

# **Kingdom Rights 2022 Discipleship**

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*Discipleship - What it Means*  
*Evangelism*  
*Teaching*

**Multiplying discipleship**

It would appear that Jesus just happened on the scene, picked out a bunch of guys and they just hung out - that there was no plan, no format, and no strategy. But when we observe what Jesus did and the way that He did it, we see that there is a system to this, there is a formula. It wasn't just the Holy Spirit running willy-nilly. It was the Holy Spirit leading in an organized, effective way.

If we know the Holy Spirit and how He led Jesus, then as we follow Jesus and as the Holy Spirit leads, we will become effective for the Kingdom. By learning and following what Jesus did in the natural, we will be in position for the supernatural to manifest as the Holy Spirit leads our lives. As Jesus walked in Love, the Holy Spirit was able to speak and move through Him. God is Love, the Holy Spirit is God and therefore, love is the central motive and driving force behind everything the Holy Spirit led Jesus to do. The Holy Spirit disciples Jesus, and if we let Him and learn His ways, He will disciple us.

*\*\* Discipleship is learning the walk of Love,  
and learning how to teach others by example,  
so the Holy Spirit can move through us,  
to replicate Jesus.*

*"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know you are My disciples, if you have love for one another"* (John 13:34,35). Jesus loved us so much that He died for us, bearing the lash and the death of the cross. *"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down his life for his friends"* (John 15:13). Is this not what Jesus did? To be a follower of Christ is to follow Christ as He lives and dies for others. The apostles were learning the responses of love. When dealing with people,

*\*\* Love always mandates that you would go beyond selfish limits.*

Jesus made fishes and loaves until all were fed. Jesus healed all that came to be healed. He preached and ministered to all that called upon Him and visited all that invited Him. The disciples saw this, and on occasion tried to prevent people from getting to Him. The disciples discouraged children. Jesus responded, *"Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them;"* Blind Bartemaues was calling to the Lord and the disciples were quieting him, until Jesus *"stood still and commanded him to be called"* (Mark 10:49).

Jesus faced burn out on a regular basis and had to withdraw to quiet places to recharge His body and Spirit, but always after demonstrating a giving of His Love, Power and guidance to the people. The disciples (followers) of Jesus saw Him give again and again, His eyes on the prize and His heart learning how to be effective in Love.

When I tire from serving others or want to withdraw from the demands of discipleship, I pause and meditate on Christ's sacrifice. What was He demonstrating to His disciples? What did they observe? Christ's unlimited desire and compassion toward people. They saw first hand God's Mercy, Grace and ultimate desire to bless and benefit every life that Jesus touched.

*\*\* Love always says: "Come here, so I can bless you and improve you."*

This is the message of the Holy Spirit through Jesus. Learn to walk in love and I'll love you and bless you and you'll love others and bless them and they'll love others and bless them till we all look like Jesus the Christ. Well, how does it happen? What are the parts that make

up the whole? Where do we begin to understand how the Holy Spirit discipled? How did Jesus disciple? All these questions and more will be addressed from Scripture and from the files of experience.

Jesus is organized; Jesus is direct. He is highly selective and there is a plan. He is using a plan of discipleship, and the key to His discipleship applies to all leadership - and by *all* I mean all.

Religious, business, sports, and political leaders use Jesus' techniques. Most do not give Jesus the credit, but they quote, misquote and steal ideas all the time. Jesus taught about morality, commitment, love, peace, war, etc., but mostly He spoke about the self and finances. Therefore, all leadership must address the self in work, money and ethical situations. Jesus was and is the greatest Teacher, Motivator and Leader because His disciples gave their lives for His person and cause... freely. His disciples did then, and they still do today.

Christians are not truly Christ's disciples until they are so like Christ in terms of self-sacrifice that they long to give all of themselves for Christ's sake. Earthly rewards are only important to achieve Heavenly rewards. Leadership translates into - "*For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain*" (Phil. 1:21). I am a leader, as I become a follower. The master becomes a servant and makes other masters that become servants. Great leaders are multiplied by creating followers that become leaders.

