have any — not a one! To have a strong point you must have a weak point, and Jesus did not have any weak points! Other men are noted for some one faculty or talent. Moses was the meekest of all men. Job was the patient one. Abraham was strong in faith. But Jesus was altogether lovely in every way. . .the meekest, the most humble, patient, loving, gracious, courageous, firm, wise, powerful, everything. Consider, my beloved, the incomparable symmetry of the perfections of Jesus Christ. What a balance He had! What fullness! And this glorious Personage is not something unique in the universe, He is the *pattern* by which your life and mine is being designed! He is the firstborn of an entirely new race of men, the SONS OF THE LIVING GOD! Christ is being raised up in us and we are putting on His image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord!

Let me present to you this glorious company of overcomers, the new creation man, the perfect man, the ideal man, the many-membered *son of man* in the midst of the candlesticks, even those who have life in themselves. These are they who have discovered the river of life flowing from deep within their own beings, life full, abundant, and triumphant! They are never discouraged by any situation, nor upset by any circumstance. They are constant — not *up* one day and *down* the next. You do not find them standing in prayer lines. They are always encouraging others, but never seem to need encouragement themselves. They continually pray for others, but never seem to have prayer requests of their own. They minister to many, but do not stop to be ministered to. They are not offended by what others say and do. They love and forgive and esteem everyone. They speak the best of all men, for they know the value of all men is Christ, for He is the Saviour of them all. They are not depressed or burdened. They are not fearful, worried, or confused. They are not upset or angry with anyone. They don't quit when the going gets rough. They do not tell you how the devil has been fighting them, in fact, they don't talk about the devil at all, for the dragon has been cast out of the heaven where they dwell! They don't talk about their problems. They do not wear sad or sorrowful countenances, regardless how dark things seem. The word of Christ dwells in them richly. They have been given a new song, even praise unto their God! They glorify God in all things, for they know that He is in control. They walk daily in wisdom and understanding, in confidence and faith, in conscious awareness of the Father's plan and will; they always have the victory, are always positive, ever rejoicing in the Lord! They walk tall and strong. They walk straight. They are constant. They press forward toward the goal, rejoicing in expectation of the glory of God!

How can one minister deliverance to another if he is bound himself? How can one furnish encouragement if he is himself discouraged? How can one impart joy when he is sad? How can one supply faith when he is fearful? How can one lift another when he is himself bogged down in the slough of despondency? How can peace be bestowed by a soul filled with anguish? How can righteousness be communicated by one with an evil heart? How can victory be given by the defeated? How can strength be ministered by the weak? Oh! The world so desperately needs NEW CREATION MEN! All creation groans for the manifestation of the SONS OF GOD! You will not see many of these kind of people in the candlesticks, but if you look carefully, you will see them arising **in the midst of the candlesticks!**

How totally inadequate do our words become in the light of truth of such wonder as this! Jesus is the *prototype* of what God intends man to be. He is God's finished product, God's ideal man. What a man! Sinless man. Perfect man. Diseaseless man. Unlimited man. Deathless

man. Anointed man. Crowned man. God-man. What a specimen! There is nothing ordinary about our Christ. Everything about Him is superlative. His perfection is far beyond all question. Yet He was a *man*. What infinite strength out of incredible weakness! Jesus is *man par excellence* living and walking in the Kingdom of Heaven! He came to earth and walked among men in their realm, but at the same time walked in the realm of the heavens of God's Spirit. He was a spiritual and heavenly man who walked among earth-bound men. He had dominion over them. They planted their smartest lawyers and most learned theologians in the crowd and tried to trip Jesus up — He made fools of them. They tried to throw Him over a cliff and destroy Him — He just walked through their midst and went His way. Never man spake as this heavenly man spake! Never man lived as this man lived! Never man did the mighty works that He did!

Our Christ is the most powerful among the powerful, the mightiest among the holy and the holiest among the mighty. With His nail-pierced hands He has lifted empires off their hinges. With the same nail-pierced hands He has lifted prodigals out of the hog pen. Our superlative Christ has turned the stream of time into new channels. HE MAKETH ALL THINGS NEW! Whatsoever He touches, whatsoever touches HIM, becomes new. This is the *Son of man with power*, what every man should be and ultimately will be! One can never comprehend the length and breadth and height and depth of God's great plan of creation and redemption until he first understands that Jesus Christ is the revelation of the **value of every man**. In the mysterious mists of Eden God breathed into man the breath of His very own divine life and prophesied of this man that he would bear the image and likeness of Himself, and in due time would take his place in the Father's great kingdom with dominion over all the works of His hands. Yet today, under the curse of sin and death, sin-cursed and sin-broken, sick and weak, murderer and prostitute, proud and arrogant, mean, vindictive, and tyrannical — all that is humanity!

But is that the *value* of mankind? What is the value of human life? JESUS is the value! The price that is paid for an object reflects its value. The price God paid for humanity was His own Son in the image and glory of the Father. God saw beneath man's tattered garment and marred image His own omnipotent potential buried there. Love pierced through the gloom and roughness and saw a diamond in the rough, but a diamond sure enough! It was in that divine spark within man's *spirit*, which came from God, and capable of being renewed, that we find the reason for the cross. The cross reveals the value of every man, and Jesus is the image of redeemed and restored men!

This is exactly what the Lord Jesus taught and demonstrated so wonderfully through His sonship ministry. He spoke the words of compassion and power into the souls of all marred creatures and called them beloved children of God. He didn't call them sinners, or condemn them. He saw them as they were meant to be, as they are in the eyes of the heavenly Father. That was the value of their lives! He healed their diseases, forgave their sins, raised their dead without any conditions, and lifted them up from the mire and defilement and set them on the pathway to holiness and restoration to their lost estate that they might live again as sons and daughters of the Most High.

It would do us all a world of good to take inventory of our attitudes — how we see men. I fear that we would be both surprised and disturbed to see how often we view men *out of our carnal minds* rather than with the *eyes of our heavenly Father* — the prodigal's Father! Oh mystery of mysteries! Jesus went to the cross not only to take away our sins, He went there for the *good* in man, to redeem it and restore it into the image of God again. The deepest mystery of all is that God is *multiplying Himself in man*, and is bringing Himself into a new dimension. There is a

MAN seated upon the highest throne of heaven. Not an angel, not a cherub, not a spirit, but a MAN! That man still is clothed in the body that walked along the shores of Galilee, for the cave of Joseph of Arimathea is empty, although that body has been spiritualized by the power of incorruptible life.

The dwelling place of a *son of God is in the Father* and the dwelling place of the Father is *in the sons*. The sons are the out-ricing of the Father's substance and the perfect imprint of His nature in human form. I never enjoy trying to see pictures where no picture exists, but it is plain to an understanding born from above that ultimately *all men* will be *manifest sons of God*, for the *man* Christ Jesus, who is the Son of the living God, died and rose again to redeem and save and restore *all men* to God as His very own children. That will be the glorious consummation of God's ages-long purpose to *make man in His image and after His likeness*. Nothing short of that can suffice. Only *then* will God be ALL-IN-ALL!

The kind of man God wants is exemplified in His firstborn Son, Jesus. If we want to know what all men will eventually be like, we have only to look at Jesus! The manifest sons for whom all creation groans are but a *firstfruit* of God's great purpose of the ages! Jesus is the Alpha, the beginning, and we, the sons of God, are the firstfruits of His harvest. God has begun a work in us and He will bring it to completion! He has also begun a work in all creation, and He will finish and successfully consummate it to the praise of His glory. Not only did God have this plan in the beginning, but the very minutest details were all figured out before He ever began. "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the ages." God knew from the beginning what He was going to do, the blueprint was complete in every detail. Only fools begin to build without a blueprint, or without the ability to finish what they start. God is no fool! He is wisdom itself, the infinite mind and omnipotent power behind all things. Nothing has been left to chance! God has planned everything step by step. He has a timetable that He goes by. Things happen at exactly the time He wants them to happen, and precisely the way He planned for them to happen.

Jesus was born when the *fullness of time* was come. He was manifested to the world, fulfilled His sonship ministry, died, rose, and ascended to the throne of the majesty on high right at God's appointed time. He will be revealed in the fullness of His glory in His many brethren, the manifest sons of God, according to God's timetable. Only God knows that day and hour, but there is a specific moment in the Father's plan in which the sons will be revealed. Your faith will not bring it even one second before the time! Should your faith *seem* to hasten the day of manifestation, it will only be because the Father gave you a greater faith to bring it sooner than it would otherwise have come. GOD is the one in control! There was a time *appointed* for you to be born. God knew all about you before the beginning of the creation, because you are part of His plan. You were *chosen* to be in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4). God knows all about your life; He knows when you sit down and when you rise up, when you go out and when you come in. God had a blueprint for your life even from the foundation of the world. He has orchestrated every event of your life. God chose your parents, the places you would live, the people you would meet, the experiences you would encounter, the difficulties and trials you would face, the blessings you would receive. It was God, my brother, my sister, who arranged with infinite care the very moment of your conversion and the circumstances that set the stage for it! It was God who exposed you to every saint of God, to every ministry, to every revival, to every moving of His Spirit and manifestation of His power that influenced your growth and development in Him and shaped your life from realm to realm. It was God who organized the precise events by which you first heard the message of sonship and the kingdom of God! It was God who touched the strings of your heart and brought forth the melody of His truth from your inward parts! Not one little detail of these happenings was by accident.

I tell you the truth when I say that had I sought for a million years to find God, to know Him as I know Him, and His great plan and purpose, I never would have found Him! Raised as a boy in a strict Pentecostal home, way out in the country from a small town in south Alabama, I tell you that out of the billions of people on this planet, and the world of religious confusion, and the darkness of the carnal mind, the odds of *me* finding the reality of sonship to God *on my own* are less than the odds of me winning the Texas Lottery! The odds of winning the lottery are one in eighteen million. The odds of me finding my heavenly Father and the truth of His great, eonian plan and purpose are one in *billions*! Daily I praise God with joy unspeakable and full of glory for the way HE has led and directed my path, for all the things HE set in my way, and brought into my experience, to bring me to Him, to give me an understanding that I might *know Him as I know Him*, to unveil Himself to me, to teach me His truth and His ways, to reveal His kingdom and His glory, to be a *Father* to me that I might be a *son* to Him. Oh, yes! I praise and thank and glorify His glorious name for it is HE, and HE ALONE who has brought me to this hour! And it is the Lord Himself who has brought *you* to this day!

This is the day that the *Lord has made*! The light of His countenance has shined upon us! God is raising up HIS MAN in the earth in this hour! There is One standing even now in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and He is like unto a son of man! This is God's Christ, the many-membered Son of Man! Truly the Father is bringing us into new dimensions of faith, wisdom, understanding, discernment, love, authority and power — the image of God! We know that we are on the threshold of a divine breakthrough into higher realms of life and glory! I hear the voice of this Man today as the voice of many waters, and I behold His countenance shining as the sun! The glory of the Lord is arising for the whole world to see, and the kingdom of God is coming with power and great glory! May your heart be encouraged this day to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord in every challenge that lies before you!

Chapter 23

One Like Unto A Son Of Man

continued

"And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the candlesticks *one like unto a son of man*" (Rev. 1:12-13).

It has been said, and I believe it, that Jesus Christ is the greatest man that ever lived. I confess, however, that it is with mingled feelings that I say it. For you see, it is, by the very nature of the case, only a half-truth! The other half, revealed clearly in the scriptures, and made known to us in the power of the Holy Spirit, is this, that Christ Jesus possessed divine powers which every man may share, which makes every man great, which will save the world and deliver every man into the image and likeness of God. It takes the whole truth to reveal Christ's greatness — the corporate, complete, *many-membered Christ* is the greatest man who has lived and shall ever live! This is the man John saw in vision while on Patmos! John beheld in spirit a picture, a representation, and what he saw was someone who was "like a son of man" or someone in *human form*. It was a personage that bore the likeness of a man. Yet this One he saw was something more than an ordinary man! This One had the features and appearance of a man, but there was a glory and a majesty of His person that transcended that of any natural man! This was the image of true manhood, the new man, the perfect man, man in the image and likeness of God!

With these thoughts in mind let us look a little closer at God's purpose in man. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness: and let them have dominion...so God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him..." (Gen. 1:26-27). God the Creator was invisible to His creation. But now, creation was about to see what God looked like! As the hands of a great potter God began to scrape together a lump of red clay and to shape a model after the similitude of Himself. He molded and formed His spiritual characteristics, senses, and abilities into an outward form in the lump of clay. He then stamped the likeness of His own divine attributes into the red clay of that which was earthy. There was only one problem with this man — he was but a model out of the earth. He could only express that which was spiritual in the form of a symbol, type, or shadow. But God already had the solution to that problem. Just at that moment God descended within Himself into the deepest depths of spirit-substance and filled His lungs with a breath from beyond the veil — He exhaled that breath of divine life and blew it into the nostrils of the man whom He had formed and man became a *zoe psuche* — a living soul!

In this procreative act God came down to the clay model and by the infusion of His divine spirit interfaced the visible and the invisible, the natural and the spiritual, the earthly and the heavenly, the human and the divine. He breathed into Adam the spirit-substance of Himself that made Adam higher than the animals, for the very essence that made him live was out of the very life of God Himself. Man, from that primordial beginning, had spirit-substance within him. When God breathed into him, that *divine breath* of God was the connection between the

visible and the invisible. Heaven and earth came together in the person of a man! And now we have a unique creation that has access at all times to both the visible and the invisible. He walks with God in the spirit and can carry on an intellectual conversation with the almighty Creator. He is God's representative in the earth, yea, in the whole universe; the visible, tangible expression and revelation of the invisible, intangible God! All that God was and all that God could do by the power of His Spirit this man manifested on the visible, physical plane. He was God's image and God's glory revealed in an earthly dimension so that God might be *seen, touched, and known* by creation!

The power which Adam had in the beginning was tremendous beyond the finite comprehension of men who are today dissipated and weakened by six millenniums of sin and death. I know that many claim that God's proclamation to make man in His image and after His likeness was merely a *prophecy, a foretelling* of His purpose to be fulfilled in man in ages yet to come. But the record clearly shows, "So God *created man* in His own image, in the image of God *created* He him" (Gen. 1:27). Then some say that God did indeed create man in his *spirit* in the image of God, but had yet to form him into the *likeness* of God. But the scripture plainly contradicts this notion, too! "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, *in the likeness of God made He him*" (Gen. 5:1). Adam in his bright beginning bore the image and likeness of God without the sad effects of the fall and banishment from the Paradise of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. The astonishing power of that man in the image of God was present in his life, for the first man Adam was *made a living soul* (Gen. 2:7; I Cor. 15:45). Adam the living soul possessed awesome abilities, authority, and dominion. Before his fall, Adam was able to freely and fully exercise this ability, since it was imparted to him by the very breath or spirit of divine life!

THE IDEAL MAN

God made a *man* in the beginning. God has made and is making a *new man* in Christ Jesus! What was fully manifested and seen in Jesus is potential in every man. Something of that same divine spirit that was expressed in Him in all fullness is also in us. Something of that same divine likeness in which we were created is *hidden* in all men, for every man is *spirit, soul, and body*. If the *spirit* of man did not come from God, from whence came it? If it did come from God, is there not a substance of God in it? Those who deny that the *seed* of God is in *every man* must explain to me the origin and substance of man's *spirit*! Or prove to me that the unregenerated man *has no spirit*! The very power of *regeneration* is the *quicken*ing of the spirit of man! Not the *giving* of that spirit, but the *quicken*ing or *germination* of that spirit in man!

It has been said that in Jesus Christ the divine and the human meet, but this is also true of every one of us. He is the *true humanity* who is the Son of man and the Son of God. It is not that He is super-human, but that we are sub-human! But inasmuch as we are human at all we are akin to Him. The first man and the second man are both *man*. The first Adam and the last Adam are both *Adam*. Those in the first man are in part what the second man is in perfection. The whole purpose of our lives is to become human in the sense in which He was human; to be changed into the same likeness from one glorious conversion to another, even by the Lord who is the Spirit. We are being transformed into a *perfect man*, that is, into the PERFECT MANHOOD! Christ is growing up in us, and the whole process of life in Christ is one in which "He must increase, but I must decrease." Paul said it so well, "It pleased God to reveal HIS SON in me," which precisely describes the life of sonship, for the Son of God is the PERFECT MAN IN GOD'S IMAGE! It is as the Spirit of Christ becomes manifest within us that we approach nearer and nearer to the true humanity as it was seen in Jesus, "till we all come to a **perfect manhood**, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). His

possession of our lives will grow, until we are fully "strengthened with power by His Spirit in the **inward humanity**," being "filled with all the fullness of God" (Eph. 3:16,19).

The people of God today have no greater need than the need to know the power and glory of CHRIST WITHIN. CHRIST is the image of God, the scripture says. I know these words may seem to be incredible, but they are the truth — the very first mention of the "image of God" is applied, not to Jesus Christ, but to our forefather Adam (Gen. 1:26). As we consider the wonderful advent of man created "in the image of God" we can only conclude that this is a *spiritual man* brought forth out of the very spirit-substance of God Almighty, and bearing His own divine nature, character, power, and attributes. The "image of God" is the nature of God reproduced in man! Thus, man is the true image of God. And Jesus Christ is the image of God because He is the *true man*, man as he was meant to be! Jesus revealed to lost and fallen men their true origin, heritage, and destiny. He came to show man what man really is, was intended to be, and through redemption (buying back to the original) shall be — THE IMAGE OF GOD! Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, man was he was and man as he shall be. In Jesus Christ you see man as he was in the beginning and as he ever shall be world without end — THE IMAGE OF GOD! Of Him it is written, "Who is the expression of the glory of God — the Light Being, the out-raying of the divine — and He is the perfect imprint and very image of God's nature" (Heb. 1:3, Amplified). Christ, and humanity in Christ, is like a ray of light that comes from the sun — man, the extension of God, emanates God!

When the Lord lowered man into this gross material realm man possessed, by the spirit, the divine potential to overcome the flesh, sanctify it, transform it, preserve it, infusing it with the qualities of life — holiness and incorruption. Jesus, the last Adam, the Ideal Man, came and demonstrated for us this very principle! This potential in man to rule the natural is shed forth in Jesus' mighty works — by His healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, casting out devils, forgiving sins, doing miracles, and raising the dead. He transcended by His life, words, and actions all the so-called laws of the material, mortal realm by turning water into wine, multiplying the loaves and fishes, calming the sea, walking on water, by His transfiguration and rising from the dead. The great significance of Jesus' mighty works will never ring clear in our spirits until we understand that He did not perform as a unique, different, higher kind of man — all His wonderful works were the example and teaching of what is NORMAL FOR MAN IN HIS TRUE STATE AS THE IMAGE OF GOD! As the last Adam Jesus demonstrated all that the first Adam lost — mankind's heritage as the sons and daughters of the Most High! Little wonder, then, that He confidently and joyfully proclaimed to His disciples, "The works that I do shall **ye do also**; and **greater works** than these shall **ye do!**" (Jn. 14:12).

By His resurrection Jesus proved the spirit within to be OMNIPOTENT, all-conquering, all-sufficient. He met and mastered death itself by the *law of the spirit of life!* He took no drugs to fight infection, inflammation, or viruses. He did not depend upon health food, pure air, pure water, vitamins, or herbs to renew depleted energies. He did not require the skill of a surgeon to heal His nail-pierced hands and feet, or to bind up His wounded side, so that He might remove the napkin and grave clothes and stride out of the tomb as before. Jesus vanquished every material obstacle, overcame every law of matter, conquered every power of corruption and death, and stepped forth from His gloomy grave, crowned with the glory of divine life and everlasting victory — the role model for each and every man and woman of Adam's race! Jesus' victory over sin, sickness, pain, limitation, death and the grave was for the enlightenment of every son of God and for the salvation of the whole world! Paul writes, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we *shall be saved* BY HIS LIFE (within)" (Rom. 5:10). And again, "If the Spirit

of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also *quicken your mortal bodies* BY HIS SPIRIT THAT DWELLETH IN YOU!" (Rom. 8:11). Glory be to God and peace to the fainting hearts! Christ hath rolled away the stone from the door of human hope and faith, through the revelation and demonstration of Life in God, the life resident in the SPIRITUAL MAN! This, my beloved, is sonship!

The truth is that every higher plane of life to which man attains, and especially the highest life **in Christ**, is the true reality of manhood — there is no becoming of anything of a different order or nature that is not **man**. MAN IS THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD, and as God changes and matures us from glory to glory there is the quickening and fulfilling of what man by the very essence of his nature is! The more man becomes irradiated with divinity, the more, not less, he is truly **man**. When I write such a truth it seems to me self-evident, yet we can only know it by the revelation of Jesus Christ. There is a true humanity which Christ came to reveal, and *in Him* all the unattained possibilities are secured. Man is the son of God! The whole creation is groaning and travailing till man shall be complete, the sons of God unveiled! What is the spirit of such words as these? Is it not an assertion that in the measure our sonship is lacking, man is not truly man? You see, my beloved, that divine life to which the sons of God are called is the *fulfillment*, not the abrogation or surrender, of our humanity! The Son of **Man**! What an awesome term that is!

It is not the *Son of God*, but the *Son of man* who has power on earth to forgive (send away) sins! (Mat. 9:6). It is the *Son of man* to whom is given all judgment and authority! (Jn. 5:22,27). It is the *Son of man* whom the Father seals! (Jn. 6:27). It is the *Son of man* who ascends! (Jn. 6:62). It is the *Son of man* who is glorified! (Jn. 12:23). The *Son of man* gives life to the world! (Jn. 6:53). The *Son of man* sits upon the throne of glory! (Mat. 19:28). All of this, and much more, is true of our Lord Jesus Christ, and all of this is true of every son who is a member of the corporate *Son of man*, the *body* of Christ! The sons of God are nothing but *true men*! "Nothing but the true man?" you ask. As if that were a little thing! As if man, with any inflow of divinity, could be, or could wish to be, anything more or different from **man**! As soon as we understand all this, what a great, clear thing redemption becomes! It is the buying back, the making of man to be himself — the calling up out of the depths of his being and the filling with vitality of that person which is truly HE — *this* is salvation!

We must see the truth as it is. Man is a son of God (Lk. 3:38) on whom the devil has laid his hand, not a child of the devil whom God is trying to save. The adversary came in, therefore he may be driven out! When he is driven out, and man is purely man, then man is redeemed. The sons of God, to all who think the thought of Jesus, are the quickened, delivered, perfected, completed **man**. Jesus is Himself the firstborn among many **brethren**. God came to reveal Himself to men and here came Christ the **man**, Jesus the **man**. If you have seen Him, you have seen the Father! No man has seen God at any time, but the uniquely begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath revealed Him, hath led Him out where He can be seen!

In Jesus we see the glory of divine manhood. We have wondered at the fact that Jesus could do such mighty works, that He could feed five thousand people from five small loaves and two fish, that He could calm the raging sea with a word, walk on water, cleanse lepers, heal the multitudes and raise the dead. It amazes us — and we think of Him as Almighty God, whom He is. But Jesus did none of these things as God! God in Christ was simply a **true man** again! That, precious friend of mine, is why all the laws of nature and the elements of the world and the powers of creation were subservient to Him! It was to **man** that God gave the dominion over all the works of His hands! Jesus was a true man, as the world had never seen man. He is the image of God, as the Son of man. The false man, Adam, is weak because of a lost

dominion. But this man, Christ, the *second man* who is also the *last Adam*, is more real than any other man! Now He seeks **brethren** who will become in Him the real men of the earth. He could come with hosts of angels to bring His kingdom to pass in the earth. But, no! He doesn't want angels. Angels haven't been given dominion over anything (Heb. 2:5-8). Man, not creatures from other worlds, must be God's kingdom on earth!

Our world today needs the new men that Christ makes. New men are the key to everything else that must be renewed. Therefore the making of new men is the first priority of the kingdom of God! Only by the making of new men can the Kingdom of Heaven come to earth! Our world desires better schools, a better press, better government, a better business world, a better economy, better living conditions, better health, better institutions, better communities. At every point we are driven to the need for new men — a NEW CREATION! Through two world wars men dreamed and talked of the coming of a better world when nations would lay down their arms and begin to build that better world. More than half a century has gone by since the last World War and it is not only the same old world, it is a much worse world. Old Adam can *never* build a better world! Getting rid of communism and terrorism is no sign of a new world. That is but the militarism and politics of natural men. We cannot build a new world out of men with old dispositions, old attitudes, old hearts, and old natures. The new world for which all creation groans and travails can only be fulfilled by new men with renewed minds, new hearts, and a new spirit!

Regeneration brings a mighty change within humanity — the destruction of the Adamic creation and the establishment of the Christ within. This reality was accomplished by Jesus on the cross and through His burial and resurrection, but is made experiential in each of us through the present inworking of God. In one of his inspired writings along this line Paul Mueller says, "Only God can remove this 'man' from us. This is His battle, not ours! By the Spirit, we know the Lord is now focusing on this 'man' who is the cause of the manifestation of all evil and darkness. When once we are free of this carnal nature, there will be nothing within us that can respond to the devil's evil thoughts. Then the seed that we are shall be pure seed, identical to the Christ Seed, which shall be planted among men to establish the new creation of Christ in the earth. So shall the kingdom of God be manifest with power in all the earth, and then in the universe, that God may be all in all. And when this carnal, sinful nature is eventually removed from all mankind, Satan will have no place anywhere on this earth to plant his evil ideas and see them fulfilled. He will be a defeated foe! Then the cause of all the world's problems will no longer exist, and mankind will live the Christ Life with peace, joy and victory.

"The new order of the fullness of the kingdom of God will be free of the carnal nature, which is the man of sin, the real anti-christ. **And God is now beginning this new creation order with you and me.** He will no longer tolerate the evil that has been promoted in the world by the Adamic man. The Lord is not only revealing the manifestations of this evil 'man,' He also is going right to the heart of the matter. The Lord will take him out of us root, stock and branches, and eventually out of all others, so that he will never again trouble the world. The true interest and purpose of the Holy Spirit of God for His elect in this hour is not the results and effects of all the evil in the world, but rather with **the cause of all evil.** The Spirit of God is now dealing with the cause of all unrighteousness! And all who are in harmony with His Spirit are also in full agreement with the work of the Spirit of God for this great day" — end quote.

ANGELS ASCENDING AND DESCENDING

When the patriarch Jacob was fleeing from the wrath of his brother, Esau, he went out of Beersheba, on the border of the desert, and walked alone toward a land far to the north,

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carrying his staff in his hand. One evening, just about sunset, he came to a place among the mountains, more than sixty miles distant from his home. And as he had no bed to lie down upon, he took a stone and rested his head upon it for a pillow and lay down to sleep. We would think that a hard pillow, but Jacob was very tired and soon fell asleep. And on that night Jacob had a wonderful dream! In his dream he saw a ladder whose steps reached up to heaven from the earth where he lay; and angels were going up and coming down upon the steps. And above the ladder, he saw the Lord God standing.

And God said to Jacob, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac your father; and I will be your God, too. The land where you are lying all alone shall belong to you and to your children after you; and your children shall spread abroad over the lands, east and west and north and south, like the dust of the earth: and in your family all the world shall receive a blessing. And I am with you in your journey, and I will keep you where you are going and will bring you back to this land. I will never leave you and I will surely keep my promise to you." In the morning Jacob awaked from his sleep and he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it! How awesome is this place! I thought that I was all alone, but God has been with me. This place is none other than the house of God; it is the gate of heaven!"

The Lord Jesus makes a striking reference to Jacob's ladder in His address to Nathanael as recorded in the gospel of John. "And He saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the *angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man*" (Jn. 1:51). What did this statement mean? It could mean nothing else than that the Lord Jesus regarded Himself as the fulfillment of that which had been symbolized in the patriarch's vision of the ladder set up between earth and heaven. Spiritually understood it means that Christ is the ladder — the connecting link between earth and heaven, between man and God, between flesh and spirit, between humanity and divinity. The *Son of man* is Jacob's ladder! Christ is, *within Himself*, where earth and heaven meet! Nothing ascends to God, and nothing comes from God, but in and through Him. From earth to the Father's throne in the heavenlies the word is, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but *by me*." And from heaven to earth the word is, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us *by His Son...*" (Heb. 1:1-2). "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father."

No man can come to the Father, to see and know the Father, except by the sonship that is in Christ. It is through what Jesus was and is, by apprehending the spiritual reality manifest in Him, by laying hold in faith upon the life that *He is*, that we penetrate the inmost heart of all existence and experience union with God. The angels of God — the messengers of heaven — have been passing to and fro between the heart of God and the heart of man in all ages. There is that within the spirit of man which will not let us rest contentedly in what is only of the earth, earthy; our angels do always behold the face of the Father; our yearnings and aspirations are ever ascending heavenward, reaching out for the kingdom of heaven. From the side of God the traffic has been no less constant. The shining ones are ever streaming down, the word of God is ever being spoken out of the heavens, the anointing is ever being shed forth. And now God has come to earth in Christ, and Christ is bringing us to the Father — many sons brought to glory! It is *in Christ* that heaven and earth meet, and the meeting place is **man**. Heaven is opened and the angels of God are ascending and descending *upon the Son of man*!

It is here in Christ, the Son of man, that man's true home, long shut to him, is now opened, and all that man has lost is restored in and through the second man, the last Adam, the Son of man. Heaven, the realm from which the spirit of every man was birthed, is again opened to him. Lowered into this gross material realm, by the flesh of the first man Adam, heaven was

closed and man was shut out of the Paradise where heaven and earth merge, shut up in bondage to his outward nature and consciousness, and heaven and all spiritual things of the celestial world were lost to him. But now, praise God! Heaven has been opened to man, and again he can see that bright world of Life and Light and Love, from which he has so long been banished. In Christ he is made a new creature, quickened from above, to know again the presence of God and be conscious of heavenly companions, angels of God, ascending and descending upon him.

Jacob's Bethel is Adam's garden of Eden, and both are our life in Christ. Oh, yes — it is a wondrous thing that in Christ, the ladder touching the earth beneath and the heavens above, we should in spirit hold direct and conscious communion with the saints of all ages, for truly the veil is rent and we are **now come** "unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable *company of angels*, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the *spirits of just men* made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb. 12:22-24).

We have found **the gate of heaven!** The gate of heaven is Christ, the Son of man! He is the ladder that brings us to the Father and to His throne in the heavenlies! God is seen and revealed at the top of this ladder! The inhabitants of that heavenly, spiritual world ascend and descend upon us in this realm where heaven and earth meet! If this realm seems dim to you, my friend, then know of a certainty that the old carnal man of the flesh must pass away and you must find your identity in the new man of the Spirit. This is the path of our transformation! As we ascend in the Spirit, we are using Christ, the ladder, to approach our Father and His throne and His world. When we ascend in the Spirit to the highest heavens, we see that it is our home where once our spirit did reside, and it is the world regained for us by the Son of man who came down from heaven. "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the *Son of man* which is in heaven" (Jn. 3:13).

Can we not see by this that Christ is our access, our ladder! Take advantage of the glorious privilege we have in Christ! Upon the Son of man we may ascend into the very presence of the Father and there learn of Him all that pertains to His will for us. There we can experience communion, by the Holy Spirit, with all the saints of both heaven and earth! We are all *one spirit* in Christ! The open heavens are before us! As we ascend in the Spirit, we see the throne of God and the dominion of His kingdom that is coming to earth. We also hear the new word of the kingdom that the Father would teach us, His sons. It is there that we see all things as they really are. It is there in Christ in the Spirit that all mysteries are revealed. We are changed as we ascend, and we are made ministers of His kingdom as we descend! The glory of God in Jesus Christ shall fill us to overflowing, transforming us within and without, and setting creation free!

THE CORPORATE SON OF MAN

Oh, what unspeakable glory it would have been to have stood with John that day on lonely Patmos to behold this One like unto a son of man — this *greater than man* **MAN** — the Christ of God! May the Holy Spirit give us wisdom and understanding to see that when the Bible speaks of "the Son of man," it is not referring exclusively to our Lord Jesus the Christ. The deeper truth is, all the growing and maturing sons of God are also part of the "Son of man" company, for they are bone of His bones, flesh of His flesh, spirit of His spirit, the *body* of Christ. They are also the *completeness* of Him that filleth all in all! This One that John saw in the midst of the candlesticks is the Christ, the *complete Christ*. It is Jesus the glorious *head*

with eyes as lamps of fire complete with all His many brethren all the way down to His beautiful *feet* burning as though in a furnace of fire! And when the voice of this glorious One rang out, it was not the voice of the man of Nazareth whose voice thrilled the thousands by the sea of Galilee, but the voice as the *sound of many waters* — many peoples — *many sons* brought to His glory!

With what eloquence did George Hawtin write of this One: "Was not Jesus the Alpha formed within the womb of Mary to come forth in manifestation as Christ, the head of the body? Should it then seem strange that the body of Christ, the Omega, should be formed in the midst of the church woman? Was not this the thing that John was seeing by revelation? John, who had known Jesus so intimately while He was here on earth, could plainly see the identical likeness, but his spirit told him that this revelation of Christ's glory was something far beyond anything he had ever known. This was the Christ in His fullness, the Alpha and the Omega together, the First and the Last in one, Jesus of Nazareth the Head, one body with a vast family of sons, all speaking with the harmony of a mighty symphony, for the voice he heard was as the sound of *many waters*."

Those who are called of God to sonship, as members of God's corporate Christ, are seen in the Spirit as the Son of man company. **All that Jesus spoke of the Son of man is true of these as well as of Him!** A whole year of articles could be spent exploring just that one awesome thought, but we cannot dwell there. A dear friend in California shared the following experience which beautifully expresses the truth of which I now speak, and points clearly to the reality of that One whom John beheld in the midst of the candlesticks. "Several months ago as I walked about performing my daily tasks, as I lay upon my bed at night, in times of prayer and meditation before the Lord, or caught up in feverish activity, there began to break upon me the vision of a heavenly man. There in my mind's eye, I was beholding with unbelievable realness, the form of a man — gigantic in size — silhouetted against the dark heavenly background. The sky around him was extremely dark, and it was as though I could see through him, for the dark sky could also be seen behind him. But there, etched against the sky, outlined with a brilliant light, was that form, daily impressed upon me, constantly with me, and I began to cry out with much depth of feeling, 'Oh, God, what is it?' Somehow, I was made to know that in some measure I was beholding the resurrected Christ! I am certain that it was only a glimpse of that which is later to be revealed to all those of us who wait for His appearing, but it was a glimpse that lifted my sights to look beyond that which we see in the immediate earth-realm.

"As that vision was daily presented to me, I began to know within the depths of my being that that was a resurrection body — and that it was, in fact, the body of Christ which arose from the grave in a glorious victory over death. More than that, I was made to know by the Spirit that somehow, in some mysterious manner, that it is THAT BODY — that very same body that arose from the grave and ascended to the Father — that *we are being fitted into!* How earthy we have been, for we have looked at the divided, carnal, worldly, un-unified camp of believers on the earth and have said, 'Behold the body of Christ.' Never have I been more convinced of anything than this: verily we are the body of Christ in that we are the materials that are being fitted into that glorious body! But THAT MAN, the GLORIFIED MAN in the heavenlies, is the body of Christ, and it is as we are fitted into **that Man** that it can truly be said, 'Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.' The place that He has gone to prepare is the place IN HIMSELF — in that glorified, resurrected body!"

The mystery of Christ! What could be more solemn or sacred than that? The mystery is just this — as we eat His flesh and drink His blood the resurrected body of Jesus is raised up within us as the new and glorified *Son of man!* God is preparing a *body*, a *perfect man*, the

Son of man company to minister to the multitudes of earth as ONE NEW MAN in the fullness of God! John saw this corporate Son of man, which is Jesus in and through His many-membered body, even His own resurrected and glorified body raised up within us, in the **midst** of the seven churches. That shows that this body of the matured Christ is gathered out of the church, out of the church age, and truly stands "in the midst" of the churches, but yet not "in" the seven churches! There is a deep mystery here. It is completely impossible to portray a divine image in the mirror of human words. Earthly illustrations can but dimly describe things that are celestial and divine.

But can we not see here the very same picture we see in chapter twelve of the Revelation of the Manchild birthed by the woman? The Manchild is *of* the woman, *from* the woman, *out of* the woman, yet *not* the woman! In like manner, the "Son of man" is "in the midst" of the churches, but yet is *not* the churches! Just as the woman goes into the wilderness while the Manchild is caught up to the throne, so the seven churches bear the glory of the seven golden candlesticks in the *Holy Place* of the Tabernacle, whereas the "One like unto a son of man" dwells in the radiant glory of the resurrected, ascended, and enthroned Christ of God! His is the glory of the Shekinah that shines in the *Holiest of all!* Do you see the contrast? The seven golden candlesticks have a flickering flame of fire from the oil within. But the One like unto a son of man has a countenance *as the sun shining in its strength* in the blinding light of which John fell at His feet as dead!

Christ is standing in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks representing something. The positioning of the candlestick in the Tabernacle in the wilderness has some relevance. You will notice that the candlestick was not in the Most Holy Place, but was located in what was known as the Holy Place, which is the area of the Tabernacle just before the Most Holy Place. This positioning of the seven-branched candlestick gives us some special truth about the church of this age. The church does not dwell in the Holiest of all — the place of all fullness. It does not walk in the realities of the *third compartment* of the Most Holy Place, nor in the blessings of the *third feast* of the Feast of Tabernacles, nor in the power of the *third day* of Full Resurrection Life. Look around you at the church world — can any deny that this is the truth? The church age has remained in the second compartment of the Holy Place, where the candlestick dwells; in the second feast, the Feast of Pentecost; and in the second day which falls short of Perfection!

It is not that the way into the Holiest has not been opened and available during the church age; it is, rather, that the church has not risen up to enter in! "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh...let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith..." (Heb. 10:19-22). Believers of the church age have with one accord sold themselves woefully short of all the great provisions of God! Christ has entered into that which is within the veil, the absolute fullness of God! He has opened up the way for men to enter into a full and complete salvation, even the *realm of sonship*. Jesus is the apostle of our faith. He is the *sign Son*, the *firstborn*, the *pioneer* and *forerunner* who has entered in for us. All who are to come to sonship shall follow Him through the veil and come into that wonderful fullness of the resurrected, ascended, glorified, and enthroned Lord! Millions prefer to remain in the dim flickering light of the candlestick in the Holy Place before the veil, but a people has risen up in this great day of the Lord to follow the One like unto a son of man into the radiant glory of the Holiest of all!

It is now time, above all times, for us to mightily stress these truths! I see no possibility of any long delay until the hour of the *manifestation of the sons of God* becomes a reality in the earth.

This manifestation is the glory, not of the indwelling Spirit as the oil in the candlestick, but of the blazing Shekinah over the mercy seat in the Holiest of all; the glory of the fullness of the Feast of Tabernacles; and the resurrection life and power of the Third Day (Hos. 6:2; Lk. 13:32). The realm of sonship is an entirely new realm beyond the attainments of any in the *candlestick realm!*

Many priests could minister in the Holy Place, where stood the candlestick, the table of showbread, and the golden altar of incense. But only one man, the High Priest, was called to minister in the Holiest of all where dwelt the ark of the covenant and the glory of the God of Israel. Under the old, Pentecostal, church order men ministered by the light of the indwelling anointing in the dimness of the Holy Place realm, to call out a people for the Lord's name, to walk there in the light of the Pentecostal anointing, to eat of the bread of Christ upon the table of showbread, which is the word of God, and to offer up the spiritual sacrifices of praise and worship at the golden altar of incense before the veil.

The candlestick identifies the church with the Holy Place, for it was there that the candlestick gave its light. So you see, when we enter by the church into the Holy Place of the Tabernacle, we come into a new spiritual dimension where the lampstand begins to enlighten us, so we have a new illumination or quickening by the Spirit and the Word. The Lord did indeed light our candle and enlighten our darkness with the anointing of Christ! Now, we see new and glorious things while darkness abounds throughout the world. Christ has lit our candle, which is our spirit, with His glory to dispel the darkness within us and around us. He has also bid us enter, in our great and glorious High Priest, into that which is within the veil! And He is arising upon us, as we enter in Him beyond the veil, in the brightness of His life until we shall be totally transformed from the light of the candlestick into the brilliance of Him who walks in the midst of the candlesticks, whose countenance shines as the noonday sun! It is in this light that we are being brought from limitation into fullness, from the earthly into the heavenly, and changed from the corruptible into the incorruptible, from mortality into immortality!

The Holy Place of the candlestick is a unique position: at its entrance it touches the Outer Court, and on the other side it touches the Most Holy Place. In the Outer Court we are redeemed by the blood of Jesus at the brazen altar of sacrifice, and thus brought to a personal reconciliation to God. The Outer Court is a *personal* experience! It is where the sinner meets God one on one and first experiences the Lord as salvation. From there we go on into the Holy Place, into the fellowship of the church, as the corporate candlestick, where we are enlightened by the Spirit, strengthened by the showbread, and brought to a spiritual life of communion, prayer, praise and worship upon the golden altar of incense. Here, our understanding is enlightened that we have come beyond the Outer Court — yet we can still *touch it*. We have not as yet experienced the surpassing glory of the Holiest of all realms beyond the veil — but we can also *touch it*, and can enter only *from* the Holy Place. As we then pass in our High Priest *beyond the veil* we step *beyond* the old, Pentecostal, church order to enter from glory to glory into the fullness and power of the GLORIFIED AND ENTHRONED CHRIST! This is the throne realm that John beheld when he was caught up in the Spirit from the candlestick realm and saw a throne set in heaven, and One sat upon the throne. It is here that we reign with Christ in the kingdom of God!

In the new order of the kingdom of God the elect shall bring Life to the whole creation by the power of His resurrection. God has determined to fill the earth with new creation men — matured into the likeness of Jesus Christ! God gave Adam, the first man, the power to multiply and reproduce himself. It was through Eve, his wife, that his image was reproduced and birthed into the world. In like manner, the same power has been given to the second man, the

last Adam, to reproduce Himself in the earth. And God has given this second man a wife — the church — that through her His image might be reproduced and birthed into the world. But that which is birthed is not the church — it is the very image and glory of the Christ of God! Little does this world know the glory that is about to come. A *Manchild* is ready to be born! A *Son of man* is ready to appear in the midst of the golden candlesticks — the churches!

This child, this One like a son of man, shall overcome all enemies, and put both sin and death forever under his feet! He shall be caught up to the throne of God, to the realm of *irresistible authority* and *omnipotent power*! The powers of the heavens shall be shaken, thrones will topple, and the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunken man! No remote corner of the earth will remain untouched by that which God is doing! God's MAN IN HIS IMAGE shall take the kingdom, and shepherd all nations with a rod of iron! The earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord! The knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea! The curse shall be broken! All flesh shall see the salvation of the Lord! All nations and all kindreds shall come and worship before Him! Creation shall be delivered! Sorrow and sighing shall flee away! Pain and tears shall be wiped away from off all faces! Prisons will become schools and policemen will become teachers! Morticians, funeral homes, caskets, and cemeteries will all become relics of the past! Righteousness and peace shall fill the earth with joy and gladness! The nations shall beat their swords into plowshares and nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more! This shall come in spite of all the unbelief of men with little mediocre minds and in spite of all their efforts against it! It shall come by the power of the Spirit of God and the authority of His sons! The mouth of the Lord hath spoken, and none can nullify it! He hath purposed, and He will bring it to pass!

For two thousand years the church has been unable to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption because it has dwelt in the twilight zone of weakness, carnality, sickness, sin and death. But the sons of God shall partake of the fullness of Christ's resurrection life and power and glory, to become the flowing of His abundant, torrential and overflowing River of Life! The sons of God, or the Son of man company, are not just "men" after the flesh; they are men and women of God who have followed on to know the Lord, becoming spiritually mature "men" in the Spirit. They have become part of that *spiritually masculine* "Manchild," whether male or female after the flesh. Flesh and blood has nothing to do with this! These have all been gloriously changed and wondrously transformed into the image of Christ the Lord!

Those who have spiritual insight can see the activity of Christ in His sons! They have *heard* the voice as of a trumpet, and have *turned* to see this One in the midst, and they are beholding the glory of Christ in the Spirit! Today, in this very hour, He is walking in the midst of the churches with eyes of discernment as a flame of fire, His feet of judgment burning like brass in a furnace, His voice of revelation speaking as the sound of many waters, and His glory upon His countenance as the sun shining in its strength. And we are there with Him, and in Him, by the Spirit! As the Lord walks in the midst of His people, He is proclaiming His Headship, His Lordship, and His Kingship. He is preparing a people to rule and reign with Him in His kingdom and bring that kingdom to pass in all the earth with power and great glory! Hallelujah!

Chapter 24

One Like Unto A Son Of Man

continued

"And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one like unto a son of man*, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength" (Rev. 1:12-16).

If we attempt to visualize with our natural mind the description that the Spirit gives us through John, we will come to confusion. An ancient artist has left us a canvas which now is in one of the museums of Europe, attempting to portray Christ in heaven according to the description here in the Revelation. The result is certainly not a masterpiece! One does not need to view the canvas in order to realize how unrealistic is the portrait of a man with hair as white as snow, with face shining like the sun, with flames coming from the eye-sockets, a sword out of his mouth, with feet of burnished brass and with seven stars in his right hand. Such a picture, is, indeed, absurd, and the very incongruity should teach us that the understanding of this passage lies in another direction.

Our text is one of the richest in all of Holy Writ! In fact, it is so profusely strewn with precious jewels and gems, diamonds and gold, that one hardly knows where to begin to search its treasures. Indeed, if texts could be mountain ranges then, truly, this is the veritable Himalayas of scripture! In the midst of all these mighty peaks there is yet one more, reaching out above them all. It stands out in majestic solemnity, reaching high into the heavens, perpetually enwrapped with snow and surrounded by clouds of mystery. It is the mighty mountain of God's Christ — the greatest revelation in all the world, the most profound, the most sublime. There, its snow peaks call us to ascend; they bid us to come up higher; they challenge us to climb the mountain of God!

The beloved John heard a voice and he *turned* to see the voice. When he turned he did not see a six-foot, blue eyed, Jesus. He saw a multi-faceted description of One who transcended any natural man! His garment, His head and hair, his eyes, his feet, his voice, his hands — each of these is a unique aspect of the *revelation of Jesus Christ!* This revelation of Jesus Christ will produce an unveiling of Him in the midst of the church! The purpose of the book of Revelation is not to get a revelation of some "coming Christ" somewhere out in the future, but to produce the revelation of Jesus Christ in the midst of His saints. The message of this book is more than mere information — it is destined to lead you and bring you to the unveiling of Jesus Christ within yourself.

HIS GARMENT

"Clothed with a garment down to the foot..." (Rev. 1:13).

There are many folk who like the book, "The Robe." Perhaps you like it, but I do not. Actually that robe that Jesus wore in the days of His flesh had no romantic history. I am sorry, but it did not. Some burly Roman soldier won the robe, and with summer coming on in a very hot climate he could not bear its heat and threw it into a corner. One day someone came in, picked it up, and threw it away. You say, "Oh my, that's awful!" No, my friend, that is what happened to it. It has no romantic history, no special sacredness or powers, because there was no merit in it at all. It was just a piece of cloth, no more sacred than the dirt under Jesus' fingernails. God saw to it that it disappeared! But thank God, there is another robe, the robe of Christ's incorruptible life, and that robe does have a romantic story!