We are concerned about multiplying disciples. Multiplying, very simply put, is this: If *one* person would disciple *three* in one year, and those *three* would each disciple *three* in one year, and those *three* would disciple *three*, you could evangelize the *total world population*. You could totally evangelize up to twenty billion - this would multiply from one person discipling three and each three discipling three - to twenty billion in twenty years. Let me say that again. If each one person discipled three people, within twenty years twenty billion people would be discipled. There's definitely something wrong. We've had close to two thousand years and it hasn't happened. We are doing better in these last days, but much more is needed.

Now the reason that it hasn't happened is because we have *focused on being an organization rather than an organism, having church rather than being church, debating rather than duplicating.*

We have to recognize that **Jesus had a plan.** He was thinking of something, and somehow we have missed it. Turn to Matthew 28:16-20: "*Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

That is multiplication of discipleship. That was the goal. Creating church leaders, that is our goal. Our goal is not babysitting children. Our goal is not having nice Sunday School. Our goal is not having nice worship. Our goal is multiplying disciples. Therefore, babysitting, Sunday School, nice worship and other church activities exist to serve the goal. Everything else is a by-product or side benefit, icing and gravy, while the main course is meeting the goal.

*\*\*Anything that is alive is growing,  
Changing and moving to accomplish survival and reproduction.*

To be a disciple means to be a *follower of Christ*. Christ was a teacher, preacher, and multiplier. Whether it's in the Sunday school or summer school or adult class or Bible study or neighborhood Bible study or a peer group, at home or at work or whatever, you are teaching others to be more like Jesus; that is discipleship. To be a follower of Christ, and in following Christ, we must "*Go ye therefore...*"(Matt. 28:19). This is the Great Commission. Anyone in a teaching capacity, anyone in a leadership capacity, anyone in a servanthood capacity and therefore, anyone who is functioning in the Body of Christ is called to **be a disciple** and **to disciple**. Now, if we're going to follow Him, then the method in which He told us to follow Him is to "*go ye therefore, and do likewise...*" Teach them to observe all things...

There are *different types* of disciples:

We have in the first category the disciple that is a **church-goer**. We need church-goers. We need people to sit in the pews to fill them up. The problem is when they do not multiply. They go to church with their husbands or their wives, and they go and they come back, and they go... they love the Lord, they sing the songs, they give their tithe, they pray, they follow Christ (to a point). We need them and we love them very much, but they do not multiply. They believe in God and may "serve the Lord." These people are Christians in that they try to regulate their personal lives according to the tenets of the Christian Faith. But they may live their whole life and not multiply, and that is not God's plan. We have to question if they are true disciples (followers of Christ). Jesus' disciples did as Jesus did, and they multiplied.

Now the churchgoers are nice, and we have to have them, but what is the goal? The goal is to take every churchgoer and make them multiply. There are many people who are churchgoers who don't even multiply in their own home.

The stationary or stagnant disciple is one that is not multiplying. He can very well sit in the pew, come to church every Sunday, be a nice person, but something's wrong if he's not multiplying. Every disciple may, for a time, be stagnant but this must be a temporary condition. This is the ongoing condition of many churches and the reason is: churchgoers become lukewarm. "*I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot...because you are lukewarm I will vomit you out of My mouth*" (Rev. 4:15,16). This is what the Spirit says to the churches, full of churchgoers that are not disciples.

The second category is: **disciples in training**. This may be a new believer or an old pew Christian that has realized he has been on the bench long enough. Disciples in training hunger to find their place and function in the Body of Christ. The ministry of Jesus is becoming a reality to them. Praise and Worship, which was a time to receive from God, is becoming a time to give to God. Instead of being a user of church resources, they are becoming a supplier of church resources. There is a new interest in the Word of God and a desire to be around the brethren. The word "servant" takes on a friendly meaning - stacking chairs, handing out Bibles, parking cars, giving a testimony on a Saturday night, all sound like good ideas. The disciple in training is eager to be molded and available to find out how to put out nets and catch fish (converts) or at least help someone else do it.

And finally, the **true disciple** is the follower of Christ, who like Christ, will multiply. Some will multiply by the hundreds, some by the thousands, some by one or two. Everyone is not called to be an evangelist, but each true disciple is called to multiply, and will multiply just by being the image of Christ. A parent will see his or her children multiply after the image of Christ that they have demonstrated and lived. The supernatural power of God will cause people to want what the true disciple has, Amen!