In the scriptures, as often also in our modern world, a person's garment denoted his rank, position, office or wealth. This One like a son of man was clothed with a garment from the head to the feet. It was one garment for *one body* of many members! What is this garment? It is, first of all, the *robe of righteousness*. It is my conviction that it is linen, pure and white. It is the characteristic of Christ's righteousness. Every son of God is to walk as He walked. We, too, must be covered with His righteousness! Our thinking, our speaking, our actions, our attitudes, our ways should be all righteous. We are being clothed in the robe of His righteousness! "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." We will never get this picture straight until we are able to see that He was clothed with a garment *down to the foot*. You see, this garment is not waist length, or knee length, it goes all the way down to the feet. The feet represent *the walk*. The garment of righteousness goes all the way down to His walk — to our walk. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet (spiritual walk) of them that publish the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things" (Isa. 52:7). The beauty is in the walking out of the spirit and ways of God. How beautiful are their feet!

This One like a son of man is clothed with righteousness because He *is* the righteousness of God, He *is* the Lord our righteousness! He is so clothed "down to the foot" so that there is no exposure of *flesh*. We also are being so clothed in the robe of righteousness until no one sees our nakedness, no one knows us after the flesh, no one sees *us*, but only Christ can be seen! Hear now the inspired message communicated to the church at Laodicea, which describes as nothing else could the truth of the vital necessity of being clothed in the righteousness of Christ. "I counsel thee to buy of me...white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness (exposed flesh) do not appear" (Rev. 3:18). We must be so clothed upon until men cannot see our *naturalness*, our weaknesses, faults, and failures, but in seeing us they see HIM — the glory of HIS nature, the quality of HIS life, the beauty of HIS character, the greatness of HIS authority, the ineffableness of HIS love, the inexhaustibleness of HIS patience, His kindness, His grace, and His mercy. We are being clothed down to the foot!

This garment is, furthermore, the robe of *royalty*, the robe of the *priest*, and the robe of the *judge*. The qualities of king, priest, and judge are all seen in the characteristics of this One like a son of man! The robes of Aaron were robes of glory and beauty. The robe of the king bespoke his dignity, honor, and power. The robe of the judge set him apart from all men as the voice of wisdom, discernment, and authority. How much more shall the robe of the Alpha and Omega display the honor, power, and glory of God's Christ — Head and body!

JESUS IS KING, PRIEST, AND JUDGE. The Lord Jesus is a Priest who is ever merciful and compassionate. He will and does meet the needs of man, but He is also the King who demands your obedience to His wise and sovereign will. Surely He will meet your needs, but He will also demand your obedience! God is teaching His sons about both dimensions of the

Melchizedek Priesthood, for Melchizedek was a king-priest. We cannot project a loving Priest apart from the firm discipline of His Rulership. We cannot preach the gospel of the kingdom without the mercy, compassion, and unconditional love of His Priesthood. And we cannot have Kingship and Priesthood with a Judge. No government is complete without all three. Christ is the one who stands and judges among His people. And know ye not that the *saints* shall *judge the world*! "And *judgment* was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom" (Dan. 7:22).

Every man and woman called to sonship must learn that the firstborn Son is Priest, King, and Judge! There is a great error abroad in the land today. There is a projection of a one-sided gospel that appeals to the flesh. This is how it comes across: "God loves you, God wants to forgive you, bless you, deliver you, meet all your needs, solve all your problems, prosper you, fill you to overflowing with every good thing." And that is tremendously true! But if that is where our message stops, then we are in trouble! If we make that priestly truth our priority, we will produce a race of spoiled spiritual brats who are immature and selfish, takers and not givers. And when the clouds of adversity and trouble roll in, when the storms of tribulation and fiery trial break in unbridled fury upon their land, as they surely will, these poor folk will be frustrated, fearful, upset, and angry with God when He doesn't come running when they quote their favorite "faith" scriptures. An unbalanced presentation of truth will produce unbalanced saints. And the land is filled with these today! They are excitedly awaiting the "rapture"! Jesus Christ wants to reveal Himself in the midst of His body not only as Priest, but also as King and Judge! He wears the governmental garment of all the branches of the kingdom of God! He is the King eternal and invincible. He is the Priest for the ages full of compassion and mercy. He is the Judge who discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart, who loves those He chastens, but scourges *every son* whom He receiveth! He is arising in glory in the midst of the churches in this very hour IN HIS NEW MAN FOR THE NEW AGE to reveal Himself in the SON OF MAN COMPANY as the merciful High Priest, as the great and conquering King, and as the Judge of all, and thus *all shall know Him*! Every tongue shall confess and every knee shall bow and all men shall partake of the blessings, power and glory that flow from God's anointed Kings, Priests, and Judges — His Kingdom!

Let all who treasure the beautiful hope of sonship know that the principles of this anointed kingdom are being established in the lives of God's elect in this new kingdom day. The Lord must be Priest today! He must be King today! He must be Judge today! The scriptures call Him a "righteous Governor." Every son of God must thoroughly and experientially know Him as Priest, King, and Judge. Why does He desire us to know Him in this way? Why is it His purpose to raise up His kingdom in our hearts? So that He can make US priests, kings, and judges! He is establishing His throne in us and is making us kings in order that HE may be able to appear and manifest Himself in the midst of the kings as THE KING OF ALL THE KINGS. The world will never know Him as the King of kings until there are kings among whom He can stand and reveal Himself as King of the kings. The world will never know Him as High Priest until there is a priesthood among whom He can stand and reveal Himself as the High Priest of the priesthood. There is no use in proclaiming Jesus as a High Priest in the heavens unless there can be a priesthood through which His love, compassion, and mercy flow out upon the earth. The world will never know Him as Judge until there are judges who have experienced His *judgment within*, among whom He can reveal Himself in His discernment and judicial authority! He will not reconcile the *world* until He has reconciled all things within *His body*! He will not reign *through* you until first He reigns *over* you! Do not think you will be puffed up when you come into sonship — "Ah, when I become a manifested son!" When you become a son that is just the beginning of the mighty working of Christ within as Priest, King, and Judge. When He has discerned all, judged all, reconciled all, and subjected all *within us*, that is just

the beginning of the opportunity for the revelation of the glory of the Son of man who is clothed with a garment down to the foot! In these wonderful Priests, Kings, and Judges the demands of God's righteousness and holiness and the outflow of God's compassion, mercy, grace, and love are brought together. This is the power, glory, and authority of His kingdom!

In the Bible the ones whom God raised up as judges for His people did more than just settle disputes between individuals or hand down and execute judicial decisions. These judges were actually THE DELIVERERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE! There is one book in the Bible that is specifically named "Judges." As a book it is a thriller! Therein we read of the fearless exploits of those mighty men whom God, "the Judge of all the earth," raised up for the salvation and deliverance of His oppressed and afflicted people. Hail the day of judgment that began when God raised up a judge to execute judgment for His afflicted ones! For those judges were, indeed, *saviours* of Israel by a special anointing of the Spirit of the Lord.

Those wonderful judges were raised up long millenniums ago for the deliverance of Israel; Christ the Judge stands in the midst of His people for the deliverance of every son of God; and now, in this glorious new day, God is preparing a mighty COMPANY OF JUDGES whose responsibility it shall be to JUDGE THE WORLD in righteousness! "And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and *judgment was given* unto them" (Rev. 20:4,6). "To him that overcometh will I give *power over the nations*: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 2:26-27). "With righteousness shall He *judge the world*, and the people with equity" (Ps. 98:9). Thank God! The very thought of a world judged and governed by sons of God in the image of Jesus Christ leaves me absolutely breathless! Words become totally inadequate and human ability to articulate the wonder of such a thing fails completely. Yet I know it shall become a glorious and eternal reality, for the Priest, the King, and the Judge has entered powerfully into *my life* to set up His government within. What deliverance has been effected! What changes have been wrought! What transformations have been accomplished! What glory has flooded my soul! The wonderful work carried forth in His sons in this hour is but the *firstfruit*, the *pledge*, the *foretaste*, the *seal*, the *proof*, and the *prototype* of what He has promised for all mankind!

The priests, kings, and judges that shall reign with Christ in His kingdom are now in preparation for their awesome task. In the midst of the candlesticks can be *seen* this One taking form! Yes, you shall judge and govern the world, saints...but you will do it in humility and with a broken heart full of compassion and love. The first aspect of the ministry of the judges in the kingdom of God is *judgment*. This work, however, shall be swiftly followed by the ministries of *mercy*, *deliverance*, *reconciliation*, and *restoration*.

A beautiful picture of this is presented in chapter seven of the Revelation. "I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, *Hurt not* the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, *till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads*" (Rev. 7:1-3). So many truths come pouring into the soul from this passage, and we shall not pause to elaborate upon them, but I am sure the reader can discern in the action of the four angels the ministry of *judgment*. Four is the number of that which is world-wide or universal, and winds which blow with devastating force are the symbol of judgment. Judgment is ready to come forth upon the whole world of the sea and the earth, which represent the multitudes of humanity that dwell spiritually in the *sea*, the *lowest realms* of wickedness and degradation, and those who dwell in the *earth*, that realm which is lower than *heaven*, but higher than the

sea, the realm of the carnal mind which finds expression in the institutions of a moral society — religious systems, education, politics, economic and social orders of *this world*.

But wait! An angel *ascending from the east*, arising as the sun announcing God's *new day*, cries loudly, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, *till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads*." There can be no doubt that the seal in the forehead of God's bondslaves is the *mind of Christ*. Can we not see by this that no man is qualified to *judge the world* until he has been sealed in his forehead with the *mind of Christ*. Only the glorious mind of Christ brings the balance between mercy and judgment. It was, then, of this Christ-mind that David prophesied when he said, "Surely His salvation is nigh...**mercy** and **truth** are met together; **righteousness** and **peace** have kissed each other" (Ps. 85:9-10). Mercy and truth are met together — praise God, what a summit meeting!

These words are pregnant with meaning. When one contemplates the impossibility of such a union, it is an overwhelming thought that mercy and truth are met together. Truth is harsh and demanding; mercy is lenient and lax. Truth condemns and devours; mercy covers and exonerates. Only when one has intermingled the ministries of priest, king, and judge are these incompatible forces MET TOGETHER! Partakers with Christ in this heavenly calling, when one actually becomes an ANOINTED JUDGE, he shares in that omniscient mind that discerns the true nature of all things, and therefore judges righteously. Partakers with Christ in this heavenly calling, when one actually becomes an ANOINTED KING, he shares that dominion, that power that is in the Spirit and by the Spirit. Partakers with Christ in this heavenly calling, when one actually becomes an ANOINTED PRIEST, he shares that unlimited outflow of mercy, compassion, and unqualified love that is derived from the heart of our great High Priest. Only one possessed of this three-fold mind of Christ is qualified to control the four winds of judgment that blow upon the sea and the earth! Only the sons of God sealed in their foreheads with the mind of Christ will be able to both *judge* the world in righteousness and *reconcile* all things to God! All others would, if given the chance, pour out unbridled vengeance, wrath, and damnation upon the rebellious!

Would to God that all who call themselves sons of God would truly see that by judgment *and* mercy God shall reconcile and restore all men unto Himself. His judgments are not vindictive; they are purposeful, remedial, and redemptive! Some do not believe that all nations will be saved and that all creation shall be gloriously reconciled to God! I do not hesitate to tell you that their unbelief shall not make the faith of God of none effect, nor shall it hinder God's program one bit. Their refusal to embrace God's glorious plan shall only disqualify *them* from being a part of that wonderful company of the sons of God through which the redemption and restoration shall be effected. I feel a great pity for those who cherish the beautiful hope of sonship, yet fail to permit the perfect work of God's grace and mercy, mingled with His corrective judgments, to be administered with divine purpose upon every man and every nation. Those who would damn men to eternal torture without mercy are *disqualified from ministering God's reconciliation to the creation for whom Christ died*. It is my deep conviction that *none* who reject and oppose the precious truth of the ultimate salvation of all men and the reconciliation of all things to God will stand in that blessed company of the **manifest sons of God**. How could they? For this company of deliverers to have within its ranks men who shut the mercy of God up from men, and who understand not God's corrective judgments, would mean the destruction of the ministry of the sons to all creation! Only the Son of man company, clothed with the garment of *priesthood, judgeship, and kingship* can set things right and set creation free!

GIRT ABOUT THE PAPS

As John turned to see the voice that spake with him, with astonished countenance he beheld the wonder of this One "clothed with a garment down to the foot, and *girt about the paps* with a golden girdle" (Rev. 1:13). The word "paps" is the Greek word *mastos* used exclusively in Greek for the female breasts! Thus we read, "And it came to pass, as He spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the **paps** (*mastos*) which Thou hast sucked!" (Lk. 11:27). On Patmos we have the woman's breast while yet the speaker is like a SON OF MAN and is THE ALMIGHTY! It would not be possible to describe more vividly the dual nature of our God who is both Male and Female, the strong and mighty One, our Father, who is also EL SHADDAI, our Mother, the Purer-forth who pours Himself out for His offspring; who gives them His flesh and His blood; who satisfies them with milk from His own bosom; who sheds forth His Spirit, and says, "Come unto me and drink, open thy mouth wide and I will fill it," who thus pours into them His very nature and life that they may grow to become His sons and His daughters! We must drink the sincere milk of the word, we must drink His very life-blood, if we are to grow and abide in Him and know Him in fullness.

All the aspects of human life — spirit, soul, and body — and the right and natural relationships which God has ordained in our lives, are designed to reveal something in God Himself. Man has been created and formed in the *image and likeness of God*! God has given us eyes, therefore we know that God possesses the faculty of sight. We have ears, and by this we learn that God can hear. We have a voice and the ability to speak, revealing that our Creator also possesses the power of speech. The complexity and intelligence of the mind of man is the picture of God's own omniscience. We think, reason, act, work, and create as a revelation of the omnipotent power of Him who made us. He is as a father to His children, providing for their needs and wants, training and educating them in love and service as members of the great family of mankind. But there is something deeper than even this — something that corresponds to the tenderness of a mother in holding, nursing, nurturing, caring for, and comforting the weary and wounded spirit of her child. Mothers are the tenderest image in humanity! There is something in God which corresponds to that power of the tender and compassionate feminine nature, something of which, indeed, that feminine care and comfort is only the pale, earthly reflection. Yes, God is a Mother as well as a Father, only He is so much finer a mother than the finest mother you ever knew!

The references in scripture to God as a Mother are numerous. "As one which his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem" (Isa. 66:13). In Genesis 1:2 we read, "And the Spirit of God *moved* upon the face of the waters." That word *moved* in the Hebrew indicates a "hovering" or "brooding" that began to take place upon the surface of the waters. The word also indicates a "fluttering" such as the wings of a fowl. So in the very beginning of this planet Earth we see the first manifestation of the maternal, or feminine, character of God. In the beautiful Song of Moses he says to the unfaithful people of Israel, "Of the Rock that *bore you*, you were unmindful; you forgot the God who *travailed in your birth*" (Deut. 32:18, Amplified). Here God is portrayed as a disappointed Mother who bore us and brought us forth! These words clearly involve the image of childbirth, of God as a Mother. "Under His wings," an expression used again and again in scripture, is a mother figure. Jesus said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a *hen* gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Mat. 23:37). It is the mother-bird that gathers up her brood under her wings to feel the heat of her body, and for protection. So Christ says, in effect, "I would be a Mother to you!"

Ah, my beloved, if God by His grace has given you a wonderful father and the love of a godly mother, He has given you something of HIMSELF. Yes He has! Because all that is good in a father and a mother comes from God, from His own nature and state of being. All who read these lines who are either a father or a mother can know how God feels. God made the heart of a father! God made the heart of a mother! God made the heart of a mother and made her the finest, the tenderest, and most loving thing you could ever know so that you could understand something about Him. You want a father, you want a mother? Come to the Lord!

The word mother is not directly used for God in the Bible. It is because with God "father" *includes* "mother." "Let us make man in our image and after our likeness. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him" (Gen. 1:26-27). You see, Adam was both male and female within himself before Eve was taken out of his side, separated from him and brought forth into a unique expression of *man*. "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him; male and female created He them; and blessed them, and called *their name* Adam, in the day when they were created" (Gen. 5:1-2). Before Eve was separated from Adam he did not know and was not initially in touch with himself concerning his own woman nature. When Adam was first brought forth from the hand of God he was created *androgynous*. This word is from the Greek, *andros* for male, *gyne* for female. There are such things on this planet as androgynous plants. An androgynous plant is a plant that possesses within itself both the male and female characteristics and is able to reproduce from within itself without an outside mate. There are still a few androgynous organisms beyond the plant family. God had to be androgynous because He could bring forth out of Himself! He did not need a partner! He was complete and whole within Himself! This is why some aspects of His nature as revealed in the scriptures are masculine and some are feminine.

Consider that God begat everything out of Himself and we see the pattern after which Adam was created. It was when Adam was asleep that God removed Eve from him, not from his rib, for in reality the Hebrew goes deeper than that and suggests that she was taken from his reproductive organs. Thus, the beginning of a husband-wife relationship began *before* Eve was separated from Adam! The church as a whole teaches that when a couple becomes married they learn to grow together, that is, they begin to form a union. In reality, the creation story is just the opposite! Adam was one (Eve within him). Eve had to be separated from him, removed from him, so that he could fully understand the union He had!

Just as Eve was in Adam, so all the strength of the Father and all the fine love and tenderness of the Mother are combined in the word "Father." It is impossible for me to explain the glory of such a thing as this for we are blinded by the impenetrable mystery of a realm that long ago passed away. Nevertheless, the moment that we understand that man in the beginning was created male and female and that *male and female IS the image of God*, then we can understand for the first time the awesome glory, power, and exaltation of the *bride of Christ*. When God formed the body of Adam from the dust of the ground, He did not make man and woman, for Adam was both in one — after the image and likeness of God! The image of God is not a body with a torso, two legs and two feet and ten toes, two arms with two hands and ten fingers, and a head with two eyes, two ears, a nose, and a mouth. The image of God is the emanation of the *nature* of God! You see, the Bible states clearly that in the beginning there was only God — omnipotent, omniscient, immutable, holy, perfect, who is love. But because God had a Father nature, He had to birth a Son: because when one has a father nature, the deepest craving of his nature is to beget and bring forth out of his own being an offspring in the likeness of himself. Therefore, because God had a Father nature, He had to birth a Son; but the problem was He didn't have a wife! Now this would have been a problem for us, but it was

not a problem for God, because He had His wife within His own side, for in that beginning, before human flesh was, God was both Male and Female within Himself. We know this is so because everything in the whole vast universe came out of God, and if God had not been both Father and Mother within Himself in the beginning, we could not have male and female in the earth today — **in His image!** "Let us make man in our image and after our likeness...so God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; **male and female created He them.**" Male and female — *that* is the image of God!

We shall not in this message consider the process by which God separated the female from the male, making Adam and Eve, man and woman, but we should carefully point out that following this separation, though existing in two bodies, inspiration declares in both the Old Testament and the New that the man and his wife, though separate, are ONE FLESH. Husbands and wives, according to the ordinance of God, are ONE FLESH, ONE UNIT, yea, ONE PERSON! The "thus saith the Lord" concerning the matter is simply stated in these inspired words: "From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man *leave* his father and mother, and *cleave* to his wife; and the *two* shall become *one flesh*, so that they are *no longer two*, but *one flesh*. What therefore God has *united* — joined together — let not man separate or divide" (Mk. 10:6-9, KJV & Amplified). It was not the burning self-desire of Adam that caused Eve to come forth, but the purpose of God! It was God Himself who initiated the whole process, for the record states, "And the Lord God said, It is *not good* for the man to be alone; *I will make* an help meet for him" (Gen. 2:18). "Meet" is an old English word meaning "suitable, fit, proper, worthy." The whole flavor of the word "meet" is to fit, join, combine, agree, be in union, be together — fusion! This is true ONENESS!

When Eve had been built by the skillful hand of the Creator and presented to Adam, he had an immediate name for what Eve obviously was. Not her given name, Eve, as we term it in English, but what *kind* of creature she was. Hebrew is simpler than English, and more plainly explains exactly what a woman is. *Ish* is the Hebrew word for man and *isha* is the feminine form of the *ish* or *man*. Permit me to paraphrase what Adam said when Eve was presented to him. "This is now bone out of my bone, and flesh out of my flesh; because she was built out of what was taken from me, I will call her *isha* — a FEMALE MAN!" Adam merely added a single letter to the word which stood for himself, to define the quality of difference: sex. He was a *male man* and she was a *female man*. And God confirmed Adam's understanding that they were both *exactly alike* despite the obvious outward differences. They were simply two parts of the same thing! "In the day that God created *man*, in the likeness of God made He *him*; *male and female created He them*; and blessed *them*, and called *their* name *Adam*, in the day when they were created" (Gen. 5:1-2). To both God and Adam it was *one creation* "in the image and likeness of God." The man's name wasn't Adam. The woman's name wasn't Adam. But *their* name was Adam!

Ish. Isha. Male. Female. Both Adam. Both man. Both in the image of God! Isha signifies, no matter how uncouth the sound to our ears, MAN-NESS. So in the old Latin the word for man is *vir*, and the word for woman is *vira* — a FEMALE MAN! The English word "woman" also confirms this truth, for it is a contraction of the old Anglo-Saxon term "womb-man" — a *man* with a womb! When Adam said that Eve must be called *isha*, it was as though for "wife" one would say *she-man*. God blessed the union of *ish* and *isha*, this one creation He called Adam.

It is also interesting to note that when God said, "Let us make man in our image," the word *image* is in the masculine gender. Yet when He goes on to say, "and after our likeness," the word *likeness* is in the feminine gender. So when the record states, "God created *him*; male

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and female created He *them*," the image and likeness of God is clearly revealed in male and female! Only a Father-Mother God could have created **both** male and female out of "image and likeness." God is unity and union, He is not two individuals, a masculine person and a feminine person. For the correct balance we must see that God spiritually possesses both masculine and feminine characteristics *within Himself*. In the original creation of man Adam was *both* male and female *within Himself*. This androgynous state was called "him." The female was contained *within* the male. HE was male and female. That is why God is called "He," for "Father" *includes* "Mother." We do not pray to "Our Father-Mother God," as some insist. The firstborn Son of God has plainly instructed us to pray, "Our FATHER which art in heaven." The Mother is included in the Father! Jesus came to reveal the Father and in revealing Him He also revealed the Mother nature of God within Himself. But this God is called *Father!* The scriptures leave no question about this at all! As one comes to know God in the Spirit, and by the Spirit, one discovers the deeper realization that God is both Father-Mother as ONE, not two separate entities as carnal-minded people love to debate the masculine/feminine issues. Nor is there any need to try and expunge from the Bible the so-called "sexist" language by referring to God as "our Parent" rather than "our Father." Those radical liberal scholars who ridiculously promote such linguistic trash know absolutely nothing about the God they are trying to represent! They are contradictors of God, opposers of God, and mutilators of His Word!

Armed with the great truth that the earth realm is but the reflection of the spirit world, we do not get caught up in the senseless struggle between man and woman, for in the spirit there is *unity* and *oneness!* God as a Father lovingly corrects, disciplines, teaches, instructs, and directs our steps. God as a Mother lovingly nourishes, comforts, soothes and cuddles the needy one. From such a fountain of loving Life can every son of God experience all the parental guidance, provision, and care needed to bring a son to the full stature of God our Father! This *man* in the image of God is destined to have dominion over all the works of God's hands. He is created in God's image, MALE AND FEMALE, SONS AND DAUGHTERS, to be the revelation of both the strength and wisdom of God's Fatherhood and the tenderness and sustaining life of God's Motherhood unto creation. God makes His sons and daughters partakers of His own nature, that they, the firstfruits of Himself, may make others partakers of the same nature! Our separation unto Him makes us fit for our work, as the Lord has said, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a **Father** unto you, and ye shall be **my sons and daughters**, saith the Lord Almighty" (II Cor. 6:17-18). Sons and daughters! Male and female! Thus we also become "breasted ones" and "pourers-forth." In the sons and daughters of God is fulfilled the promise of Jerusalem, that "those who love her may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that they may milk out and be delighted with the abundance of her glory" (Isa. 66:10-11).

Without male and female there can be no reproduction. That is why homosexuality is such a curse and outside of divine order — it is contrary to nature, both human nature and divine nature, it is a love for the same, and produces no seed. No reproduction out of the love of the parents can take place. That is like *sons* who want nothing to do with the *bride of Christ*, they only want to spiritually play with one another. Then there are the spiritually "lesbian" churches whose only revelation is the *bride-church*, and they want nothing to do with the sons! They want to do their own thing, make their own little plans and programs and have their tea parties with the other little girls. They stay with each other and make love to one another and have no acknowledgment of the call of sonship at all. But no eternal seed of God is reproduced out of such unions! Oh, they get more numbers and members on their rolls, but nothing of Christ is

reproduced out of their midst. The spiritually masculine quality is missing. To bring forth life it is necessary to have both male and female!

In the midst of God's elect there must be both the reality of brideship and sonship! "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate...and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my *sons* and *daughters*, saith the Lord." The Lord is not talking about what we are *naturally*; He is talking about what we are *spiritually*! Being a man in the flesh does not make one a "son" and being a woman in the flesh does not make one a "daughter." Sons and daughters of God are not reckoned by fleshly birth, but by spiritual birth! I am writing to you of *spiritual qualities*. Some people have the idea that women can't be "sons," they are always "daughters." Others think a man is never a "daughter" of God. But I know women who are *sons*, who possess a spiritually masculine character of strength, authority, and dominion in God! I also know men who are *daughters*, possessing a spiritually feminine character of love, gentleness, succor, and submission to Christ! And I know many who have a beautiful blending of both characteristics! It has nothing to do with flesh at all! It has everything to do with our spiritual nature by new birth. It depends upon our calling in God, not our physical gender. Brideship and sonship are both *in the Spirit* and *by the Spirit*, and the sons and daughters are in their individual companies the *body of Christ* (Eph. 4:15-16; 5:22-32). Within each of us individually there is also a son and a daughter, a male and a female!

GIRT WITH A GOLDEN GIRDLE

When John the beloved turned to see this One He was girt about the paps or breasts with a *golden girdle* (Rev. 1:13). Divine nature held everything together in divine order! The golden girdle is in modern terms a golden belt, that which goes around the body to hold the garment in place. The golden belt is the badge of every matured, perfected son of God! The golden belt represents a state of being. It is righteousness and truth as a life out-poured! It is a spiritual possession and an omnipotent power derived from the life and character of divinity. It is the medallion of victory that engirdles the firstborn sons of God! This is significant because in the Old Testament there was a *curious girdle* worn by the *priest* and a little later on in the book of Revelation we see *angels* with golden girdles on. The girdle represents what unites the whole garment. The golden girdle covers the breasts and unites all the masculine and feminine attributes of God that they may flow forth in truth and righteousness through God's Royal Priesthood — the SON OF MAN COMPANY!

The beauty of this truth is further enhanced when we see that the glorious order of Melchizedek is also both male and female! The word *melchi* in Hebrew means "my king of" and is a masculine word. The Hebrew word *zedek* means "righteousness" and is a feminine word. The full meaning is "My king of righteousness." In the order of Melchizedek these two characteristics of masculine and feminine are united in one King-Priesthood ministry. Kings and Priests! The kingship speaks of the Father nature of God and the priesthood speaks of the Mother-nurturing nature of God. Until this Melchizedek order is manifested in the earth through the Son of Man Company there will be no deliverance to the whole creation. This mature ministry of the plenitude of the Father-Mother nature of God must flow in wisdom, grace, love, power and authority in the earth!

God's name as revealed to Abraham is another significant mother figure. Father Abraham heard the call of God and departed from his own country, from his father's house and his father's kindred, and traveled to a land that God showed him. God gave to him the promise of a seed and that in this seed all the families of the earth would be blessed. After many years of experience in Canaan, this man of faith, yet without the promised seed, and seemingly without

hope, was visited by the Lord. The record states that "When Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the ALMIGHTY GOD; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly" (Gen. 17:1-2).

Now this name, GOD ALMIGHTY, is both interesting and touching. In Hebrew it is *El Shaddai*. *El* means "might," "power," or "strength," and signifies the "Strong One." *Shaddai* is different, though it also describes power. But it is the power, not of force, but of all-bountifulness, that which is abundant, plenteous, and running over. *Shaddai* primarily means "breasted," being formed directly from the Hebrew word *shad*, that is, "the breast," or more exactly a "woman's breast." Thus *Shaddai* means one who "pours forth life" as a woman bears her child and then feeds and sustains it with the milk from her breast. In the same way God is the giver out of His own life as He bears out of His own substance His offspring, and then feeds and sustains and strengthens it with the "milk" of His word. Can we not see that all natural things have spiritual counterparts?

By her breast the mother has almost infinite power over the child. Some of my readers perhaps have heard the old Greek story of the baby laid down near some cliff by its mother, while she was busy with her herd of goats. The baby, unperceived, crawled to the edge of the cliff. The mother, afraid to take a step, lest the child should be startled and move further and fall over the precipice, only uncovered her breast, and so drew back the infant to her. It is this figure which God Himself has chosen in this name *El Shaddai*, by which to express to us the feminine side of His Almightyness! His Almightyness is of the breast, that is, of bountiful, life-giving supply! Therefore He can quiet the restless, as the breast quiets the child; therefore He can nourish and strengthen, as the breast nourishes; therefore He can attract, as the breast attracts, and draw us unto Himself when we would slip away. Ah, this is the "Almighty" who appeared to Abraham and assured him that he would be blessed according to the promise. How wonderful are these things!

This means that He is the One who is the nourisher, who is able to nourish children. It is children who need to draw from the breast, and it is older children that need to be *drawn from* or *weaned* from the breast. We must be not only those who draw from the breast of God, we must also develop breasts from which others can draw. There are multitudes of people today who are destroyed for lack of knowledge and stunted in their spiritual growth for the lack of nourishment. What is called "milk" in the church systems today is often so diluted or so polluted that it ministers malnutrition, illness, and even death to those who suck at the breast. Christ the nourisher is here revealing Himself to us, in us, as us, and through us as the One who provides the sincere (undeceitful, unadulterated) milk of the word that the babes in Christ may grow thereby (1 Pet. 2:2). Some ministries today have no milk for the babes, only meat for the mature. But that is not according to the nature and order of God! HE is our Father-Mother, and every son of God who bears His image is also a father-mother! How can we shepherd the nations and deliver creation without the beautiful balance of the Father-Mother heart of God!

This One who feeds the babes is "girt with a golden girdle." The girdle speaks of *control*. The breasts of Christ give life — divine life, divine nature — for that is the significance of gold. There are those who minister milk to the babes but not out of divine nature! They minister, rather, out of human zeal, out of the desire to be seen and heard, to gain a place, position, or recognition, to control people's lives, to instill within the babes the carnal doctrines, programs, rules, rituals, traditions, purposes, and spirit of the *denomination* or *movement*. These frustrate the grace of God in the lives of the babes! By their organizing the people into their religious system they take the processing of God out of the hands of God, they usurp the life of God and

so nullify the work of the Holy Spirit, until the babes grow up to be something altogether different than the image of the God who gave them life. The nourishment that we provide for creation must be under the *control of the Spirit of God* in our lives — the *golden girdle*!

Breasts. The divine nature has both the qualities of the masculine and the feminine. Christ is a feeder, a nourisher. I have no desire to feed on anything but Christ! That's where my life comes from! We feed on the Christ in one another. In the natural, the mother holds the little baby up against the paps and the baby feeds from the breasts. We must draw close enough to one another in the Spirit until we can lay our hands upon the breasts of our Lord. Remember where John the beloved was found at the Last Supper? He reclined with his head upon the breast of the Lord. John sat in that place of closeness to Christ, he loved this man so much, and had such an intense hunger for truth and reality, that he wanted to be in that privileged position where he could draw from the life of the Lord, to drink as it were from the paps, and eat of the substance of divinity. It is no accident that it was this same John who on the isle of Patmos beheld the glorified Christ in the midst of the churches with the golden girdle upon the paps. **Everything we need is in Him!**

JOINT DOMINION

Those who read these lines should meditate deeply upon the wonder of man's primordial glory — male and female — *set together* in splendor over the works of God's hands! All creation being set in order, one was needed to take the headship in the visible realm, to bring the authority and blessing of God's kingdom over all things. "And God said, Let us make man in our image and after our likeness; and let THEM have dominion...and God blessed THEM, and God said unto THEM...HAVE DOMINION OVER...EVERYTHING" (Gen. 1:26-28). My reader will observe the change from *him* to *them*. God blessed *them*, male and female, and gave *them* JOINTLY THE PLACE OF UNIVERSAL GOVERNMENT.

All realms from the lowest of the bottomless to the highest of the heavens were set under their joint dominion, as typified by the fish of the sea, the beasts of the earth, and the fowl of the heavens. These three realms symbolically encompass all spheres of existence from the lowest depths of darkness unto the highest dimensions of light and exaltation. Jesus confirmed the true scope of man's dominion when, as the last Adam and the Son of man, He descended into the lowest parts of the earth and then ascended up far above all heavens. He liberated the captives in the prison house of Hades and ascended up far above all heavens to reign over all things. We have been raised up with Him, and made to sit together with Him in the heavenly places, yet *we are right here on earth!* So being raised up to the highest heaven does not speak of a geographical or astral *location*, but of a dimension of *spiritual reality and power*. ALL POWER is given unto Him, both in heaven and in earth! This, precious friend of mine, is the magnificence of that dominion given to Adam — male and female — in that long ago beginning! Just as God is Father *and* Mother over His creation, so the rulership given to the sons of God must exhibit both the masculine *and* the feminine characteristics of God's nature. It must be Adam *and* Eve, the bridegroom *and* the bride, sons on mount Zion *and* the New Jerusalem bride coming down from heaven, kings *and* priests, truth *and* grace, strength *and* compassion, righteousness *and* mercy!

The sons of God are the *temple of God* (I Cor. 3:16; Rev. 11:1-2,19). The bride of Christ is the *city of God* (Rev. 21:9-11). That city is the holy city, the New Jerusalem. Every stone of that city is a living stone, a glorified Christ-being. Every stone is a living, ransomed soul just as every member of the body of Christ, which is the temple of God, is a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious. We cannot fully explain nor understand a

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mystery so awesome as this, but the eye that sees by the Spirit sees the temple as a living thing, composed of living saints. In that temple redeemed men, the sons of God, are the pillars and foundations, and Christ Himself is the chief cornerstone, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord, in whom we also are builded together as the habitation of God through the Spirit.

In holy vision the apostle John was transported in spirit to a great and high mountain, the majestic heights of the kingdom of God, from which he was permitted to see the perfected bride of Christ in all her beauty and glory. From his lofty vantage point the eyes of John were ravished with the electrifying sight of the unequaled majesty and infinite splendor of the bride adorned for her husband. Not a city of stone as was the Old Jerusalem, but a New Jerusalem, a *living city*, a bride beyond compare, a virgin pure and holy, composed of incorruptible saints brought forth out of the living substance of Christ. Words utterly fail me to describe the wonder of such unsurpassable glory, for ours are but the words of men, but that holy and beautiful city belongs to THE REALM OF THE SPIRIT. Now at last the perfection, the image of God, sons and daughters, male and female, temple and city, of which Adam and Eve were but a frail shadowy type, has come! The many-membered bridegroom, the sons of God, with the many-membered bride, the holy city, in the image and likeness of God JOINTLY RULING OVER ALL THINGS!

The nations shall walk in the light of this city, and the rulers and leaders of the earth shall bring into it their glory. The tree of Christ's incorruptible life is in the midst of it, and the water of life flows from the authority of the sonship throne of God in the midst of it. This is GOD, male and female, ruling over all the endless vastnesses of infinity for evermore! This is the Son of man with authority and power, girt about the life-giving paps with a golden girdle! Oh, the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it!

Chapter 25

One Like Unto A Son Of Man

continued

"His head and His hairs were *white like wool*, as *white as snow*..." (Rev. 1:14).

John the beloved, banished to the treacherous isle of Patmos, was *in the spirit* and there heard a voice, and he turned to see the voice that spoke to him. When he turned he did not see a six-foot, blue-eyed Jesus, with flaxen hair and gentle face. He saw a multi-faceted description of One who transcended any natural man! His garment, His head and hair, His eyes, His feet, His voice, His hands — each of these is a unique aspect of the *revelation of Jesus Christ*! This revelation of Jesus Christ will produce an unveiling of all His wonderful attributes and powers in the midst of all who receive it! The purpose of this vision is not to give us a picture of the physical appearance of the resurrected Christ in heaven, but to convey to us the glory of His unveiling in the midst of us. The message of this book is more than mere information — it is destined to lead you to the unveiling of Jesus Christ within yourself!

The head represents authority and white speaks of purity and righteousness. Christ's authority in our lives must be pure! Those blessed sons of God who are *growing up into Him who is the Head* are being formed in the maturity of Christ as a *Headship Company*. Just as there are many saints who make up each particular part of the body of Christ, so are there those who mature to share in His headship over all things. Those who function in the wisdom and power of the Headship Company in this day of the Lord must be pure! God is raising up this Headship Company in this hour, and it will not be composed of people who enter carelessly and presumptuously, who grasp after it by carnal means or with fleshly zeal, or who try to operate in this realm unprepared. This place is reserved for a people that has been purified by the nature of Him who comes to His temple as a refiner's fire and as fuller's soap. When I think of the head and hairs of God's Christ, I am reminded of the words of the prophet, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as *white as snow*; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as *wool*" (Isa. 1:18).

The vision John saw of Christ doesn't mean that Jesus is up in heaven and now has hair that is as white as snow. If that was the case, then His immortality would be brought into question, as white hair on earth is a sign of *aging*! It doesn't mean that Jesus now looks like an old man. It's a symbol — a symbol that does not need too much interpretation except here in America. Here, we don't have them anymore — the judges with the white hair. We did have them in the early days of our Republic, but not anymore. In parts of Europe, however, the judges still wear their little wigs. The wigs are all white. It carries us back to antiquity. In the ancient civilizations, including the time of the Roman empire, the judges wore white wigs. It isn't just a symbol of old age — it speaks of wisdom and maturity.

The way one becomes a judge who is skilled in the law and justice tempered with mercy and compassion, is by years of experience. But you might be a judge with black hair, brown hair, or

red hair — and that would not signify the wisdom and maturity gained through experience. So it became the custom for the judges to wear white hair as a symbol of the wisdom, maturity, and experience of their office. John in spirit beheld One who is the sum total of all wisdom and knowledge, he saw the all-wise One, the one who speaks out of the maturity of the ages. He saw the Judge of all judges in the midst of the churches! And every matured and perfected son of God shares in that stature, in that wisdom, in that understanding, and in that judgment as we grow up into the fullness of the mind of Christ! White hair is symbolic of omniscience. It is the crown of spiritual wisdom gained through the crucible of experience and testing. The scriptures clearly teach that the hoary head is to be greatly honored, for therein lies the wisdom, experience, and discernment that comes with age. Just as Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, and grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men, so every son of God is being brought, by the dealings of God, to the state of divine wisdom, knowledge, discernment, understanding, authority and power! The experience is gained by *walking with God!*

There is an even deeper meaning in this. There is a very great difference between the glory of the first man Adam, and the glory of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. There is a profound and marvelous significance in the meaning of Adam's name and the marked contrast between Adam's *redness of face* and Christ's *whiteness of head*. May the Holy Spirit give understanding as I explain. In the scriptures the blood always stands for the life, and a person's name always stands for his nature. The face, in symbolic terms, speaks of the deepest part of a man's being — what we would call the heart, or the nature. In the beginning we have a man *named Adam*, which means "to show *blood* in the *face!*" It speaks of being red-faced, as one blushing, so that the inward nature of the blood, or the soul, is revealed through the face.

The understanding of this one point should make it easy for us to grasp why it was that Adam turned so soon from the way of his Creator to follow after the darkness of his own soul, of the carnal mind; why he did not live in the Garden for at least twenty years, or a hundred years, or a thousand years before succumbing to temptation and plunging headlong into the dismal abyss of self, sin, and death. Now since divine wisdom teaches us that blood represents life, it should not be difficult for any to see that Adam's *red face* reveals that from the day he breathed his first breath upon earth there was deep-seated within his being this propensity to cling to *his life*, to fulfill the demands of *his life*, to exalt *himself*, so he is seen as **retaining the blood** which represents his *soul* or his *self-life*. Sin and the fall were the natural result of this condition!

But the *glorified Christ*, on the other hand, is always depicted as *white*: hair as white as snow, head as white as snow, garments as white as snow, everything white, like an albino. Why? Because HIS LIFE is poured out...released by means of death! Upon this truth hangs the eternal hope of billions of mankind who have inhabited this earth, and it is even now the wellspring for all those blessed ones upon whom God has breathed the spirit of understanding from on high and quickened together in Christ Jesus. The truth is this: *blood retained* is *Adam* and is therefore *death*. *Blood poured out* is *Christ* and is therefore *life!* Or, as the apostle Paul expressed it, "To be carnally (self) minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Rom. 8:6). Jesus stated it this way: "For whosoever shall save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk. 9:24).

This poured out life of Christ is the river of life flowing bountifully from the throne of God and of the Lamb! The Lamb has been slain! Jesus, the reservoir of divine life, released His life and the Father pours forth that eternal and incorruptible spirit into the hearts of all who believe.

While our Lord Jesus walked upon earth, He *alone* had divine, eternal life. That life was in His blood, not the blood of Adam's self, but divine blood of the quickening spirit of God. That blood was confined to Himself. There were no other manifest sons of God! He was the firstborn of the new race of God-men, the firstborn among many brethren. Nowhere in scripture do we have any record or evidence that Jesus Christ ever imparted eternal life or the spirit of sonship to any man before His blood was shed. It should not be difficult for any man to see that if Jesus had **retained His blood**, as Adam did, if He had clung to His *own will* rather than being obedient unto death, the gate of the kingdom of heaven would still be closed and the riverbed of the great River of Life would today be as dry as the desert wadis of Arabia. There would be no other sons of God! Well did our Saviour know that, as long as His life-blood still flowed in His veins, all the rest of humanity must remain dead in trespasses and sins. He would be the only one of His kind, the only human Son of God! So He poured out His life, giving Him *whiteness of face*! And, blessed be His name, as we, in turn, *pour out our life*, we stand identified in this glorious Son of Man as the life-giving sons of God!

HIS EYES AS A FLAME OF FIRE

"And His eyes were as a *flame of fire*" (Rev. 1:14).

As John gazed upon this One, his attention was attracted to His eyes, which blaze like flames of fire. The spirit within was so aroused that it shone through His eyes! This description of the Son of man is most illuminating. George Hawtin has commented on this passage: "The eyes of the Son of God are completely different from all other eyes. The eyes of mankind and of every living creature are capable only of receiving light. Our eyes receive reflections and images of things that are without, but the eyes of the Lord not only receive reflections of things without, but are LAMPS OF FIRE, shedding abroad the light of God whithersoever they are turned. Every creature and everything upon which His eyes shall fall will receive the LIGHT OF GOD. 'They looked upon Him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed' (Ps. 34:5). Even in the hour of Christ's greatest humiliation when Peter had denied his Lord, the Lord turned and *looked* upon him, and at that look the light of truth dawned upon this trembling and heartbroken man as he sat in his dismal despair and, being thus enlightened to the truth and to the knowledge of his guilt, he went out and *wept bitterly* in repentance and contrition.

"But this manifestation of the light of truth that shines as a burning flame from His eyes is merely a fleeting shadow of greater things to come. It is as a feeble candle in the night compared to the illuminating rays of the sun at noon. The day is coming and is near at hand when Christ shall be the Light of the World in the fullness of its meaning. His eyes run to and fro through the whole world and wherever He looks the light of heaven will shine. Upon whomsoever His eyes shall fall darkness will be dispelled from him and the light of Christ will shine upon him. Through long millenniums has the world sat in outer darkness and in the cold and gloomy shadows of death, but He who soon shall come riding triumphantly through the open heavens has eyes burning as lamps of fire, before whose shining darkness and shadow will flee away forevermore" — end quote.

The One who has the eyes as a flame of fire is He who comes to judge and make war. Ah, He stands in the midst of the seven churches with His eyes of fire! He stands within the spirit of each one of us with eyes as flaming fire! To judge rightly He must see through and through, search all depths, look beneath all masks, penetrate all darkness, and try everything to its ultimate residuum. There is often something wonderfully luminous, penetrating, overawing, in the human eye. Men have been blinded by the look of kings. It is like the living intellect made visible, which seems to read all secrets at a glance. It is this infinitely intensified, flashing like a

sword of fire, that the apostle beheld in this heavenly Judge. It is an eye-flame of omniscient perception, a searchlight that penetrates to the inmost thought and intent of the heart, laying bare in its awful revelation every fiber of self, even in purposes supposed to be pure, scorching, burning, shriveling every hypocrisy, and withering away every breath of the flesh.

Oh, the eyes of the Lord! The eyes of holiness, the eyes of infinite discernment, the eyes of depthless love and burning desire for those apprehended to be conformed to His likeness. They descend into the depths of the spirit, the candle of the Lord, to search out and make known what is of soul and what is of spirit, and flash with their flame of sincerity, truth and shadowless righteousness. The word of God is quick and powerful — living and active — sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and the marrow — the deepest part of our nature. And when the glorious Son of man comes marching into our land He comes with eyes that are shining lamps of heavenly fire, penetrating, illuminating mind and heart, revealing all that is there, destroying every selfish and secret motive, consuming every vestige of the carnal mind, purifying the deepest intents of the heart, transforming and flooding the whole being with righteousness and purity and power.

Some things in our lives are deeply hidden, but the eyes of the Lord are going to cause everything to surface and be brought out of darkness. The fire of those eyes is such that all the dross is made to emerge. Do we really want the Christ to invade us through and through — to thoroughly touch every area of our lives? We will never conquer until we are conquered! This moment He is mightier in His elect than He ever was before. This moment He is doing a work vaster, stronger, deeper, more overwhelming than ever before. He will direct it from one degree of glory to another, until every member of His elect is transformed into His likeness. He will shine forth the glorious light of His illuminating eyes until we are all refined and brought forth as pure gold!

Christ's eyes of fire, and the eyes of fire of every son of God who shares His glory, are eyes of the same fire that is revealed throughout the book of Revelation. There are not two or five or ten different fires! There are His eyes of fire, and there is gold that is tried in the fire (Rev. 3:18), and it is the very same fire! Fire is taken from the golden altar and cast into the earth (Rev. 8:2-5). The same fire that releases the fragrance and power of the prayers of the saints is cast into the earth-realm and mighty commotions take place! By that fire all carnality is consumed from the sons of men, that God may be glorified in the earth-realm even as He is in the heavenlies. There are seven lamps of fire burning before the throne which are the seven spirits of God (Rev. 4:5). The Lamb has seven eyes and the seven eyes are the seven-fold spirit of God, thus they are likewise eyes of fire! (Rev. 5:6).

You see, it is all the very same fire of God in different administrations! There is a sea of glass mingled with fire (Rev. 15:2), a people who have become within themselves an untroubled sea of tranquillity, peace, and transparency, made so by the processing fire of God. All the restlessness and agitation of the carnal mind has been burned out of them! There is a fire that destroys the religious sham of Mystery Babylon (Rev. 18:8), and a great lake of fire for all the adversaries of God — death, hell, the beastly fleshly nature, the soulical false prophets, and all who do iniquity (Rev. 20:10-15). What are we meant to understand by this lake of fire which burns with fire and brimstone? We know only too well the use the church systems have made of this conception through the ages! It has had some horrific connotations and given a distorted view of the character of God. The crude idea that an all-wise and all-righteous and all-loving Creator would decree endless torment in undying flame for any of His creatures does dishonor to the name and glory of our precious Lord Jesus Christ, and it is incredible that the

compassionate Saviour of mankind could ever have intended us to read into His words the notion that He will use that holy fire which *He is* to torture billions of souls throughout eternity.