Everyone, regardless of his or her gift, function or position should be multiplying. If someone says, "I don't multiply 'cause I prophesy or sing" - they are in error. Your gift is what you do - a disciple is who you are - and disciples are living testimonies. Even a new "Born-again Christian" will multiply as "Living Water" (God's Word) flows out of him. Our silence is satan's greatest weapon. We overcome the evil one by Rev. 12, "*The Blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony.*"

The deadly evil in the United States is the cultural conditioning that we never discuss: religion, sex or politics. satan's great success proves God's Word - "*The people perish for lack of knowledge*" (Hosea 4:6). Knowledge is gained by exchange of information.

**\*\* *Ignorance has no right to silence knowledge.***

The old adage still holds - a man with experience is superior to a man that thinks he knows.

**\*\* *Who would you follow up Mt. Everest  
- a man that climbed Mt. Everest,  
or a guy that had a picture of it?***

A Christian that has never shared his Faith has been effectively silenced by satan and is drying up on the vine. Too often we are afraid to speak because of cultural conditioning that is supported by fear of rejection or embarrassment. In all cases the **ego** (or flesh) prevents us from being a multiplying disciple. The Holy Spirit needs us to sow the Word - He will cause the growth in His own time. We must give our testimony no matter what place, position or gifts we have.

**\*\* *satan's plan is to out-walk us and to **out-talk** us.***

When we speak as a disciple, someone will be touched. Sheep will beget sheep and leaders beget leaders, everything multiplies after its kind - Christians make Christians.

The nature of life is to reproduce. All spirits reproduce after their kind.

**\*\* *Ants beget ants, bears - bears, devils make devils  
and saints should make saints.***

**\*\* *Christ-likeness should be like a train not a carousel.***

*Trains stop and go, loading on and dropping off good things.  
Carousels go 'round and 'round over the same ground,  
never getting anywhere, playing the same music, getting dizzy...  
... and they're just for kids.*

To be a disciple of Christ is to set out on a daily adventure believing that others will join you, even though you don't know exactly where you are going. To be a disciple of Christ is to get excited that something wonderful can happen at anytime, with anyone. A disciple of Christ teaches people to dance, not knowing what kind of music is going to be played.

From the Scriptures we get a picture of Jesus and then project and superimpose His life over ours, hoping to mimic and move in such a way as not to be identified as independently different from the original. We strive to walk in His footsteps, even though our feet and stride are too small and short to keep up; and we dare tell others to follow us as if we know where His steps are leading.

**\*\* *A disciple of Jesus understands why a new convert smiles and  
says: "If I had only known it was this good!"***

The multiplying disciple is one who has a goal, whose purpose is to carry out the Great

Commission. Now, just briefly, we look at the multiplying disciple from a couple mega-evangelism vantage points. We look at a Billy Graham, a Benny Hinn, a Kenneth Hagin and so forth. These men are high profile; they preach to 5,000 - 50,000, (A Billy Graham will leave town but the new convert stays and must be disciplined into a living vibrant *baby*, then *teen*, then *mature multiplying disciple*). Mega-ministries begin discipleship but it is indirect; someone else must emerge to direct the training. What is the primary method that Jesus used? He preached to over 4,000, and fed them, then He preached to 5,000 (We know that the 5,000 were actually more because ancient Jewish culture did not count women and children). But how did He really multiply? One to one, One to two, One to twelve.

It would be wonderful to run out and preach to 5,000, but you don't really *disciple* the 5,000. You win the 5,000 to the Lord, but you *really don't* disciple them. You don't have that interpersonal contact. Jesus preached to the 5,000 and fed them and then they went home. And then the disciples came and said, "Yo... what was up with that? What really happened? What did the sermon really mean?" The real discipling occurs on an interpersonal (one-to-one) basis.

Paul said, "*Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ*" (1 Cor. 11:1, KJV). We'd need to know Paul to do that. A disciple is a follower, following a disciple that is following a disciple that is... etc. High profile TV evangelists have great numbers of converts but a much smaller number of disciples. We have no idea how to live like Billy Graham - how does he walk in Faith after a bad board meeting, when taxes go up, when persecution comes from unsaved family members? How many of us can lean over and say, "Billy, what are you gonna do now?"