The divine fire is the truth, the righteousness, the love of God; in a word, it is the *nature* of God! Any careful reader of the Old Testament will be aware that fire is often used therein as a symbol of the presence and action of God. "The Lord our God is a consuming fire." "God is love." Those are not contradictory terms — they are complimentary terms! It is no straining of metaphor to say that the love of God and the wrath of God are the same thing described from opposite points of view. How we shall experience it depends on the way we come up against it. God does not change; it is man's moral state that changes! The wrath of God is a figure of speech to denote God's unchanging opposition to sin! It is His righteous love, His holy passion operating to destroy evil. Nothing can live in that devouring flame that is of the nature of a lie or wars against the spirit of holiness!

That consuming fire is as eternal as God Himself; it is, because He is; it is that which was from the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Oh, if there be one thing for which we ought to rejoice and praise God without ceasing it is that eternal fire which will burn up all the foulness and rottenness, all the wickedness and cruelty, all the shame and wrong from which our souls have ever suffered. It is not evil which will have the last word, but righteousness; not sorrow, but joy; not hate, but love; not damnation, but salvation; not death, but life. When the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, heaven is there. When any other spirit is dominant, hell is there. It is not God who changes when we pass from one to the other, it is *we* who are changed by His eternal fire! All who are members of the corporate Son of man have eyes of fire! The judgment of God is in their eyes, for they judge as they *see by the Spirit*. Judgment begins at the house of God, and the saints shall judge the world even as Christ now judges His people. Fire devours. What is there to devour? The veil. The veil that conceals Christ in our lives! When the veil is consumed we see Him as He is and reality breaks forth.

Charles Finney went into a mill up north one time, and as he walked through the mill he spoke not a word. He just looked at the people, and as he looked at them they broke before his gaze, weeping, repenting, and crying out to God for mercy. They had to close the mill and a great revival began in which multitudes of people turned to the Lord. The move of God started with just a look — a piercing, penetrating gaze beyond the veil of men's flesh into the depths of their lives — with eyes as a flame of fire! There is power in a look when the fire of God is there!

"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good," says the wise man (Prov. 15:2). Elihu declares, "He withdraweth not His eyes from the righteous, but with kings are they on the throne" (Job 36:7). "The Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven. His eyes behold, His eyelids try the children of men" (Ps. 11:4-5). David was seeing the Lord's eyes of fire by the Spirit when he prayed, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Ps. 139:23-24). David did not engage in the unproductive and defeating practice of introspection. He asked God to examine his life to show him if he was harboring any fleshly way. Self-inspection is futile. We will always protect those things that most need to go to the cross! We miss things. We are prone to gloss over certain faults. We practice self-justification. But if God does the searching, it is different! His eye is sharp. His judgment is true. The window of our soul is transparent to His penetrating gaze. And yet in light of all that, David is eager for God to search his life. He opens the windows of his life and lets the sin-destroying and life-giving breeze of the Holy Spirit blow through. He asks God's help to find and destroy the sin that lurks within.

When I read David's prayer, I am reminded of a diligent, zealous, competent customs official I once saw examining a Palestinian family's bags in the Tel Aviv airport. You haven't seen airport security until you have passed through the Ben Gurion airport in Israel! The agent took the man's electric razor apart. He unrolled his socks. He unfolded each shirt and searched the pockets of each pair of pants. He even held the lady's underwear up to the light and peered through them. He unscrewed the back off their alarm clock. He felt the lining of the suitcase and then hauled the suitcase off and had it x-rayed. And through it all the family whose bags were being inspected was not too happy with the procedure. They didn't like it!

In his prayer David took the exact opposite attitude. Had God been the customs agent, David would have been encouraging him to make a thorough search! As the Lord purges and purifies His sons we must expect to have our inmost secret thoughts, relations, and purposes revealed, searched, and judged by His eyes of fire! No court of inquiry was ever presided over by a more exact inquisitor than this! God is the critic of all the secrets of the heart. As each thought or intention passes to and fro, He searches it, examines it. Eyes as flames of fire — you can't hide from this One! He discerns behind all your masks, He can burn beyond all your appearances, all your hypocrisy is as an open book before Him. But He is not vindictive, for He is the King of a burning passion of Love! Whenever you fail, He *understands*, He knows what is in man, He can see right through all the appearances to what really is. He knows your heart and your desire after Him! He takes into account your weakness. Yet He will not be complacent toward you! This is the One who is walking in the midst of the candlesticks, the One who possesses all the wisdom of the ages and an unconditional Love by which He judges.

If you are called to the high calling in Christ Jesus you will behold this One who walks in the midst! He will do His work in any event, but how much better for us to present ourselves before Him and with David invite Him to do His work of amputation and excision! If we cannot cut off the offending member, let us look to Him to rid us of it. Nothing in heaven or earth can withstand the fiery glance of omniscience which sees and knows all and can therefore judge all. His eyes pierce through the façade that we build up around ourselves and past the front the church has built around itself. There is no way we can keep anything from God! Even when He was here in the flesh, Jesus *knew what was in man*. One aspect of the prophetic ministry, which is the testimony of Jesus, is that the secrets of men's hearts are revealed. We may lie unto men, but we can't lie to the Lord Jesus Christ. How powerfully Ananias and Sapphira found that out! He can see right past all our pretense. To the church at Ephesus He announces, "I *know thy works...*" (Rev. 2:2). To the church at Smyrna He reveals, "I *know thy works...*" (Rev. 2:9). To the church at Pergamos He says, "I *know thy works...*" (Rev. 2:13). To the church at Thyatira He declares, "I *know thy works...*" (Rev. 2:19). And to the churches at Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea He proclaims the same solemn truth, "I *know thy works!*" Whatever we see up front, the Lord says, "I see behind the scenes. I perceive the underlying motives, the intents, the secret purposes, the hidden agendas, the covert schemes — I *know thy works!*" The Lord looks beyond what the public sees, what the billboard says, behind what the church bulletin announces, beyond all the claims, promotions, boasts, propaganda, and phoniness. The Lord's eyes of fire burn through all of man's smokescreens. Before those burning, piercing eyes humanity will throw up its façade of external righteousness and religiosity. Ah, His eyes of fire penetrate to the very core of our being!

Yet, this wonderful work of the eyes of fire is not a vengeful, implacable, destructive work, but that of *redeeming, transforming Love*! It cannot be stated better than it was by Rex Andrews when he wrote, "Your enjoyment of the book of Revelation will depend, to a considerable degree, on what you believe about that fire flame of His eyes. Unless you can perceive that

that FIRE is pure-unadulterated-love, the LOVE which GOD IS, you will likely miss some of the most vital things intended to be conveyed by the Revelation. If you consider the flaming fire, and the two-edged sword of His mouth, and the face which is as the sun shining in its strength, as being destructive, bent on killing, you will have missed about all there is of value. That FIRE of eyes, and face shining as the sun, describe a Being-like-unto-man, whose spirit and soul and body were utterly invested, and completely possessed by, THE ETERNAL SPIRIT. And that ETERNAL SPIRIT is declared to LOVE!"

HIS FEET AS BURNISHED BRASS

"His *feet* were as *burnished brass*, as though they burned in a furnace" (Rev. 1:15).

In the Bible brass speaks of divine judgment. The feet of the Son of man are described as being not only of brass, but of *fine* brass. This is brass that has already been through the judgment, it has already been refined by the fire and processed — that's why it is called *fine brass*. The elect of God are called to judge, but they must first of all *be* judged! We must first judge ourselves lest we be judged. When we successfully pass through judgment, then we can mete out judgment, for we will not judge after the appearance, but judge righteous judgment by the spirit of wisdom and understanding.

As brass is symbolical of judgment, I am sure we can behold here the judgment of Christ and His many brethren through those blessed *feet members* of the body of Christ! As the Lord Jesus Himself judges in the midst of the churches, among the members of His body, so shall His many brethren bring judgment to the nations and to all mankind. These saints make up the feet company, who are the last members added to the body of Christ at the end of this age. They have a specific duty to perform in judgment! They shall tread upon the head of Satan within themselves, conquering sin and death, and then go forth bringing the judgment of Christ in the earth. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it (the seed of the woman) shall *bruise thy head*, and thou shalt bruise *his heel*" (Gen. 3:15). "And the God of peace shall *bruise Satan under **your feet*** shortly" (Rom. 16:20). "And she (the sun-clad woman) brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and *prevailed not*; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was *cast out*, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world...and I heard a voice saying in heaven, *Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the **power of His Christ!***" (Rev. 12:5,7-10).

Judgment, we must remember, is not merely condemnation, wrath, and vengeance as so many think. The judgment of God has the distinct purpose of **setting things right**, and, indeed, all things will be set right and all things will be gloriously reconciled unto Himself, yea, things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, or wherever they may be. The feet members of the body of Christ, who are the sons of God to come forth in this new kingdom day of the Lord, must be purged in the fires of the Lord like no people before them. They shall tread upon Satan, sin, and death, therefore, they must be more thoroughly washed, cleansed, refined, and purified. These anointed ones will appear "like unto fine brass" as though they burned in an oven because they have been more thoroughly purged in the Lord's fiery furnace of purification. Surely this explains why the saints of this hour are experiencing such severe trials and testings, and are being so thoroughly processed by the Lord. The testings and trials we are experiencing in this hour are not so much organized persecutions from without, but very personal pressures and circumstances that try us to the very core of our

being. Don't think these are a small thing! Think not, my brother, my sister, that should the government cast you into prison and take all your possessions, that you would then be tried in a greater way than in the nitty-gritty of every day experience! How we respond to the smaller, very personal challenges that daily touch our lives often speaks louder than our response to greater things over which we have no control!

The feet members of this Son of man company appear as red-hot burnished brass signifying their primary function in the corrective judgments of the Lord. Micah described this company as having "hoofs of brass" by which these anointed ones in union with their Head shall "judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it" (Mic. 4:3-4,13).

All of this issues from the *mountain (kingdom, government) of the house of the Lord* which is established in the top of the mountains, or at the head of all the kingdoms! Mic. 4:1). It is obvious that those members of the body of Christ who have overcome, and been formed into the governing and ruling company of His kingdom, have the responsibility of ministering redemptive judgment among the peoples of the world, rebuking strong nations afar off by the powerful word of the Lord, and by signs, wonders, and miracles establishing peace, justice, and righteousness in the earth. The *law* shall go forth out of Zion (the sons), and the *word* of the Lord from Jerusalem (the bride). When they hear this powerful kingdom gospel of peace and righteousness coming from mount Zion, the exalted mountain of the house of the Lord, confirmed by signs and wonders greater far than those God manifested in Egypt or in Israel, "many nations shall come and say, Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord" (Mic. 4:1-2). When the sons of God are thus revealed in the power of Christ's resurrection, multitudes who have nurtured the call of God upon their lives will finally see the fulfillment of that call, when in that glorious day their ministry will have arrived.

We are speaking of the *greater ministry* and the *greater works* that shall be wrought by God's elect in the full REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST! The elect who make up the *manifest sons of God* shall not administer the word of the kingdom in their present limited body of carnality and corruption. Instead, they shall minister the pure law and word of the Lord from Zion's holy realm in the glory and purity of the mind of Christ, and in the power of resurrection with bodies of incorruption. The present world systems were created by corruptible men, thus bringing forth the harlot systems called Babylon. We have all had enough of the rule and dominion of carnality and corruption from the man of sin. Therefore, only incorruptible, holy, perfect, and anointed individuals shall serve mankind from Zion's all-glorious realm!

A beautiful insight into the "burnished brass" of this feet company was shared by Paul Mueller in one of his booklets wherein he said, "The original Greek words for this passage tell us that those of this feet company were ignited and inflamed in the fiery furnace, which caused them to glow as they burned. They were refined in the fire of God's awesome and holy presence (Heb. 12:29). And when they were properly and thoroughly burned, cleansed, and refined, they were then inflamed by the holy fires of the presence of their Father. Those of that company were ignited and inflamed of their Father, so that they glowed with His holy love, and the deep passion of God for suffering humanity, and for the groaning, travailing creation. They were so inflamed with His holy love, fervor, and passion that they vowed to press on in God, by His Spirit, until they attained to the fullness of Christ and the manifestation of the sons of God."

A most precious writing along this line was received some time ago from Terry and Tykie Crisp, of which I shall devote the rest of this article to quoting from a portion of it. Terry wrote:

Have you ever heard anyone use the age-old idiom of "holding one's feet to the fire"? What they meant by this was that they were going to keep the pressure on that individual, they were going to give him no rest, they were going to bear down upon him with such force and intensity, that he would finally assume his moral obligations, line up with their desired expectations, conform to a certain standard of conduct or consciousness, etc. It was another way of saying that they were not going to release that person from the heat of intense scrutiny and high expectation, until they saw a change in him. Does this not describe how our Lord is dealing with His children in this hour? Yes, it is true that Jesus loves us just the way we are. And, yes, His love for us is unconditional. But aren't you glad that He loves us so much that He will not leave us in that condition? His highest desire for each of us is that we should ultimately look like Him; and He will go to any length to make this a reality! Therefore, He holds us in the fire, even when we kick, and scream, and think we've had enough. He knows just what it will take to achieve the objective; and works incessantly toward that goal, in spite of our objections! He is content that once we share His vision, then we shall understand why it was necessary!

There are several things we might mention about the appearance of Christ's feet; chief of which is the fact that John's description of them was never meant to be taken literally. This should be apparent, since he referred to them as being "*like unto...*" This shows plainly that he was speaking in a metaphorical sense; he was creating a word-picture in the minds of his readers, and what an excellent picture he gives! Secondly, we would add that the mention of His feet speaks figuratively of *His walk*. It is another way of commenting on the expression of His life; the demonstration and exhibition of that life as He makes contact with the earth realm of humanity.

While reading over this passage I noticed something conveyed in the Greek, which is almost overlooked when read only from the Authorized version. There is a condition described here, which plainly reveals God's ultimate, eternal purpose for holding not only Christ's feet to the fire, but ours, as well! The word "burned," as used in the King James translation, should more accurately be rendered, "glowed." Is there a difference? Most assuredly there is! We know that in order for something to burn, its composition must be of a combustible nature. But for something to *glow*, it must be of a more enduring substance! Now, both burning and glowing are responses to the fire. And for a short duration, even that which is in the process of being burned may emanate a momentary glow, much the same way a "falling star" shines temporarily, until it burns out. But know ye that in the fullness of time, the fire will at length reveal the true constitution of a thing. Beloved, it is an undeniable fact: *the fire cannot be fooled!* If the substance is ignitable, it will eventually be reduced to ashes; if it is not, then it will simply be refined to the highest degree of purity. The fire makes manifest the basic make-up of the material, and openly declares its consistency for all the world to see!

Looking again unto Jesus, *our* Author and Finisher who *gives* us faith, we see that when our Lord trod upon this earth, He gave us the perfect example of what it is like to have "feet like unto fine brass." Why, He was the greatest **firewalker** that ever lived! For centuries, men in various parts of the world have mystified multitudes of spectators by walking upon hot, glowing coals of fire. In fact, in some cultures, a walk among the fiery embers was even required of those who had hopes of being initiated into the ranks of their priesthood. It was looked upon as an act of moral purification. But without fear of contradiction, we can boldly declare unto you that **no one ever did it quite like Jesus!** You see, He encountered all the trials and temptations common to mankind. He was faced with the same kind of pressures wherewith

each of us are familiar. There was no area of His life which escaped the all-searching flame; in no thing was He spared!

We are persuaded that the pressures Jesus encountered were more intense than what any of us might even imagine at this time! Many years ago the question was posed by wise old Solomon, "Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?" Prov. 6:28). The answer, up until that time, was a resounding NO! Every man or woman who had ever passed through the fiery path of fleshly lust, trials, or temptations had always come out with "charred feet," so to speak. Every one of them had "flammable" elements in their "soles"; that is, elements which responded poorly to the heat! Oh, they might have been victorious in one situation, only to turn around and find themselves "flame-broiled" in another form of testing. We know this to be true, because according to the divine record, "ALL have sinned (missed the mark), and come short of the glory of God."

But when Jesus stepped forth on the human scene, He bore an entirely different testimony! We read that He "was **in all points** tempted like as we are, **yet without sin**" (Heb. 4:15). It mattered not whether He was being tempted with one of the common sensual allurements which appeal to the natural appetites in man, or whether He was being led along the fiery pathway which passed by the house of that "great harlot," religious Babylon, whose sweet, seductive influences had slain many strong men (Prov. 7:26-27). Regardless of whether He was walking through one of those challenging natural circumstances which is of a frustrating nature and had the potential of causing Him to "lose His cool," or whether He was being forced to pass through the flaming words and the false accusations of His chief critics, He always did what was right! He calmly kept His composure! No matter how hot "the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire" made them (Isa. 54:16), and no matter how intense the heat became under His feet, there was absolutely nothing in Him that would ignite! Much to the devil's dismay, **Jesus simply would not burn!** The flame would not kindle upon Him! Why, He wouldn't even blister! In fact, the *hotter* the adversary made the trial, the more *fervently* Christ's feet "glowed"! He radiated such an intense purity, such indescribable peace, such absolute discipline and self-control, the multitudes were astonished by Him! They could not help but admire this man's walk! He was totally above reproach! Ah, beloved, we believe that it was because of this very thing that He had such influence with the people! They understood that what He taught them, He had first walked out Himself! He not only instructed them in the overcoming life; He demonstrated what it was like to have power over the fire!

The question might be asked: how was it that Christ was able to walk through the midst of such tremendous fires, and remain unsinged? How did He keep from being overwhelmed by them? We believe that one of the main reasons was that He stayed focused in the heavenlies! He kept His eye on *the Lord of the fire*, instead of looking at the fire itself! You see, while His feet were walking out the purposes of God in the earth, His head was *in the heavens!* (Jn. 3:31). He was not the least bit overwhelmed by the fire, because He understood its origin! He knew from whence it came!

This is the destiny of those who yield themselves unreservedly to the Lord! Even now, the feet of God's king-priest company of "firewalkers" are being *conditioned* in the flames of fiery trial and daily tribulation; and even as we write, a bed of coals "seven times hotter" than in any previous generation is being prepared! The stage is being set; the world will be watching! What a breathtaking sight this will be! We need not fear, however, for once He has consumed everything in us that can be burned, and refined the metal of our inward nature to its highest degree of purity, then, regardless of the temperature, we will simply *glow* all the more with the glory of God!

You see, at such a time we trust that God will have already taken "the burn" out of the fire for us; and by then, there will be nothing to threaten us, to make us afraid! The fire is an enemy to us only so long as there are things in us that respond negatively to it, or as long as there are things that we are afraid of losing to it. But when we truly get *victory* over it, it will not matter! The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us! As did our Lord Jesus, we, too, will "glorify God in the fires," by walking in a way that magnifies and radiates His holy name (nature) to all creation! As prophetic confirmation Isaiah says, "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; THOU ART MINE...when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isa. 43:1-2).

Praise God for the hope of His calling! As we become victorious over every Adamic tendency in us now, we will then be able to stand calmly and triumphantly with the Lamb on a *sea of glass mingled with fire*, having nothing to hide or be embarrassed of. Our feet will glow like His! (End quote).

Chapter 26

One Like Unto A Son Of Man

continued

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great *voice*, as of a trumpet...and as the *sound of many waters*..." (Rev. 1:10,15).

What is that voice which is as the sound of many waters? "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: *the Lord is upon many waters*" (Ps. 29:3). Water is one of the primary elements. Every part of our being is composed of elements which come out of the seven days of creation. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void: and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the *face of the waters*" (Gen. 1:1-2). We first meet the voice out of the waters early in the book of Genesis. The voice of the water actually exists within it. Many of us have had the experience of sitting by the seashore, or a great waterfall, in a meditative moment, listening to the sound of the waters. In that time of reflection it seems the waters speak to us! Tranquillity is ministered to our soul and peace to our mind. Answers and solutions to difficult problems and the stresses of life form within our consciousness as we contemplate in the stillness the voice of the waters. Inspiration and revelation arise from within!

Water is representative of life. The voice of many waters is the voice of the fullness of life! What can man do without water? Nothing! Without water we will die within a few days because our very bodies are composed of 65% water. We were formed in water in the womb. In that long ago beginning the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters and there it was that God spoke! "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God *said*..." His voice was first heard *upon the waters*! Creation began out of the waters by the word of the Lord! The Spirit of God moved upon the *face* of the waters. Face speaks of personality, as though there is a person trying to appear through the waters. The face is the expression of the intelligence of the mind. It speaks of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. The Spirit of God brooded over the face, over the personality of the waters. And then God spoke! He spoke out of the waters!

From the dawn of creation there comes to us the sound of the voice of many waters. It is HIS voice. It is the voice of the Lord! Darkness was upon the face of the deep, the very great deep of the waters. And there it was that the almighty God spoke and said, "Let there be light!" And the light shined out of the darkness of the waters. God speaks in the darkness within ourselves, out of the very great deep of our being, and light dawns upon the face of our waters, understanding springs forth in our mind and heart. The voice of the Lord that quickens us, the word of the Lord that awakens within the revelation of who we are and who He is, that brings salvation and the day of the Lord, is upon the face of the deep and is the voice of many waters.

"And I heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps" (Rev. 14:2). This is naught

but the voice of the 144,000 sons of God standing on mount Zion! Just before John heard this voice of many waters he saw a Lamb that "stood on mount Zion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written *in their foreheads*." Then he heard the voice of many waters! The forehead is that part of the face the bespeaks of the *mind*. Out of that mind the voice speaks. Just as the Spirit of God in the beginning spoke His creative word out of the deep of the waters, and upon the face of the waters, so the Spirit of God now speaks out of the face of the deep in us, out of the mind of Christ in the sons of God!

The word of the sons of God is the voice of many waters! It is the voice of One in the midst of the candlesticks! Water is *life*. Water *saves*, water *refreshes*, water *cleanses*, water *rejuvenates*, water *creates*, water *births*. Ah, methinks I hear the voice of the Lord as the sound of many waters! Why many waters? Because there is no longer the *only begotten* Son of God — that was Jesus of Nazareth — there are now *many sons* coming to His glory! These many sons are the many waters! The *foreheads* upon which the Father's name is written, the *minds* in which are formed the mind of Christ, the *personalities* in which are formed the nature of the Father, are the *face* of the very great deep over which the Spirit of God now moves and out of which He speaks. It is the voice of *the Son* in the sons. It is the voice of love and restoration, the word of salvation and release, the power of redemption and resurrection that shall bring deliverance to creation from the bondage of corruption.

How can I be so certain that the voice of many waters is the voice of the sons of God? The apostle John gives this remarkable description of the vision he saw. "Then I looked and lo, the Lamb stood on Mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty-four thousand who had His name and His Father's name inscribed on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven (out of the realm of the Spirit) *like the sound of great waters* and like the rumbling of mighty thunder; the voice I heard seemed like the *music of harpists accompanying themselves on their harps*. And they *sing a new song* before the throne of God...no one could learn to sing that song *except the hundred and forty-four thousand* who had been ransomed from the earth (realm)..." (Rev. 14:1-3, Amplified). There is no doubt that the voice of many waters is the very same voice which was the music of the harpists and also the voice that sings the new song which no man can learn but the 144,000 who are the *sons of God*. It is clear that the voice, the harp music, and the song are but different descriptions of the same reality. A new song is a *new message*! A new message is a *fresh word*, a *living word* out of the realm of the Spirit!