*\*\* Close personal relationships is the arena of making a disciple.*

Cry together, laugh together, carry burdens together - follow me as I follow Christ. No masks, no fronts, just the real deal. James, John and Peter did all of this with the Lord and they were His closest disciples.

Now, if you look at the whole twelve, Jesus really didn't multiply with the whole twelve. When you think of it, actually, it was Peter and who else? Peter, Matthew, Mark, Andrew, Simon, Nathaniel and John? No, let's look at it again. Peter, James and John. They were the 'inner circle', and, if you spend time reading the Gospels, the closest people to Him who saw the inner workings. He *disciplined* Peter, James and John. John was at the Sanhedrin meetings and saw and heard what Jesus said and did. Peter caught the fish with the tax money in his mouth; and they all were there to see Jesus bear up under the persecution by His family (John 7:1-5).

When you look into the New Testament, whenever Jesus had something important or something private, when He went away to pray, He would often take Peter, James and John. When He went to the Mount of Transfiguration, He took Peter, James and John. When He had His private sessions, where He had to explain something very closely, He took Peter, James and John. At the Last Supper John was sitting right next to Him, and Peter was on the other side and Peter said to John, "Ask the Master, 'Who's going to betray You?'" John and James came first because they were disciples of John the Baptist.

Andrew (Peter's brother) and John had been disciples of John the Baptist; when Jesus was identified as the Lamb of God, they immediately followed Him. When they got back to the Sea of Galilee they said to Peter, "We have found the Messiah". From that point on Jesus begins collecting His other disciples. Throughout Scripture His faithful nucleus that He disciplined was - Peter, James and John... Peter, James and John. They, in turn, passed on



information to the others and led them. Look carefully at the end of the Book of John. We see John closely following as Jesus Christ appoints Peter to feed the lambs (John 21).

Jesus spent most of His focused teaching on those closest to Him and that happened to be Peter, John and James. The rest of the disciples were allowed to participate and to interact with Him, and they were discipled also. Yet, the main thrust was for a few key multipliers. Jesus discipled the 12, then 70, then 120 were in the upper room in Acts 1 and 2. Notice - Jesus discipled Peter, and then Peter led 3000 to the Lord from His first sermon in Acts Chapter 3 – not bad math. Jesus’ first fruit offering to God was the 12 that became 120 that became 3000 only 50 days after the Resurrection.

**Discipleship Identification**

At certain times Jesus would focus on specific people and ask them if they had what it takes to be a true disciple. This is an example of disciple identification.

Consider these Scriptures:

*“Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has nowhere to lay His head.”* (Matthew 8:20)

*“sell what you have and give to the poor... and come and follow Me.”* (Matthew 19:21)

*“Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life,”* (John 6:54)

*“Who do men say that I am?”* (Mark 8:27)

*“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”* (Matthew 4:19)

*“Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.”* (Luke 19:5)

*“Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?”* (John 3:10)

Jesus even seems cruel as He separates the disciples from the churchgoers. Remember the Scripture – *“Lord, let me first go and bury my father”* (Luke 9:59). And Jesus answered, *“Let the dead bury their own dead: but you go and preach the kingdom of God”* (Luke 9:60).

All of the above and more were spoken to identify disciples. *‘Come, I’ll make you fishers of men’* - save the lost, then *disciple* the saved. We are looking to identify those that can multiply.

Now, it doesn’t matter what age we’re talking about. It transcends all age. *Disciple identification* means that you have your prime directive - ‘Go ye therefore and preach and teach’ - and you apply it to the masses, which you come in contact with. (There are special people for special purposes, but we are looking for disciples, namely *those that are ready and willing to be multipliers*.) All of us come in contact with a lot of people, but out of all of them we need to learn to identify our target population. Your target population is the people that can be brought into training.

There are ways of identifying who is ‘targetable’ as discipleship material. Someone at the age of five may be your target population, but by nine they may change. It’s not very likely, but it could happen. You could have somebody at five who was totally disinterested and on the fringe - bored, bad attendance, not participating - and then all of a sudden at nine, they’re showing that they’re discipleship material. And that same one flourishing at nine might drift out at fourteen. And the other one who was originally picked at five, is pulling away, his fire is out. And that’s what we really have to focus on - target who God has called that can become a multiplying disciple.