When in chapter seventeen of the Revelation John was caught away into another astounding vision it was explained to him by the angel which showed him these things that *waters* mean *peoples*, and *multitudes*, and *nations*, and *tongues* (Rev. 17:15). Can we not see by this that in the symbology of the book of Revelation *many waters* means *many people*. This is a many-membered body of Christ! There are many sons coming to glory! So he's not talking about "waters" speaking, rather it is "many people" speaking. It is many people but yet only *one Voice*. When John heard the voice of the Son of God through many members it wasn't the clamor of six hundred and sixty-six different denominations proclaiming six hundred and sixty-six different doctrines. The babble of so many diverse messages would not have sounded like the beautiful harmony of harpists harping and would have been unintelligible to his understanding. He heard a multitude of redeemed men and women out of every people and tongue and nation *speaking the same word*! They were in agreement, from their mouths proceeded the living words of God without discrepancy. They were speaking in the Spirit and by the Spirit. They had come from numerous backgrounds, diverse cultures, various races and nationalities, different dealings and processings of God, yet there was one word and revelation of God pouring out of their spirits! They did not belong to the same church order, they had not attended the same Bible school, they had not sat under the same ministries, they had not been

in the same revivals, they had not read the same writers, they had not shared the same experiences, but they had been brought *by the Spirit* to the same word and reality in Christ! If you could read the letters we receive from around the world, from Europe, Asia, South America, the nations of Africa, Australia and New Zealand, and many other areas of the world, you would see just how true and powerful this is. We regularly receive letters from brethren in little villages in far-away places with strange sounding names, who were not in the Latter Rain move of 1948, nor in any of the other revivals we have experienced here in America, and when they share the revelation of the Christ, the purposes of God in this day of the Lord, the truths of reconciliation, sonship, the kingdom, and the processings of God in their lives, it is abundantly evident that we don't have one thing over them in any way! And they were not taught it by man! This phenomenon is not the result of any concerted effort, or any organized venture by any group to raise up a "sonship" movement in the earth. Oh, no! It is the result of the sovereign moving of God in the earth! It is the Lord Himself calling out and forming His elect! You can sit in a great auditorium with five thousand people and if everyone is chattering away about their own things it is a confusion of tongues. But should all speak in unison, reciting, for example, the Lord's Prayer, you can understand every word though it is spoken by five thousand voices. John heard a multitude of people *speaking the same thing* by the Spirit — the living word of God!

SEVEN STARS IN HIS RIGHT HAND

"And He had in His *right hand seven stars*..." (Rev. 1:16). "The mystery of the *seven stars* which thou sawest in my *right hand*, and the seven golden candlesticks. The *seven stars* are the *angels* of the seven churches..." (Rev. 1:20).

Caught up in Spirit John saw a divine revelation. In the right hand of Christ were *seven stars*, which are the *seven angels* of the *seven churches*. The seven angels reside in His right hand because the right hand is the hand of authority, power, dominion, and blessing! Throughout history, there have been those anointed of God who have seen some connection between the stars and the messengers of God. This connection can easily be made because both stars and the ministering spirits are called "the host of heaven" in the Bible. There are several beautiful passages that provide the indisputable link between the two, of which I will cite only one. "Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the HEAVENS: praise ye Him in the heights. Praise ye Him, all His ANGELS: praise ye Him, all His HOSTS. Praise ye Him, SUN and MOON: praise ye Him, all ye STARS OF LIGHT. Praise ye Him, all ye HEAVENS OF HEAVENS" (Ps. 148:1-4).

The natural sun is the brightest luminary in the natural heavens. And to help us in correctly interpreting the meaning of the spiritual sun, Genesis 1:16 informs us that God made "the greater light to *rule* the day, and the lesser light to *rule* the night." Here we first have the idea expressed of both the sun and the moon being **rulers**. Then we find that God, the supreme Ruler, is called in the Word a "Sun." "For the Lord thy God is a SUN and a shield" (Ps. 84:11). Also, our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings, is called "the Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. 4:2). He rules! In Matthew 14:33 we find, concerning saints who are to be kings and priests and *rule* with Christ, that they are compared to the sun. "Then shall the righteous SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father."

Here in the book of Revelation we have *seven stars* which are the *seven angels* of the *seven churches*. Now let us face some facts. We have listened to fairy tales much too long. In the first place we discover that the word "angel," instead of being a translation, is but an evasion, being the English form of the Greek word *aggelos*, which to the average person means nothing at all.

The Greek word *aggelos* means nothing more than "messenger." And in every occurrence of the word "angel" in our Bibles, that is the word that should have been given. The word *aggelos* is simply a pure Greek word without any particular meaning except what we choose to give it, and people oftentimes have the notion that it means a man with wings, whereas, if a man did have wings, he has no muscles to move them — a most ridiculous thing!

Get the thought, now, that an angel is a messenger and read the word "angels" always with its proper translation, "messengers." The Greek word *aggelos* has just the direct meaning "messenger," one sent with a message, the personal representative of the Sender. What the person or being looks like or where he is from is completely irrelevant to his being a messenger. Whether he be a man, a spirit, or any other kind of creature makes no difference whatsoever! Anyone sent with a message is a messenger — an angel. If there would have been Western Union messengers in Bible times they would have been called "Western Union Angels," for angel means messenger. It may mean a messenger from hell, or a messenger from heaven, or a messenger from some man on earth; any messenger sent by a king, or any other person, is in both the Hebrew and Greek languages, an angel of that person. Even a homing pigeon would be an angel! It is simply one commissioned to bear a message. Yet that is not the end of the matter!

Let it be known with truth and assurance that there is a correspondency between *all the sevens* in the book of Revelation. How clearly we first see this in chapter one where the Lord Jesus reveals the mystery of the *seven stars*. The seven stars are the *angels* of the seven churches. Then further on there are the seven lamps of fire which burn before the throne which are the seven spirits of God. And there are seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb which are also said to be the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. It is my deep conviction that all of these "sevens" are but different aspects or facets of the same reality — the seven-fold Spirit of God, the absolute completeness and fullness of the Holy Spirit! The fullness of God in Jesus Christ is the seven spirits of God! The fullness of Christ in you is the seven spirits of God! The seven "angels" of the seven churches are the seven spirits of God — the fullness of the Word of God as Christ in us!

It will greatly aid our understanding to realize that in the Revelation where the word "angel" is again and again employed as a *symbol* the meaning is not the angel or messenger himself, but what the angel or messenger *stands for* — the *message*! The message bespeaks of a *word* — there is a spiritual activity in the heavens of God's Spirit by which a word is communicated, the mind and voice of God reveal a truth, an activity, a purpose in the unfolding plan of God. Therefore, when we see the word angel in the book of Revelation let us think of a *message*, a *revelation*, or a *word* from the Lord! This is the power and authority of the Christ by the Spirit in His word sent to the churches. His word is not humanistic prattle. The seven stars are that spirit-ministry to the church that proclaims the living word of God!

Just as these seven stars are "in" the right hand of God's Christ, they also ARE His right hand! This meaning is often expressed in common speech, "He is my right hand man," meaning, the one who carries out my instructions, and accomplishes all my will. The seven angels are the seven-fold SPIRIT of God, and the seven stars are the seven-fold WORD of God which issues out of the Spirit, that word which never returns unto Him void, but accomplishes that whereunto it is sent. Each of the seven angels is a SPIRIT and each of the seven stars is a WORD. Each angel or star, each spirit or word, reproduces Christ in the members of His body!

As the revelation John saw progresses, we see a theme unfold before our wondering eyes that discloses to us a deep mystery. A lamb appears in the midst of the throne! This is very

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meaningful, for the lamb in the book of Revelation is not the lamb of mount Calvary. The lamb in the book of Revelation is the lamb in the throne, not the lamb on the cross. The lamb in the book of Revelation is the lamb standing on the heavenly mount Zion, not the lamb hanging between two thieves on Golgotha's hill. The lamb in the book of Revelation is in the throne in the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, not outside the gate of the Old Jerusalem in the land of Israel. He is the lamb of the throne! He is the lamb of a people! He is slain — that is, He is pouring out His Life, but not as the man of two thousand years ago, but as the Living Lamb of God in the midst of His government of sons!

Now notice, in the midst of the throne there stood a lamb, as it had been slain, having *seven horns* and *seven eyes*, which are the *seven spirits of God*, sent forth into all the earth (Rev. 5:6). Then we find that "out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were *seven lamps of fire* burning before the throne, which are the *seven spirits of God*" (Rev. 4:5). Take note that the horns and eyes are in the lamb that is in the throne. The seven spirits of God *originate* from the lamb in the throne! But they are "*sent forth* into all the earth" (Rev. 5:6). Thus there is an *emanation out of the throne* of the seven-fold spirit of the Lord, that radiates out until it penetrates and fills all the earth and every dimension of creation. The seven lamps of fire which burn *before* the throne are the first aspect of that emanation! These correspond to the seven golden candlesticks, which are the seven churches, which are made up of all those individuals whose *spirits*, as the *candle of the Lord*, have been lighted by the Spirit of God, and that is the light of the seven churches! The horns and the eyes of the lamb are *in* the throne. The seven spirits of God issue out of the very nature and authority of God in the lamb! But the light of the seven lamps or candlesticks burn *before* the throne. There has now been a movement, for both that which is *in* the throne and that which is *before* the throne are the seven spirits of God — which eventually are sent forth into all the earth! As the seven spirits of God radiate out from the throne, the *church* is therefore the first expression of that emanation! The light is the illumination of the Spirit of God!

In consideration of these beautiful truths it will be instructive to look at another significant scene in chapter eight of the Revelation. "And I saw the *seven angels* which stood *before* God; and to them were given seven trumpets" (Rev. 8:2). Before God! Before the throne! Can we not see that the position of the seven angels is identical with the position of the seven lamps of fire, which are the seven churches. The great truth is that these are the *seven angels* of the *seven churches*! Consider this, my beloved. The seven horns and the seven eyes are in the throne. Seven lamps of fire are burning before the throne. And now there are seven angels, and they are standing before the throne, that is, in the seven churches. Furthermore, the seven angels have *seven trumpets* — a seven-fold *message*. They are sounding forth a *word*! As you study chapter eight you will see that these trumpet sounds go forth into three dimensions — the *sea*, the *earth*, and the *heavens*. These are the seven spirits of God *sent forth* into all the earth! Can you see that the seven angels are the seven spirits? And the trumpets they blow are the seven-fold word of God which issues forth out of the spirit. Oh, how wonderful are these things! As you follow these seven angels all the way through the book of Revelation, you will find that their relationship is to everything that happens to the three realms men live in upon earth. They sound the trumpets that affect the earth-realm. These same angels pour out the vials that affect the earth-realm. Follow these seven angels and you will see how they are identified with *every activity of God that affects the earth-realm*!

The seven spirits are the seven angels. When they are *in* the throne, they are eyes and they are horns. When they are *before* the throne they are seven lamps and seven angels. But when they are *sent forth* into all the earth they are seven trumpets! It is all the seven spirits of God in different administrations. Yet, when you stand in the earth-realm, viewing this vision from an

earthly perspective, the seven spirits appear as *seven stars*! John was standing on the isle of Patmos as a prisoner, banished to those rocky shores as a criminal, suffering the pains of trial and tribulation, standing in his isolation perhaps in discouragement, but most certainly in a state of lack, shut in, hedged up, surrounded about, a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed; and from that vantage point he beheld a vision of the Lord of glory in the midst of His people, and in the right hand of this glorious One he saw seven stars. If you are in the throne you will see the seven spirits of God as the horns and eyes of the lamb. If you are before the throne you will see the seven spirits of God as burning lamps and seven angels. As you move away from the throne you will see the seven spirits of God as seven trumpets blasting forth. But if you stand in the confinement of Patmos and in the darkness of the valley of the shadow of death, you will see the seven spirits of God simply as seven twinkling stars up in the heavens of God's Spirit!

The deep mystery is that we are looking at the same things from different vantage points. Not only are the seven spirits, the seven angels, the seven horns, the seven eyes, and the seven lamps of fire all the same reality in differing applications, but the *seven stars* are also the same! To further indicate the influence of the seven-fold Spirit and the seven-fold Word upon the churches, the Lord is pictured as holding *both* the seven spirits and the seven stars in His right hand. "These things sayeth He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand" (Rev. 2:1). "These are the words of Him who holds in His hand the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars" (Rev. 3:1, Phillips). Several other translations bear out the fact that Jesus not only *has* the seven spirits, as the King James Bible says, but that He *holds* the seven spirits and the seven stars, or it could be said that He holds the seven spirits of God, *even* the seven stars.

Many say — and I once taught it myself as a hangover from the traditional teachings of the church systems of men — that the seven stars or seven angels are the pastors or ministries of the churches. Through my lifetime I have read two or three hundred books on the book of Revelation. I have listened to scores of tapes on the book of Revelation. And I have heard quite a few sermons on the book of Revelation. Ninety-nine percent of the time they told me that the seven stars and the seven angels were the pastors of the seven churches! Well, first of all, in the days of the early church they didn't have *pastors*! They had elders and other ministries, but there was no position called "*the pastor*." Look "pastor" up in your Bible Concordance and see how many churches had a man called "*the pastor*." Not one! See how many times, when Paul and the other apostles wrote to the churches, they addressed "the pastor." Not once! Paul commanded Timothy to ordain *elders* (plural) in every city, and when the apostles addressed the ministry of the churches, or met with the ministry of the churches, they spoke with and met with *the elders*, not "*the pastor*." The position of "the pastor" didn't exist in Bible days. It just isn't in the Book! It is an invention of the carnal, man-made, Babylonish church system. So we do know that "the angel" of the church was definitely *not* "the pastor" of the church!

I am convinced by the Spirit of God that these symbols bear a deeper spiritual meaning beyond that traditional teaching. The truth is that we are dealing with inward *spiritual realities* and *powers* — not external forms, structures, and systems. The stars or angels are *heavenly dimensions* of the body of Christ, not outward or earthly aspects. This *inner power* or *spiritual essence* of a thing is seen all through the book of Revelation! As John saw things in the Spirit and by the Spirit, every person, every thing, had its angel. God proclaims and executes His will by angels (Rev. 7:2; 14:6,8,9; 15:1,6). He addresses His Christ by an angel (Rev. 14:15). Christ acts and reveals His truth by an angel (Rev. 1:1; 20:1; 22:6). The waters have an angel (Rev. 16:5). Fire has an angel (Rev. 14:18). The winds have an angel (Rev. 7:1). The abyss has an angel (Rev. 9:11). In all these instances the "angel" appears when the persons or things spoken of are represented as *coming out of themselves* and as taking their part in

speech or action. Can we not see by this that the seven stars or the seven angels of the seven churches are representations of the *seven-fold anointing* of the Spirit of God *within the church* — the Spirit of Truth!

There are seven spirits of God, and each of these seven spirits has an "angel," that is, an "anointing," a "message," or a "word." The seven stars are the seven-fold fullness of the word, the revelation, and the authority of God which comes forth out of the seven spirits of God. If we now know the Lord in greater fullness and maturity, we will realize that He has ministered to us in the power and glory of each of these seven spirits and by each of these seven stars or seven angels, or the seven-fold *fullness of His word*! And just as our Father has ministered each of these seven spirits and the fullness of His seven-fold word to us throughout our spiritual experience, so also will we receive, experience, and manifest all the fullness of these seven spirits and the seven-fold fullness of His word, revelation, and authority at the appointed hour. Then we shall know Him and reveal Him in all the glorious fullness that He is! That will be the manifestation of the sons of God, which will set creation free!

The elect, to whom has been imparted the seven stars, the seven-fold fullness of the word of the Lord, are protected from being oppressed and confused by the voices of "strangers." They receive their word directly by the impartation of the living Christ, they now hear within themselves the voice of Christ and follow Him, and are then secure in His mighty hand. The pathway before all the elect may differ in some small details, but the predominant principle remains and is active within each one — **THEY HEAR THE VOICE OF THE SON OF GOD WITHIN THEMSELVES AND BY THAT VOICE THEY LIVE.** This is the "angel" of Christ, and the angels of the churches! This is the anointing, the revelation, the message, the word, and the authority of Christ for us! The pathway to life abundant, to the glory of our full redemption and transformation, is one of following the Lord alone. As we are made partakers of the fullness of His word by the seven stars, we follow Him who alone is able to lead us to the fullness of His life.

Some man may come by promising sonship if you follow him, sit at his feet, give yourself exclusively to his ministry and movement, but the elect will not be taken in by the carnal, self-exalting promotions of such false prophets, for they have the seven stars and the seven angels and hear the clear voice of the inner Son. Christ and only Christ will lead us to the fullness of sonship — to the Christ-life necessary to break the fetters of sin, limitation, and death and release creation from its bondage to corruption. Because of the indwelling "angel" of the Christ, the elect need not that any man teach them. Oh, yes, we encourage one another, confirm the dealings of God to one another, and exhort one another, but the Teacher is within! The Prophet and High Priest are within! The Messenger is within! The Witness is within! He will faithfully lead each one of us to our appointed destiny in God. Men will draw us away and lead us astray. Men will lead us into the ditch. The only purpose in our writing to the elect of God is to encourage every man to *know the Lord for himself*, to *point every man to the living Christ*, not to draw men to ourselves or our ministry in any way.

The wonderful truth of the indwelling Christ, who is the Word, is that we need not convince anyone of the truth of our message. Those with whom you must plead, beg, coddle, coax, explain and explain, debate, and argue in order to get them to "see" the truth are not apprehended to sonship! Those who are predestinated to the adoption of sons and receive the seven spirits of God are made of *quick understanding* in the fear of the Lord! (Isa. 11:2-3). There is an *immediate inward response* to the truth! Every time God has sent a word to me, I found that I was ready to receive it. It was as though I knew it all along, but did not understand it. When the word came my heart leaped for joy, for I knew *inwardly* the voice of the Son of

God! There is an Eastern proverb that says, "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear." If you are trying to "teach" someone deeper things and they just can't "get it," then the student is not ready! They are not apprehended at this time. This is not their hour. When we proclaim the revelation of the Lord all the apprehended elect of God respond with joy and thanksgiving! Christ is speaking within His elect, and when He speaks, He declares the same message, the same word, thus confirming His truth to each one. If someone does not receive the same truth, it is because of the dealings of Christ within, maintaining the order of His kingdom so that no one invades a realm in God that is beyond their calling. The Christ within is "the witness of God." The same John who received the seven spirits of God on Patmos also wrote, "If we receive the witness of men, **the witness of God is greater**: for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son. He that is believing into the Son of God **hath the witness in himself**" (I Jn. 5:9-10). Indeed, the witness of God is within, and He is leading us to the fullness of our inheritance, the Christ Life.

The elect are in this hour hearing the voice of the Son of God, the voice of the witness within them. And in hearing His voice, these chosen ones are forsaking every vestige of the world, the flesh, and the carnal church orders, and are entering into the life of Christ. Those who hear, and continue to hear, are being changed and transformed into His image! The transition from death to life is progressive, taking place line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. However, as we look back on our pathway of spiritual transformation and growth, we are able to see amazing progress! And one day, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we shall burst forth into a full manifestation with such splendor and speed that will amaze us.

The following words from the writings of Paul Mueller are so very confirming and profitable for each of us. "To all who read these lines, regardless of your place in God, or the depth or height of your walk with Him, you will benefit from these blessed truths. To have the understanding that Christ is within you, speaking to you from within, guiding you hourly and daily in your walk with Him, revealing His truths as you progress spiritually, and conquering all within you that is of the realm of corruption, little by little, is the understanding that you too are progressing unto that realm of His life and perfection. Christ is within you to bring to naught things that are of this corruptible realm. Therefore, your todays and tomorrows will be more successfully lived, for they are being lived in the light of the indwelling Christ. O the wonder of the Christ within! He is the light that has shined into our hearts, revealing the knowledge of the glory of God, a light and glory that shall eventually inhabit our entire being, spirit, mind and body, so that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. If it were possible for us to attain to the perfection of His life, without the Lord's help, we would then take the glory. But, it is impossible for us to receive that life apart from Him! Therefore, He will receive all the glory when we are finished, fully perfected, and in His image and likeness" — end quote.

A SWORD OUT OF HIS MOUTH

"And out of His *mouth* went a *sharp two-edged sword*" (Rev. 1:16).

The sword that goes from the mouth of Christ is without doubt the sharp two-edged sword of the Word of God. His name is called THE WORD OF GOD. He is the LOGOS. "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made" (Ps. 33:6). This is He who was in the beginning. "In the beginning was the Word" (Jn. 1:1). This is the Word that was God. "And the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (Jn. 1:1). In Him was life and the life was the light of men. This is He of whom it is written, "He sent His Word, and healed them." This is the Word that is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. In this vision the

One like a son of man is represented as being armed with a sword, two-edged and sharp, passing out of His mouth, indicating that His chief force lies in the action of His lips uttering words. His force is truth — truth expressed by His mouth in words. He goes forth to battle wielding only the weapon of Truth. Christ does not come to avenge blood or slay in battle as other conquerors have done. His words smite all who hear them! As someone has said, it will smite them with conviction and bless them with conversion.

The apostle Paul says, "Take the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). When the legionnaires of Caesar girded on their belts and fastened their breastplates in position and took upon themselves their helmets and picked up their shields and swords, they were going forth conquering as a conqueror, to travel across the face of Europe for Imperial Rome, and to conquer all that came before them. How does the Christ conquer? By His WORD!

When I speak, or write, I manifest spiritual influences; and the force of these influences is proportionate to the inner power, and their effect is proportionate to the state of reception of my hearers. Words are thus seen to be the representatives of spiritual forces. The action of spirit on spirit is appreciable by the senses; but could we look behind the veil of nature when a crowd or a congregation is swayed hither and thither by the speech of one man, we should see that the influence exerted was as real and actual as muscular force. From this we learn that words are not mere sounds, but are the sheaths or cases of spiritual life, and on this ground we at once see the force of the Lord's declaration, "The words that I speak unto you, they **are spirit**, and they **are life**" (Jn. 6:63).

The Lord's speech is the manifestation and influence of His inner life poured forth upon those to whom He speaks. An incident in the life of Jesus, recorded in Luke, chapter seven, provides a picture in which may be discerned the POWER OF THE WORDS OF GOD. As He approached the gate of Nain there met Him a funeral procession, a widow's only son carried out to burial. Moved with compassion for the sorrowing woman He bade her dry her tears. The astounded crowd heard Him address the figure upon the bier: "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise!" The power of the speech of the Prince of Life pierced the realm of the dead! The lad sat up and began to speak. The tender Christ delivered him to his mother, and made effective His command, "Weep not!" Her son was not only brought back from the gates of the tomb, but was restored to her as a gift from the Lord BY THE POWER OF HIS WORD.

On another occasion Jesus had come up to Jerusalem to attend the feast. As He reached the city He came to the Pool of Bethesda and He looked into the pool. There were five porches around that pool. He passed through the porches, and at last came to a poor man, sick for thirty-eight years, who had been pushed away from the sacred spring. The man was startled as he heard the Voice. "Wilt thou be made whole?" He looked up into the face of a Man who was looking down at him, asking that strange question, "Wilt thou be made whole?" There went right down into his heart a strange sensation, his whole being vibrated like a harp when every string is touched by a master hand. "Wilt thou be made whole?" Gently he explained that he had no man to help him into the pool, but that others, when he was coming, step down before him. Then he waited with his eyes fixed upon the Man who had so strangely appealed to his will. He got ready, for the very next moment he heard the voice of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life say, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk!" And in a moment there came into his body with that Word, power; and he rose, took up that bed, rolled it up and walked home, set free from the bonds of Satan who had bound him for thirty-eight years. Oh! The power of the flaming sword of the Word of God that proceeds out of His mouth!

As the Christ of God is a many-membered body, so is the sword that goes out of His mouth. The word of God is spoken in the world today by the body of Christ on earth, and that word flows forth as the sound of many waters. There are not to be two swords — one out of the mouth of the Lord, and the other out of the mouths of His ministers. There is one sword, and it is HIS. Our quotation of scripture, our knowledge of the Bible, and our understanding of truth is not the sword of the Lord! The sword of the Lord is that word which proceedeth only out of His mouth, and out of ours as we are **made one in Him**. The sword of the Lord bespeaks of a purified people, holding forth the word of Life in the power of the Holy Spirit, and how we praise God for this company!

The Spirit of God is forming and fashioning a people, a glorious company, from whose lips flash forth that **clear word of the Lord** which shall cause the traditions and unrighteousness of man to utterly come to naught. It was said of our Lord and Elder Brother, "Never man spake like this man" (Jn. 7:46). "What thing is this, what new doctrine is this? FOR WITH AUTHORITY commandeth HE even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him!" (Mk. 1:27). "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!" (Mat. 8:27). That which was manifest in Jesus Christ shall also be seen in His many-membered-brethren-company. There are preview glimpses of this even in God's servants in the Old Testament. With what boldness did Elijah the prophet pronounce unto Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, **but according to my word**" (I Kings 17:1). God's elect has at this time received the "firstfruits" of the Spirit, the "pledge" and "down payment" of that fullness revealed in the firstborn Son of God. We have witnessed the movings and miracles of God on a certain level as the sick have been healed and wonders done in the name of Jesus. Oh, yes! I have seen these things with my own eyes, and miracles have on occasion been wrought through even my word, and the laying on of hands. But all we have experienced up to this time is but a taste, an appetizer, a small sample of the glory that is coming! When our hearts are fully prepared for it, the pure and powerful word of God shall cause His servants to ride victoriously. Naught shall be able to stand before God's army of sons bearing the two-edged sword of **HIS WORD!** Not demons, not sickness, not sorrow, not limitation, not death, not the elements, not nature, not religion, not rulers, not governments, not *anything!* How glorious shall be the advance of this mighty company!

Fear not. Have hope. Believe in hope! It is God's good pleasure to yet renew the face of the earth. Surely all these things shall come to an end. All the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness! Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more! The government of God shall be established over all the kingdoms of men! All the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ! They shall not hurt nor destroy in all His holy mountain! They shall all be without spot and blemish, loving one another, even as Jesus loved us! Sin, sickness, and death shall be swallowed up in all mankind! You, my beloved, are called to be a part of the firstfruits, even if the total harvest has not yet come. You are to wield the mighty sword of the Spirit. You are to ride forth in majesty as the expression of God's kingdom on earth. You are to utter His burning word of authority, redemptively smiting the earth with the sword of His mouth!

When man was banished from his Edenic realm of life, glory, and dominion, the record states, "So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim, and a *flaming sword* which turned every way to keep (guard) the way of the tree of life" (Gen. 3:24). Man must be excluded from the tree of life until a provision should be made by which he can approach and partake of it. Nor is Adam merely driven out of Paradise; but a guard is assigned to the place to make any approach to it impossible, just as watches are stationed in the vicinity of fortresses, army camps, and many other highly sensitive buildings and restricted locations.

The Cherubim were placed to "**keep the way** of the tree of life," and it is interesting to note that the word here for "keep" is in the Hebrew *shamar*, meaning "to guard, to protect, to defend, to hedge about as with thorns." I have heard brethren say that the Cherubim were to "keep" the way of the tree of life in the sense of keeping the way open, maintaining accessibility, but this is not the meaning of the text. The statement following makes this plain, for the Lord explained, "**Lest** he (Adam) put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever..." (Gen. 3:22). The flaming sword was a prohibition. The illustration is clear; if you would keep your neighbor's cows out of your garden you must fence it with a good thorny hedge or a few strands of barbed wire! Thus, life was denied to mankind by God, and so death came upon every man, even those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression.

Moreover, those Cherubim at the gate of Eden did not have a metal sword to ward off such as would approach, but the Hebrew denotes a movable sword, that is, a flash or a flame, such as of lightning, which is unsteady and blinds the eyes. This flame or lightning is depicted as having the form of a sword that is in continuous motion, moving to and fro. Because of the cutting, searing, flaming sword of the Cherubim, no human being made his way across that dread portal! The tree of life, yea, all that Eden represents, was guarded by the power of death, it became untouchable, divinely unapproachable. From that day Adam's life before the gate became a continuous denial of the realm from which he was excluded. It was a flight and a search upon the cursed ground of the carnal realm to find what he had lost, and then a repeated, desperate rage against the power with the flaming sword; he continually ran against it, it always stood in his way, and the sword was formidable, preventing his circumventing it. Nothing is plainer in the whole Word of God than the fact that the Cherubim with the flaming sword were not stationed at Eden's gate to point, direct, or guide men back into life, for, in that event, man surely would have *entered back in!* They were placed there for the express purpose of SHUTTING MAN OUT FROM LIFE!

The cherubim bespeak of a *realm of dominion* by a *flaming word*. The word that proceeds from the Cherubim is typified in the flaming sword. The word "sword" is found in the Bible over 400 times. That indicates the tremendous importance the Spirit of God attaches to it. There are both the positive and the negative connotations. The apostle Paul, speaking of the whole armor of God, admonishes the saints to "put on...*the sword of the Spirit, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD*" (Eph. 6:17). Then the writer to the Hebrews declares that the sword of God's word is "QUICK." Quick means **living and active — LIFE-GIVING!** "For the word of God that speaks is alive and full of power — making it active, operative, energizing and effective; it is sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12, Amplified). Ah, yes, here is the sword that conquers the death in us and GIVES LIFE! As it is written, "It is the *spirit* that quickeneth; the *flesh* profiteth nothing...for the *letter killeth*, but the *spirit giveth life!*" (Jn. 6:63; II Cor. 3:6). The sword of the Spirit is the quickening, energizing, life-giving WORD OF GOD!

I shall not hesitate to explain to you, dear ones, that there are two aspects of the word of God. Jesus Christ is *the Word* — the Logos — THE LIVING, CREATIVE WORD! But there is also that word which Paul calls "the letter." The letter is the outer hull, the record and history, the laws and commandments, the rules and regulations, the types, shadows and figures, the external ordinances, rituals, ceremonies, and feasts; the *visible form of the word* which tells us, in terms understandable by the *natural mind*, many things *about* the Living Word, Jesus Christ. As I meditated upon the Cherubim and the flaming sword in Genesis, the Spirit spoke within me, saying, "The flaming sword is a **word!**" Then in a sudden burst of divine illumination the truth of it dawned powerfully upon me. Christ is *the Word*, the *Living Word*, and IN HIM IS LIFE! But the flaming sword at the portal of Eden is *a word*, not *the Word*, not the living Word, but the *form* of the Word, that is, A WORD about THE WORD!

It should be clear to any thinking mind that the law given by Moses was a word from God. Many, many scriptures confirm that it was the very Lord Himself who spoke to Moses giving him the laws, commandments, judgments, and ordinances. Therefore it is called "the law of the Lord." Yet Paul, in speaking of this word from God, calls it "the *ministration of death*, written and engraven in stones." Then he further designates it "the *ministration of condemnation*." You, see, the law could only condemn! The only way the law could give life was if one perfectly kept it, but for every broken law there was a penalty. And no one was ever able to keep it! "For *all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Therefore the law with all of its commandments, ceremonies, rituals, sacrifices, and observances is a *dead word*, it is *form* without *essence*, *law* without *life*, *shadow* without *substance*, *chaff* without *kernel*, it is *the letter* that *killeth*! It is "a word" about "The Word" and therefore shuts men up unto the dominion of death. It should not be difficult to understand that as Jesus Christ is the Living Word of God, the sword of the Spirit that quickens, so is the Letter of the Word a deadly sword, killing rather than quickening. Ah, two words and two swords! The flaming sword of the Cherubim is the word of the law which is a ministration of condemnation and death. It keeps men out of Eden, away from the tree of life! But the sword out of the mouth of God's Christ is a living sword that excelleth in glory as the ministration of Life! Under the anointing a brother said, "The creative power will be invested in the sons of God and we will step out of infinity with eternity to work with the creative word in our mouths."

The old Saracen warriors were famous for the swords they carried. A few of these old swords still exist, among them the famous Damascus blades. These blades are said to be made of finely woven steel wires fused together in a secret process by a charcoal of fire. The amazing thing about these swords is that they were so pliable the sword tip could be doubled back to the hilt without breaking. They were so strong that they could pierce any medieval armor. Their two edges were so sharp that they could halve a silk handkerchief in mid-air. The sword of the Spirit, which is the *living Word* of God, is fused of many threads of truth and reality. By the secret processes of spiritual power, these threads are being gathered into one mighty weapon of truth — the many-membered Christ of God! This is a sword that never wears out! Its edge is never blunted! On its blade no rust ever yet has gathered! It cuts to heal! It smites to save! It kills to make alive! It is *the sword of the Spirit*. Now is the time when it calls for the strong hands and brave hearts of God's sons to wield it!

It reminds me of a little story I once heard about some Quaker boys who were going on a picnic. They were going up a mountain with their basket filled with apples and other good things. Some mean boys were harassing them, but they quietly went on their way until they had passed them; then they threw their apples down at them. At first the boys thought they were stones. When they saw the red apples they changed their minds, picked them up and ate them. That is the way of the sons of God! The sons of God will win because their weapons are so good! It is the bread of Life! While we go forth fighting sin, flesh, sickness, sorrow and death, we will give the world something to eat, something to live on, something to change them from corruptible to incorruptible. Hallelujah!

Chapter 27

One Like Unto A Son Of Man

continued

"And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned I saw...one like unto a son of man...and His *countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength*" (Rev. 1:16).

When Jesus Christ, the *sign son*, was transfigured on the mount before the wondering eyes of His disciples, we are told that "His face did shine as the sun, and His garments became white as the light." In the Gospel of Mark we are told that "His garments became glistening," which, in the Greek, means, "to lighten forth, flash forth like lightning." Within that form of man dwelt glory ineffable! As He prayed upon the mount of Transfiguration, He opened a little way the robe of humanity with which He had covered Himself when He came down to earth, and His majesty and glory burst forth! The truth is that this was a "breaking forth" of the glory of the incorruptible life of God flowing through the veins of Christ's perfect humanity! With this wonderful thought in our minds let us with reverence consider the words of the apostle John wherein he wrote, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In Him was **life**; and the **life** was the **light of men**. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn. 1:1,4,14). "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the **light of life**" (Jn. 8:12).

In one of George Hawtin's writings he shared this beautiful thought: "You have heard of the light of a candle. You have heard of the light of the stars. You have heard of the light of the moon. You have heard of the light of the sun. But this is the light of *life*! When men speak of the light of the sun, we understand. When they speak of the light of the moon, we understand. May we not now understand the truth of Christ's words: **the light of life?**" The glory of the transfiguration was the momentary unveiling of the glorious heavenly light of Christ's life. It was in truth the manifestation of the light of life promised by our Lord, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the *light of life*" (Jn. 8:12). It shone from His face. It glistened from His garments. It surrounded Him like a halo. It emanated like a blazing sun. His eyes were like lamps of fire — the light that swallows up all darkness and death of the carnal realm. There on the mount of Transfiguration His disciples beheld Him in the glory of the light of His incorruptible life. This was resurrection life, kingdom life, sonship life, immortal life! And, beloved, this beautiful picture tells us what **our incorruptible bodies will be** — the glistening light of life that Christ Himself actually is!

I remember following a guide deep down a winding path into the Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico. We entered a kind of underground amphitheater and were asked to sit down. Then all the lights were turned off, and we were surrounded by a darkness thicker than any I have ever experienced. No matter how long we waited, no tiny ray of light made its way down to where we were. The darkness was so thick that we could almost feel it. No one moved. Since that moment I have often thought about what it means that "God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all." The human situation, apart from God, is much like being deep in a cavern with

the lights off. There's no way to know which way to go, what to do, or how to get where we belong. Then God comes in, in the power of His Spirit and by the glory of Jesus Christ, and it's as if the lights go on and we can see! We find our way by following His way. We learn who we are, who our Father is, and all we need is wondrously discovered in the *light* of His countenance! In the glory of Jesus God shows us not only where we are but also how to get to our ultimate destiny!

The Roman emperor Trajan said to one of the believers in the true God, "I understand that you believe that your God is everywhere. And He dwells among the nations. I should very much like to see Him." To which this believer responded, "I am afraid, sire, that no mortal eye can look upon His glory and that person live, for He is too glorious for the eye to behold." "Nevertheless," said the emperor, "I am your king and I command you that you show me your God." "Very well, sire, but before I do, I think it best that you look upon one of His ambassadors before you attempt to look Him in the face." And with that, he led the emperor Trajan outdoors on a bright and dazzling midday. He bade him to look up into the sun shining in the heavens. The emperor exclaimed, "I cannot, for the light dazzles my eyes!" The believer said, "If you cannot look upon one of His ambassadors that carries the message of His creation to the world each day, then how shall you look into the face of God, Himself?"

Spiritual bodies are represented as *shining* as the lightning. The heavenly messenger who came to roll back the stone from the door of the sepulcher where Jesus had been lain was described thus: "His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow" (Mat. 28:3). We have already mentioned the transfiguration of Jesus upon the dizzy heights of mount Hermon where "His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light" (Mat. 17:2). When Saul of Tarsus met this same Jesus following His resurrection and glorification, the shining was so bright that he fell from his horse and his sight was destroyed as by a blazing sun; and yet "the men that journeyed with him saw no man." And it is written, "Who maketh His messengers spirits, and His ministers a *flame of fire*" (Heb. 1:7). Moses walked with his flock along the backside of the wind-swept desert when "the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a *flame of fire* out of the midst of the bush" (Ex. 3:2). And while shepherds tended their flocks one starlit night just outside Bethlehem, suddenly, "the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the *glory* of the Lord *shone* round about them: and they were sore afraid" (Lk. 2:9).

These were one and all appearances of spiritual beings from the spiritual realm. It is a wonderful fact that the elect sons of God are destined to rule and reign with Christ in the kingdom out of that higher sphere. Any man who thinks the sons of God will be flying around on airplanes and renting great auditoriums and stadiums for massive crusades has missed the point of sonship altogether! The realm of *manifest sonship* is a presently **unexplored and unknown realm of life** so far as we are concerned. If you want to know the full glory of manifest sonship look not at Jesus of Nazareth, but behold the Christ who came out of the tomb in the power of resurrection! The natural mind cannot *think itself* into such a realm of life as this by any kind of confession, positive thinking, or self-induced raised consciousness! It is only by the inspiration of the Spirit of God that we ever get a glimpse of a realm so transcendent and glorious. No man knows the things of God, but the Spirit of God does, and as God wills we are given understanding.

John saw the manifestation of this *glory of sonship* on the holy mount with Jesus, and again on the isle of Patmos when in Spirit he beheld the splendor of this One like a son of man whose countenance was as the sun shining in its strength. Today by the Spirit of revelation the curtain is beginning to open and some are seeing that which lies before us to be apprehended, praise

His wonderful name! It follows of necessity that man's being, because it is unsuited to the spiritual world, must be changed by the power of God. A bird would need a mighty change to be able to live under water, or a fish to live in the air; but the Lord promises a much more striking change to those who are predestinated to be manifested as the sons of God with power! "We shall not all sleep, but we *shall all be changed* in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." "Who will transform and fashion anew the body of our humiliation to conform to and be like the *body of His glory and majesty*, by exerting the power which enables Him even to subject everything to Himself" (Phil. 3:21, Amplified).

In a starless night all is black; but from the moment that the dawn has kindled its first beacon-light of vivid crimson on the ice-clad mountain peak, it fires — summit after summit — the splendor of the hills, and flows down their sides in rivers of molten gold. The streams flash into silver; the sea burns beneath the flood of radiance; the fields burst into color; the forest leaves and dewy flowers gleam with millions of diamonds; the whole world thrills and burns with luster and life beneath the brilliance of the noonday sun. Like that is the radiance of the Son of man whose countenance is as the sun shining in its strength! All things are revealed in the light of His countenance, which is the glory of God. God is light; He is that light, bodiless and imperceptible, from whose inexhaustible fountain our earthly light is but a faint spark, or a dim shadow.

Thus, in the prophetic scriptures the Lord is symbolized by the sun. The natural sun is the brightest luminary in the natural heavens. His countenance as the sun helps us to interpret the meaning of the spiritual sun. The light which Christ is, is the sun of God's spiritual solar system. "For the Lord God is a *sun* and a shield" (Ps. 84:11). The twenty-seventh Psalm begins with this word, "The Lord is *my light*." This phrase is found frequently in the Psalms, as for instance in Psalm 36:9, "For with Thee is the fountain of life; in Thy light shall we see light." And again, "O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles" (Ps. 43:3). The wonderful significance of this One whose face shines as the noonday sun is beautifully expressed by the Psalmist, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, **in the light of Thy countenance**" (Ps. 89:15). Light is the very substance of God, it is the essence of His own person, being, and nature. It is embodied in Him. Light originates, emanates, and radiates from our heavenly Father! From the brightest star in the universe to the tail of the tiniest firefly — all light comes from God!

The glorious Son of God is the One in whom the unapproachable and utterly incomprehensible glory of God is made manifest! As we only know the sun by the light that shines from it, so is God's Christ the *outshining*, the revelation of God's glory! As the light that shines from the sun is one nature with it, so every son of God is of one nature with the Father! As the light that shines from the sun is one substance with it, so the sons of God are the very substance of God in the earth! Friends, Christ is the light, the light is within; it must break through, it must *arise* and *shine*, it must have pre-eminence in our hearts. The glory of God is the emanation or radiation of His nature, and as we are filled with His glory we radiate His nature to creation. This is the real purpose of our calling! The Christ within, not the doctrine of sonship, not the truth of reconciliation, not the word of the kingdom, not another man's revelation, not another man's faith, but your own INDWELLING LIGHT enables you to manifest as the One in the midst of the candlesticks whose countenance is as the sun shining in its strength! Other people can follow the wandering stars and the falling stars, vainly chasing after the illusive light within them, but, praise God, there is a people in whom the God of light is being formed and birthed, partakers of His divine nature, conformed to His image, a new life found within, even the *light of life*. As the light of God increases in the elect in this hour, we are being brought to the place

where all our need is fully met by the INNER SUFFICIENCY of the indwelling Spirit, not from that which comes from without.

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and *His glory shall be seen upon thee*" (Isa. 60:1-2). There is a people UPON WHOM OUR GOD IS ARISING! He isn't going to arise in the skies of the physical heavens, as the church-world ignorantly expects, but *upon His people*. His glory will not be seen streaking across the physical heavens, but *upon His people*. Darkness does cover the earth, and gross darkness the people, but in spite of the abounding desolations of wickedness and trouble, we live in the most glorious hour of all time for the people of God! The prophetic voice of the Lord is in the earth proclaiming with a great voice as of a trumpet that God is preparing His king-priests for the grand task of bringing reconciliation, restoration, and transformation to the whole fallen world order. Nothing that man has done has so desolated the world that it is beyond hope! One glorious Son of God came into a world of pagan darkness and ruthless power and by the Spirit of His Life conquered all the gods of the pagans and altered the course of world history. That divine seed that fell into this earth has sprung forth in the hearts of millions and is now ready to bring forth its harvest — *many sons* brought to His glory! For two thousand years the world has seen the candlesticks; now is the time for them to see **the One in the midst of the candlesticks whose countenance is as the sun shining in its strength!**

In the very midst of all this darkness upon the land and gross darkness upon the people, God is arising upon His chosen ones. He is rising in my heart! How joyful we are that God, who is the Light, gets right down where the darkness is. He does not come from afar to dispel the night, for "God...commanded the light to shine **out of darkness**" (II Cor. 4:6). First, God has met us right where we are. Some of us have been in some pretty dark places in our lives! But God commanded the light to shine out of our darkness, and the dawning of God's day within us has blazoned our sky and made us a body of light to usher in a new day for all creation. The brightness of our rising brings the dawning of the new day! As we shed His glory abroad, we are lights in humanity's sky — so let no shadow of self keep your light from shining, but fill the earth with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ!

We are appointed to shine as the sun. We have now come to mount Zion, to the city of the living God as a shining scene of great splendor and brightness and dazzling beauty. It is not our desire to merely see the light, or tell of it, or paint it, or live in it — as fine as all that is. We must BECOME THE LIGHT. "YE ARE the light of the world." "YE ARE light in the Lord." How unworthy and unprepared for such a calling we feel some times! But, precious friend of mine, you may be poor, weak, unknown, unheralded, unlettered, despised and rejected of men; but if, through grace, there is a link connecting you to that "One in the midst of the candlesticks," then you are, in very deed, a son of the day, and destined, in Father's purpose and time, to shine in that celestial sphere, that region of glory, of which God's Christ will be the central sun forevermore. This is not your own doing. It is the result of the counsel and operation of God Himself who has given you the light of life, joy and peace, triumph and glory, in Jesus Christ.

Yet, should you be a total stranger to the hallowed action and influence of divine light, if your eyes have not been opened to behold any beauty in the face of the Son of God, and no attraction to that place in Him in the midst of the candlesticks, then, though you possessed all the wealth of the nations, though you had the power of a king, though you had all the learning of an Einstein, though you were enriched with all the treasures of human philosophy, though you had drunk in with avidity all the streams of human science, though your name were adorned with all the learned titles which the schools and universities of this world could

bestow, though you were piously devoted to the grandest creeds, traditions, rituals, ceremonies, and service of the revered religious systems of earth, yet you are A SON OF THE NIGHT, A CHILD OF DARKNESS; and are just as dark, just as void, just as formless and empty, just as cold and dead as was the desolate earth and the dark abyss, from which you came, before that memorable day in which God first said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

We must first see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shining in our hearts and then it will be radiating forth to enlighten the earth. Isaiah said of the desolation of the earth, "And they shall see the glory of the Lord." Oh, yes! ALL shall see the glory of the Lord as it was upon the countenance of Moses, as it radiated forth from the whole being of Jesus Christ, as it shone in the face of Stephen. And the glory of the latter house must be greater than the former! There must be a sense that the glory of the Lord is filling His temple. The glory of the Lord so filling the temple that the priests will not be able to stand and minister. All that is of ourselves, all that is common and ordinary, all that is done by rote must be hushed and fall down in prostration before the very presence of the glory of God, because it is from underneath the threshold of the house that the living waters flow out, from the deepest dimensions of our lives. Out of that low place and out of the temple and the tabernacle of our God there will be that expression and that shining forth of the brightness of the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God. The beautiful expression of His life, the marvelous operation of His spirit, the authority and glory of His power — THE EXCELLENCY OF OUR GOD!

We were all born into a world of darkness and death. Christ is appearing within us as Light to begin to dispel the darkness and give us hope. His light within us is making it possible for us to trust our Father to bring us to a *complete transformation*. The darkness of this world becomes light all around us, for Christ, the source of all light, is shining brighter and brighter within us to dispel the darkness of the carnal human realm. His light within us is manifested as a greater revelation of the truth, by increasing His faith within us, by raising up His nature of peace, joy, love, confidence, power and victory in all the happenings of our lives. We now see things in the world more positively, for we know our Father *is in control*. We have learned this experientially, by His great faithfulness in our own experiences, testings, and circumstances. We now see all men in a different light by the true spirit of unconditional love, mercy, grace, reconciliation, and restoration. This is all the LIGHT OF CHRIST! The more positive outlook we now have is not due to a new teaching, a new mindset, a new form of meditation, psychology, hypnotism, mind control, or mental imaging. Those are all *soulish* things! The kingdom of God, the nature of God, and the glory of Christ does not come by *soul power*! But it is the direct result of a greater degree of the Light of Christ within us, by the Spirit. IT IS THE LORD!