**\*\* *Can you identify one who will be greater than you?***

Greatness is not measured by personality, intelligence, charisma, etc. Jesus was looking for servanthood and commitment. These characteristics exist even in small children. You are calling people to serve – God first and man second. You cannot identify a plant when it first sprouts, but after some sun, soil, water and time you begin to see enough of the plant to know what its potential is. Then you protect it, fertilize and put in the time till harvest. People are the same way. Teach and treat all the same, but when you see a disciple about to come forth, then call him forth and get busy. You may never see the harvest, but the Lord is the Harvester and we are to tend the garden. We are to nurture (look for) the produce that He has planted.

**Multipliers in the Church (Pitfalls and Pride)**

The churches today are filled with saved people that cannot or will not multiply. We are in the Laodician Period (See Rev. 2) wherein Jesus calls the churches “lukewarm”. We have lukewarm believers that are complacent - and comfortable. They have what they need - salvation - and have not witnessed to anyone, but have grown fat overfeeding, but not exercising. Especially in the US, where persecution has been low, Christians have adopted the mindset of “everybody do their own thing, leave me alone”, “religion is a private matter” also, “I’m saved and I keep it to myself”.

Many churches teach that gifts and power are not for today so “*they deny the power*” (2 Tim. Ch. 3), but have a form of godliness - yet to non-effect.

**\*\* *If your theology places limits on God’s power,  
then God’s power is limited in you,  
but God is still sovereign and powerful.***

God’s greatest demonstration of His power is His ability to change the heart and mind of a man yielded to His Creator. Yet it must be stressed that our God accomplishes this through the gifts and power.

A great manifestation and testimony to God’s power is that He has created beings with self-will. So powerful is God that He does not fear the catastrophes that are created by misguided and often immoral self-willed creatures. In Numbers 13, the ten spies went to see Canaan land and brought back an evil report. They limited God’s ability to deliver to them the land God had promised. They limited God’s ability to make them victorious over the enemy. This diversion from the game plan cost them their lives; they died in the wilderness. This death sentence was by their own choosing for they said, “*If only we had died in this wilderness!*” (Numbers 14:2) God allowed them to get what they said.

**\*\* *God has not changed and churches that choose not to multiply  
are choosing to die.***

Churches that choose not to believe God’s power have ceased or have been limited and will see spiritual gifts and miracles fade away, and then even the greatest miracle will fade also – salvation. These churches don’t grow and they don’t want to be bothered. They say: “Our church is for me and mine and that’s just fine” and “We had a plan for a comfortable church, and growth would force us to change the plan God gave us.” Well, that was never the plan. The Lord has not changed to a new plan. His plan is still the same as it was in Jerusalem (Acts 2) - from 120 to 3000 in one day! - “*...And that day about three thousand souls were added to them*” (v.41). “*And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved*” (v.47).

This is the plan for the church age from the Apostles till now, and until the church sees Jesus coming in the clouds. The goal has not changed, nor have the tools been changed. Love, hope faith, signs, wonders, service and discipleship. Our gift to God is our selves and the fruit of our labor – more souls.

**\*\* *Stagnation is not and never was God’s plan -  
heat expands and so does **God’s plan!*****

Another problem in the church is the social and personal discontent. Our society has made people feel so very inadequate that self-centered happiness and self-help are major problems. Emotional babies are everywhere wanting bottles and refusing to grow. They don’t want to

grow so they suck up so much time that pastors and leaders can't minister to the young ones who are ready to grow up from 'milk' to 'meat'. They refuse to be pushed or pulled and won't get out of the way.

No amount of preaching or counseling seems to help them. "Oh me, poor me, help me... do you love me? You weren't there for me..." - these types of people have major development problems. They are negative criers that are terrible examples of the victorious Christian life and their testimonies are poison to the unsaved, therefore they don't multiply, but subtract. They drive away the baby Christians with condemnation, they take up positions by volunteering, and they want to run everything and everyone, including the Pastor. They refuse to grow; they fight against growth, for it would diminish the time that could be spent on them. Discipleship trains up and turns people out so they depend not on Pastor but on the Holy Spirit and their new renewed minds. Amen. New people coming in would compete for space and time and may grow faster than they are growing.