The following words by George Wylie are very precious and meaningful. "I often wondered how it could be that God was omnipresent; that He could be everywhere at once, as the Psalmist said, "Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me" (Ps. 139:7-10). God can be everywhere, and fill the universe with Himself because the glory of God is the **radiation** of His being into the whole cosmos. Every living being has an "aura" or "emanation" of its life. This "aura" or "emanation" is identical with and corresponds to our nature, and is our nature and personality radiating from us into our surroundings, and it affects everything around us. With the people of God it is a radiation that flows from our spirits, and the stronger our spirits are the greater the radiation.

"God is likened to a **sun**, so that bright orb that shines out there in space is a type of God. Let us look at this for a minute. Though the sun is more than ninety million miles away in space, it radiates light, heat, energy, and life to everything on the earth. The nature of the sun is that of light, heat, and energy, and it radiates itself into all our solar system. Though it is over ninety millions miles away from us, if it weren't for our atmosphere, the light and heat would burn everything to a crisp in a matter of minutes. How much farther its radiation goes, I have no idea, but it could travel an inestimable distance into space. The sun supplies us with light, heat, energy, and life. Without it no life could exist on this planet. The sun is the source of all this! God is a **sun**, and what the sun is to this earth, God is to the universe! HE is the life, light, and energy that pervades and radiates through the universe, supporting and sustaining all creation. Just as our sun radiates into our solar system, and supports and sustains natural life on this planet, so God radiates Himself into the entire universe to support and uphold all things.

"The glory of God is the radiation or emanation of His nature and power, and this glory surrounds Him. As we become partakers of the divine nature, we also radiate the glory of His nature! This is the real purpose of our calling! We receive His glory when we are made partakers of His divine nature, and there is no other way by which we can enter into the glory of the Lord. When the scripture says that God is bringing many sons *to glory*, this is not some geographical location He is going to take His sons to, but a *realm in the divine spirit* that belongs to eternity. God brings us *to glory* by recreating Himself within us, giving us His nature, reproducing in us His image and likeness, filling us with His fullness, until the light of the glory of that divine nature radiates from us to give light and life to all creation. As the Son is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person, when we are conformed to the image of the Son, then we also become the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person! We are being changed into heavenly, spiritual, life-giving beings!" — end quote.

"His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength" (Rev. 1:16). **The countenance is the face.** The face stands spiritually for the inward nature for the face is the revealer of one's inmost being. Our faces reveal much about us — often more than we wish! The beauty of a person is upon their *countenance*, for from the eyes, the lips, the expression, the light of the inner man shines through and thus he is known as a man of light or of darkness. Every emotion and desire sheds expression upon the countenance. The hidden man of the heart finds language in a look. A furtive glance, a blushing cheek, a pensive line, a nervous lip, a shining smile, a troubled eye or a beaming eye will reveal what speech would conceal. There are faces that betray weakness and instability. There are faces that reveal sin and dissipation. Other faces betoken determination, firmness, strength, confidence, contentment, and character. The world has no portrait of the lowly Nazarene who walked the shore of Galilee. But the power of the Spirit of that Man within us reveals the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ!

There is a deep mystery to the body of Christ, and even a deeper mystery to the glorious Head of that body. Robert Wise reported in one of his books an amazing incident in the life of Cecil Hanson. Incredibly, in 1940 Cecil was pronounced clinically dead for approximately 20 to 30 minutes. During those lost minutes he entered one of those extraordinary adventures of leaving his body and this world behind. During this period of being dead he discovered a number of things that defy the imagination. Ultimately he felt God directing him to return to this life and to rear his small son, Van. He came back to dedicate his life to raising the boy who would otherwise have been orphaned. Van's mother had died in childbirth and Cecil had not gotten over the blow. During those missing minutes his hostilities disappeared and he was ready to pour himself into the little lad. Ultimately, Van grew to be an outstanding person.

Today he is an oral surgeon and countless lives have been touched by his faith as well as his medical skill.

And what happened to change Cecil's life so dramatically? During that period of "twilight" he encountered Jesus in person. In those moments he looked fully into the face of the risen Christ and beheld Him in all of His glory. It is Cecil's description of His face that embodies a deep mystery. He saw the face of Jesus as a marvelous mosaic made up of hundreds of small facets. Each piece added a shade or line to the total picture. So in looking into this *composite face he could see the countenance of Christ!* But as he looked he could see hundreds of parts. The startling realization was that the mosaic pieces were not tile, metal, or glass. Each small section was a clear, distinct cameo of *someone's face!* As Cecil stared fixedly at the face there was a pulsating fluctuation between the total face and the cameo sections. One minute he could see the Face and then in the next he was aware of hundreds of faces! In awe Cecil began to recognize what was revealed in each of those cameos. They were all people he knew! Moreover, they were all people who had loved him and shown the compassion, kindness, and goodness of Christ to him during his life. Overwhelmed in worship and amazement, Cecil bowed before the risen Lord. In the lingering moments of that experience, anxieties, fears, and doubts were healed. When Cecil "returned" to start his life again, the many-faceted face of Jesus guided him through the years ahead.

I FELL AT HIS FEET AS DEAD

"And when I saw Him, I *fell at His feet as dead...*" (Rev. 1:17).

When Moses desired the vision of the glory of God, he was warned that no man could see God's face and live. No man can stand in the full blaze of divine glory! The glare of the eastern sun on desert sands has dazed men's eyes; the fierce, gleaming radiance of sunlight on the snow-clad hills has blinded human sight, and none can, with the naked eye, behold the sun in the sky. How, then, can our mortal vision turn its gaze upon the glory that is ineffable? When John on Patmos saw the glory of the Son of man the glory so overpowered him that he felt like a man whose very life was taken and there was no strength in him.

We might think that John would have leaped and danced and shouted for joy in the presence of the revelation of the glory and fullness of Christ. But this blessed saint of God, who had lived near to the heart of Christ while they walked together on earth, this man, who with wonder had seen the Galilean control the very elements, who once was awed by the transfiguration and struck dumb by the glory of Christ's resurrection, this man who had experienced the blazing glory of Pentecost, now falls as a dead man as he beholds this Christ not as He was *at first*, but as He is *at last*. Truly John was *changed* from glory to more excellent glory by beholding the glory of God's Christ! My prayer is that all who read these lines may clearly see that beholding His glory causes the *old you* to shrink and wither away and die while the new man, the Christ man in the image of God, matures and grows up into His likeness. As the glory of the revelation of Jesus Christ shines upon us, things that belong to the old Adamic creation pass away like the fall leaves and, behold, new things are born.

Saul of Tarsus many years earlier was fulfilling his commission of slaughter when he was arrested by the voice and vision of Christ on the Damascus road, and the man, in the dazzling light brighter than the noonday sun, fell to the ground, blinded by the glory. Ezekiel did not see the Lord; he did not see even the glory of the Lord. He saw only "the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord." Ezekiel caught just a glimpse of a reflection of divine radiance, but that was enough to floor him. He fell down in awe!

"Behold, I am vile," said one man in the Bible. This was not said by Cain in a remorseful moment after his murder of Abel, nor by Judas after he had betrayed the Lord into the hands of His enemies; instead, it was the utterance of one of whom God said, "There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil" (Job. 1:8). Was Job's language the result of extreme depression, induced by his terrible afflictions? Was it when he first received the news of his terrible calamities? Not at all! For then he exclaimed, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord!" Was it when his friends reasoned with him and reproved him? No, for then he vindicated himself and argued of his uprightness. Let us notice when it was that Job uttered the words, "I am vile!" IT WAS WHEN THE LORD APPEARED TO HIM AND GAVE HIM A STARTLING REVELATION OF HIS OWN WONDROUS PERFECTIONS! It was when he stood in the all-penetrating light of God's *holy glory* and was made to realize something of His surpassing majesty.

Ah, when a soul is truly brought into the presence of the living God, boasting ceases, our own righteousness is turned to corruption, and we cry with the prophet, "Woe is me! For I am undone!" When God makes to the soul a personal revelation of HIS GLORY, that individual is effectually convinced of his own wretchedness. The more we are given to discern the ineffable glory of the Lord, the more will our self-worth wither. It is in God's light, and in that only, that "we see light" (Ps. 36:9). When He shines into our understandings and hearts, and brings to light "the hidden things of darkness," we perceive the utter corruption of our humanity, and are abominable in our own eyes. Thank God for it! For when we stand in the blazing light of Him who is a consuming fire the nature of the Adamic man of sin is slain *by the breath of His mouth!*

John "falling as one dead" before the majesty of God's Christ has nothing to do with the silly, carnal experience of being "slain in the spirit" as practiced by many in the Pentecostal and Charismatic realms today. Now don't get me wrong — there *is* a genuine experience of actually falling under the power of the Holy Spirit! Elaine Cook printed a testimony from our long-time friend, Rita Kahr, with an added comment by Elaine which I deem important to share here, for it reflects my own observation and concern through many years of walking in the Spirit. Rita says:

"I was in a group where people were being prayed for and were falling over, 'slain in the spirit.' I wasn't sure if this was **real** or not, so I *resisted* the one who was putting some pressure on my head and I stood my ground when everyone else had fallen over. The question I put to those who had fallen down was, 'Did anything happen to you? Did the Lord speak any thing to you, or show you anything?' Their reply was, 'No.' It was plain to see that they counted it a thrill to have been knocked over by the Lord. On another occasion, a brother in my home was just lightly touching the people and they were falling over. Before I knew what had happened, he had touched me and I had fallen too. *I didn't feel the Lord, nor did I feel holy!* I tried to *pretend* that something had happened. I talked to others later and they seemed happy just to have had this experience, but I protested that *God is purposeful* and would not do anything unless it was *for a purpose*. I began seeking the Lord, asking, 'Is this *real*? Is your purpose just to give us a *thrill*?' Months later, I had an experience of *truly being slain in the spirit*. I found that there is a *real*, and there is a *counterfeit of the real*! God showed me that **He is purposeful in all that He does** and that we are to **test the spirits and prove all things.**"

Elaine added the following comment: "Rita shared this with us when we met her on our trip. It was refreshing to meet someone who *questioned* the validity of this particular manifestation. I too, have had those who exerted pressure upon my head to push me down. Like Rita, I felt there must be some *purpose* to it and I would resist any man trying to *fake* the power of God. A
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certain TV evangelist who was busily trying to make a name for himself would copy a certain famous evangelist by throwing his arm out and causing the people to fall down. It *looked like* the mighty power of God! But the Holy Spirit rebuked him with these words: **'You are prostituting the gift of God.'** This solemn warning shook him to the core and was the means of the Lord bringing him out of that place of *trying to be 'Mister Big'* to the place where he now sees the message of sonship and understands that *the soul life must be laid down*" — end quote.

We have to get beyond dead doctrines, religious traditions, and soulical experiences. We have to see the living Christ, for He is the Word of God, the Truth of God, and the Reality of God. It will take more than sermons on sonship and exhortations on perfection to make us perfect sons in God's image! We must SEE HIM to be changed into His likeness! We must see Him as *He is*. It is going to take more than singing choruses, clapping hands, shouting Amens and Hallelujahs, and preaching to one another about the deep mysteries of God to bring us to the knowledge of God. We shall have to MEET HIM as Thomas and Paul and John met Him! We must see Him in the Spirit and by the Spirit, we must hear His voice speaking to us out of the deepest recesses of our spirits. We must commune with Him in the glory of God that radiates from the face of Jesus Christ. Sonship can only come by personal association with Christ Himself! I am willing to stake all that I have and all that I am on this one bold assertion: No man or woman can ever be changed into the image of God or put on incorruptibility and immortality until he has cast off the yoke of the carnal mind and the bondages of human tradition and religion and has MET THE FIRSTBORN SON PERSONALLY, COMMUNED WITH HIM INTIMATELY, and continued to walk in the light and glory of what he sees.

The promise of this vision assures us of the perfecting of the powers of our spiritual life. When Moses desired the vision of the glory of God, he was warned that no man can see God and live. No man can stand in the full blaze of divine glory until he himself corresponds in nature to that glory! When John on Patmos saw the glory of God's Christ he **fell as dead** in the overwhelming presence. Our nature is not constituted to bear the blaze of uncreated light. But this restricted nature is not for ever! For the burning radiance of His holy light shining upon us releases us as we are exposed to it from the obstructiveness of our own impaired senses, and then with purged heart, renewed mind, and quickened life we shall perceive Him.

George Hawtin penned some beautiful words along this line which express the real truth of it. "I have often thought," he wrote, "of the wonderful words *no man can SEE GOD AND LIVE*. Oh, how often we have quoted that wonderful passage as proof that we may not hope to see His face. Will you allow me to reverently say something else? Though it is true that no man can see God and live, it is equally true that no man can see God and die. Men do not die in God's presence, neither do they live AS THEY USED TO LIVE, but they are TRANSFORMED. Hallelujah! They are changed; they are transfigured; they come into THAT SAME IMAGE of Him who created them. In whatever measure God reveals Himself to man, to that same measure you are changed and nothing can avoid that conclusion."

I know why some folks can't die to flesh — when you see HIM, you die. I know why some preachers preach themselves instead of the Lord Jesus, why they can't preach without reminding the audience of what good preachers they are, how great their word is, how chosen of God they are, how blessed the people are to have *their ministry*, why they promote themselves and seek to gain a following and build a kingdom around themselves — if ever they see HIM, *self* will fall at His feet as dead! Truly we are *changed by beholding the glory of the Lord*, as the apostle said. You won't see the Christ until you start looking for Him, and you won't find Him until you go where He is revealed. He is fully, totally revealed in His glory in the

realm of the Spirit! He is revealed in the midst of the golden candlesticks, in the midst of *spirits* that have been quickened by His Spirit and set on fire from that fire *which He is*.

HE LAID HIS HAND UPON ME

"And when I saw Him I fell at His feet as dead. And He *laid His right hand upon me*, saying unto me, Fear not..." (Rev. 1:17).

I do not find it humiliating to fall down before Him. Paul fell off that swift, majestic horse into the dust on the Damascus road, and the Lord Jesus dealt with him. Then do you notice that He said to him, "But rise and stand on thy feet." Only the glorious Christ of God has ever lifted a man out of the dust of the carnal mind and the fleshly nature and put him on his feet in the light that cannot be approached unto. John on Patmos saw the glorious Son of man and said, "I fell at His feet as dead." Then he continued, "And He laid His right hand upon me." And in that blessed moment John arose to behold in spirit glorious things never known by man.

The scriptures portray the *right hand* of God as the hand of strength, power, salvation, blessing, and anointing. The implication is that the right hand of God is the *good hand* of God doing wondrous things! The Psalmist confirms this when he says, "In Thy presence is fullness of joy, at Thy *right hand are pleasures* for evermore" (Ps. 16:11). Again, "The voice of *rejoicing and salvation* in the tabernacles of the righteous: the *right hand* of the Lord doeth valiantly. The *right hand* of the Lord is exalted" (Ps. 118:15-16). To this the prophet Isaiah adds his inspired testimony: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will *strengthen* thee; yea, I will *help* thee; yea, I will *uphold* thee with the *right hand* of my righteousness" (Isa. 41:10). In the Old Testament, whenever God is portrayed as manifesting His power, it is done so with His right hand or arm. "Thy *right hand*, O Lord, is become glorious in power" (Ex. 15:6). "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for He hath done marvelous things: His *right hand*, and His holy arm, hath gotten Him the victory" (Ps. 98:1). "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, Thou wilt revive me; Thou shalt stretch forth Thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and Thy *right hand* shall save me" (Ps. 138:7). Numerous other Psalms express the same thought. In the New Testament, after His resurrection, Jesus was by the *right hand* of God exalted, and made to sit at His *right hand* (Acts 2:33-34; Heb. 1:3,13).

This speaks of Jesus Christ, the firstborn Son, our Forerunner. He is exalted to the *right hand* of God! That is therefore the calling of every son of God! He is the **positive force** of God in the universe "who is gone into heaven (spiritual realm of government) and is on the *right hand* of God; angels and authorities and powers *being made subject unto Him*" (1 Pet. 3:22). There is no greater prize than *oneness with Christ*. The inspired apostle exhorted the saints in Colosse, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the *right hand* of God" (Col. 3:1). The message is clear — the elect of God are to SEEK THE THINGS OF CHRIST AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. Seek the things of the *right hand*! What a word is that! There are your orders, dear child of God who treasures the hope of sonship. People tell us that we are too concerned with *deep things* and with *high things*. Nothing could be higher than the realm of God's right hand! **Seek it! Seek it! Seek it!** That is the word of the Lord to every one who is conscious of being risen with Christ. *Seek* to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might! *Seek* the anointing of His power! *Seek* to rule and reign with Christ! *Seek* to be victorious in all things! *Seek* to be a blessing to creation! *Seek* to become His salvation unto all the ends of the earth! *Seek* to rule by His love! *Seek* to do wondrous things in His name! *Seek* to reconcile and restore all things and all men to God! *That* is what it means to **seek the things of Christ at the right hand of God!** Some of the greatest truths of

the word of God are the ones that lie hidden like pearls of great price, unnoticed by the careless but available to all who will search prayerfully and diligently in the depths of God.

John fell at the feet of Christ as a dead man. Then the Lord laid His *right hand* upon John! The deep mystery here concerns what was *in* the right hand of Christ that was laid upon John. Christ held in His right hand *seven stars*! I want you to see the picture. John was in the earth realm on the isle of Patmos. He felt like we feel. He was weak, as we are weak. He was discouraged, as we are sometimes discouraged. He was limited, as we are limited. He was in tribulation! He was shut up, hedged in, compassed about by infirmities. But in the spirit and by the spirit He saw One, and he saw in His right hand, in the hand of authority and dominion and power, seven stars, and they were the seven angels of the seven churches which are also the *seven spirits of God*! He fell as dead. What happened in that blessed moment when *John died*? The King of glory came and laid His right hand upon him!

Do you know what the laying on of hands is for? *Impartation*! The laying on of hands is presented in scripture as the indication of the *transferal* or *bestowal* of the power and authority of both God and men. It was used as a means of setting apart men to particular offices or ministries. Through the laying on of hands there was the impartation of virtue and anointing to enable one to fulfill that office or ministry unto which he was called and separated. I remember well when hands were laid upon me in the Latter Rain outpouring. In those days of God's moving we had what was called "confirmation services." The confirmation service was rooted in the scripture (along with others) which says that the apostles went from city to city "confirming the souls of the disciples" (Acts 14:21-23). The teaching was that every child of God should be *confirmed* in the body of Christ by prophecy with the laying on of hands. The presbytery would come and lay hands on the saints as the Spirit directed, and by prophecy with the laying on of hands one's calling and ministry would be revealed, gifts of the Spirit would be imparted, and each one would be established or set in his place in the body of Christ.

I will never forget when hands were laid on me in Toledo, Ohio. One of the first words to come out of the mouths of the prophets was, "Yea, thou shalt be a teacher of the kingdom of God!" I didn't even know what the kingdom of God was! I had not the foggiest idea what the kingdom of God was about. But I do believe in confirmation! I do believe in impartation! And I cannot deny that the spirit of the word of the kingdom of God was that day *imparted* into my life by prophecy and the laying on of hands! It was only shortly thereafter that a mighty quickening came upon me and the revelation of the kingdom of God burst forth in power within my spirit, and I began to proclaim it from coast to coast and from nation to nation. On that day of my confirmation, another word that was spoken by the prophets was, "...and yea, thou shalt have the gift of prophecy!" When the prophets were all finished they stepped back and one said, "Brother Eby, the Lord has said that He gives you the gift of prophecy — now *prophecy*!" I was astonished! But I opened my mouth and the first prophecy ever to pass through my lips began to pour out! *That*, my friend, is *impartation*! And all through the Bible impartation was accomplished by the laying on of hands. Men have received strength to be healed by the laying on of hands. Multitudes have received the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. Wonderful gifts of the Spirit have been imparted to members of the body of Christ through the laying on of hands. Bishops, elders, deacons, and other ministries have been separated unto God and equipped with a special anointing by the laying on of hands. The laying on of hands by the Spirit brings impartation of the life and power of God.

The question follows — when Jesus put His right hand upon John that day so long ago, *what happened to the seven stars in His hand*? HE PUT THEM INTO JOHN! Can we not see that the King of glory *imparted* to John the seven spirits of God! He laid that hand, that held the

stars, on John, and there was a mighty transformation! From that moment forward John began to see new and glorious things, he began to *experience* fresh and wonderful things. The old cocoon of his natural life cracked. A door stood open in heaven. John was caught up into a higher realm! What he saw was the revelation, the unveiling, the uncovering of Jesus Christ!

Christ held in His mighty hand the seven stars, the seven-fold word of God, the full revelation and power of that word which originates out of the seven spirits of God, and He lays this hand upon John and imparts the vision, authority, and power of that spirit-word to John, who is the symbol of every overcomer in Christ! We are *participators* in this divine drama! The seven stars, which are the seven angels, which are the seven spirits, which contain the seven-fold fullness of divine revelation and truth, were given to John that *by them* he would write to the seven churches! The Lord Jesus put this high and holy knowledge of the purposes of God, this heavenly illumination of His will and ways, this divine anointing of His spirit of wisdom and power, into John. He laid it on his mind, impregnated it into his spirit, and only then did He give the charge to John: "Write the things which thou has seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks" (Rev. 1:19-20).

And now, praise His name, Christ has laid His hand upon us! John is the symbol of every overcomer in Christ! Truly we have heard the great voice as the sound of a trumpet and we have turned to see the voice. Oh, yes! We have seen the golden candlesticks and have beheld this One in the midst like a son of man. We have within ourselves fallen as dead men before the glory of Christ the Head, and He has laid His hand upon us and there is a mighty impartation and transformation taking place in this hour! And now we are seeing wondrous things and experiencing great and mighty things that we knew not!

About The Author

J. Preston Eby was born into a Mennonite family in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. While still a toddler his parents received the baptism in the Holy Spirit through the witness of some Pentecostal brethren in the area. They were led of the Lord to sell their business and move to Alabama to do missionary work. In his twelfth year Preston was filled with the Spirit – and in that same year the Holy Spirit sovereignly unfolded to his understanding the wonderful truth of the reconciliation of all things and all men unto God. No one else around him – in family or church associations – embraced this revelation. Through those early years he kept this truth to himself and pondered it in his heart. Later he came into contact with, and was touched by, a mighty move of the Spirit known as the "Latter Rain", with emphasis on the body of Christ, gifts of the Spirit, laying on of hands, impartation, five-fold ministry, prophetic ministry, spiritual worship, the kingdom of God, and going on to perfection, unto fullness of sonship to God.

The Lord pressed him into a deeper walk with Him, intensifying within his heart the truths of sonship and the kingdom of God, already planted within as seed through the visitation of the Lord as Latter Rain. Along the way he became associated with brother Gerald Derstine and The Gospel Crusade in Sarasota, Florida, serving as an associate minister with him for eight years, first co-pastoring and later pastoring the Revival Tabernacle in that city. His wife Lorain and he, with their family, were on the mission field in Latin America for a total of five years, with ministry in several other areas as well. For seven years, following this, he was an elder in a fellowship of believers in El Paso, Texas where they witnessed a precious move of the Spirit and a body of saints flowing together in the liberty and life of the Spirit.

Eventually the Lord changed even that order, and in 1976 led him into a full-time writing ministry directed to those who are called and chosen as elect of God to grow up into the full stature of Jesus Christ as sons of God. The writing ministry includes a monthly message titled KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES as well as a number of booklets on various subjects. This ministry is greatly expanding throughout the world and our sincere hope and earnest prayer is that this course shall redound to HIS GLORY in encouragement, strengthening, edification and blessing to unnumbered thousands of God's elect sons everywhere – that creation may at last witness the true manifestation of the sons of God, setting all creation free from the bondage of corruption, restoring all things to God, and bringing to pass the glory of the kingdom of God throughout the whole earth and unto the unbounded heavens.

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES are sent free to anyone upon request. God's Word is always free to all. God's way is, "Freely you have received, freely give" (Mat. 10:8).