One careful look shows they are given over to the flesh and its desires; drugs, gluttony, gambling, critical spirit, poor money managers, preoccupation with sex and romance, pride, etc. They are easy to spot. In 1-3 years even a child learns to walk if it wants to. Flesh attachments cause spiritual retardation that makes multiplying discipleship ineffective.

If Peter hadn't gotten his pride together, no way could he have multiplied. He was rebuking Jesus Christ and boasting, then he denied Christ, therefore he could not have multiplied effectively without growing up. He committed high treason, and the Lord reestablished him and said, "Feed my sheep," now, he was restored and beyond treason. Now once he was beyond treason, which was his pride sin, he could then begin to multiply. Imagine if, after being restored, Peter went right on telling Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit what they ought to do. He never would have preached in Acts 2, or would have folded during the persecution of the Church (Acts 4 & 5).

If Christians refuse to grow up, holding up God's program and draining your energy, then you must:

1. Pray for them to be removed.
2. Move them out of the way.
3. Replace them quickly.
4. Prepare to ignore their tantrums.

**Discipleship Identification in The Church**

In the public school, you have to educate all the kids and you are under pressure to educate all of the kids equally. Our thing is that we are going to educate all the kids and the adults as well, because we may not know who is going to be a multiplier. The minute we know (and there are ways to know), we must *focus*.

The Holy Spirit will show you that there is a calling and an anointing upon a certain individual. One of the first signs is you see a *hunger and an enthusiasm* for the Word and a *willingness to share the Word*. There is a curiosity there. Who has put it there? The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has planted it before their birth. There's *something* in that person that's *identifiable*. You see *something*, some little spark of interest or enthusiasm for the Word of God. Then the next thing that happens is there's action. You can have *enthusiasm* and not have *action*. They come to church sporadically; they don't participate fully but talk a good talk. You've got to look for the *action* - participation, questions and new revelations.

When there is action, you have the key ingredient that will lead to the next thing - which is 'teachability'. They begin to participate, they begin to ask questions. *Now*, are they teachable? Are they going to seek instruction, retain information and transfer knowledge? Do they show that there is a learning process? When you throw out a little bread on the water, does it come back? When you, as a teacher, present the student with a challenge, does he attempt to meet it? Give a verse to be memorized - will he do it? If that is the process that has been begun, then you know that in your little class, maybe seven or eight little twerpers, you've got two 'identified disciples'.

Now you begin to set goals for the ones you've identified that the Holy Spirit has chosen. You do it for the whole class, but you have a special interest in the 'potential multipliers'. Your clear goal here is to develop discipleship, so that person can become effective, even as a little kid, carry out the prime directive, the same prime directive that drives you, "*Go, ye, therefore, and teach all things...*" (Matthew 28).

Now, you've identified these people as teachable. They have action. They have involvement. They have attendance. You begin to focus on the prime directive that you are teaching, the goal that you are building into these lives: "*Go therefore... teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you*" (Matthew 28:19,20).

**\*\* *Living Water (the Word of God) is a stream, not a stagnant pond.***

Everyone learns but not everyone shares what he or she learns with those around them. That is a key trait for identifying a disciple that will multiply.

The purpose and the function at all ages - is that you are looking for someone who can make a multiplying disciple, not just a sit-in-the-pew person who comes to church. As Jesus did, we do. Often I would say come follow me as I follow Christ. The excuse makers never become disciples. The world distracts them from a high purpose for a lower purpose.

**\*\* *Saved but not in the saddle.***

There's nice, wonderful kids who come to church and come to Sunday school and so forth. Well, great! But we want the ones that can multiply. We want the ones who can witness. We want the ones who can stand up for Jesus and get it done. Be careful, it may not be the loudest or the most outgoing. The Holy Spirit will find them, not the way the world picks people - by looks, polish and power. Remember little shepherd boy David. We've seen little kids witness at the age of five or six and be able to say, "Jesus, I love Jesus, and I know He love me, and He loves you too!" This is not confined to Sunday school class; it's translatable

anywhere, to a play environment, to a work environment. Look carefully for the Spirit to show you who is a diamond in the rough.

I teach *everybody*, but while I'm teaching I'm looking to see whose lights are on, who's getting it and who's going to go with it once they get it. Who's going to call me up and say, "You know, what you taught me, I'm applying it to my life. I'm putting it to work for me." When I see someone who comes to Bible study and church 'religiously' (as a routine), and is locked in the same continual struggles without any evidence that the discipleship is working, then it means that they're not moving in the process of multiplying disciple.

**\*\* A disciple who isn't *developing* cannot *multiply*.**

The committed Christian is not afraid to speak the Name of Jesus in the secular world. He will communicate his Faith and is "not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ" (Romans 1:16). Any saint can be loud *in* church and silent in the world.

**\*\* Brother Hagin once said, "If Faith was dynamite, some Christians don't have enough Faith to even blow their noses!"**

Seek to identify potential disciples by these key traits:

1. Interest
2. Action-doer
3. Teachable
4. Communicative
5. Committed
6. Enthusiasm
7. Questioning
8. Involved
9. Growing

**Levels of Growth**

**Baby Disciple**

A **Baby Disciple** is a recent born-again Christian that is coming to the knowledge of the saving power of Jesus Christ, has begun to feed upon the milk of the Word, and is beginning to grow in the grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ. This would be distinguished from a new born-again Christian, in that a 'Baby Disciple' is a born-again Christian that realizes that he is supposed to multiply and is enthusiastic about his newness in the Lord to the point that he is willing to share and eager to be a positive factor in the body of Christ. A person can be born-again and not be a multiplying disciple.

Yes, a person could be in the church for years and years enjoying their salvation, but not being a factor for the Kingdom of Heaven due to a lack of knowledge, lack of guidance or a lack of motivation and devotion.

Positive attributes of a baby disciple: Hunger; a baby disciple is eager to learn, willing to spend time in the Word, willing to attend Sunday service, one or sometimes two or more Bible studies per week, has a ravenous appetite for conventions, conferences, and in the best of cases is even eager to be in a prayer group and attend prayer meetings. A baby disciple is eager to experience new things and is a ready volunteer for service.

Disadvantages: prone to self righteous arrogance (has found a precious pearl and abuses their new revelation by using it to judge others); realizes that he or she has changed and is intolerant of others that have not changed along with them; emotionally fragile and is prone to use old tools of the flesh to try and solve new spiritual problems (For example: fleshy pride, arrogance and anger will be used as if they are zeal, courage and boldness for the Lord). Knowledge without wisdom is like a fast car without rubber tires, which leads us to the next stage of development - **teenagers**.

**Teenage Disciples**

**Teenagers** are able to eat some meat and have sufficient teeth for chewing and digestion. Their ravenous appetites cause them to draw from all sources. They begin applying life examples to spiritual things and begin to see the material world and the spiritual world as they converge together. Teenagers love a party, and therefore are open to experiencing not only the joy of the Lord, but also the supernatural presence of the Lord. They can be very matter of fact and will quickly cut to the chase. They love a good debate and an argument, and will pursue an unbeliever with enthusiasm. This can all be good, but at the same time, there are disadvantages.

*\*\* Teenagers are in front of the mirror all the time,  
but they don't see much.*

At the same time that they will pursue a non-believer, they are intolerant and impatient with baby disciples. They have a strong grasp of repentance and obedience, but fail to gather the concepts of mercy and grace. They will place an emphasis upon works, but fail to see the connection to self-sacrifice. They bear resentment to the source and the recipient. Pleasure is the goal and they think they know how they should grow.



Adult Disciples

**Adults** are meat eaters that have learned spiritual balance. They have experienced tantrums, burnout, selfishness and combated the evil one, seen miracle signs and wonders, and led people to the Lord, have been successful and unsuccessful - know the difference, and know that God works with yielded vessels to win the lost, develop and run His Body. There are no disadvantages to this stage, but there are negative attributes that can be demonstrated at this stage which are more devastating than teenagers and babies. An adult disciple who reverts to being a baby disciple, or a teenage disciple, is worse, way worse, than a baby disciple or a teenage disciple. The reason is an adult will impact negatively upon those around him and those under him, thereby causing more disruptions in the body and causing more adults, teenagers and babies to regress. The regressing adult may simply go back to not multiplying, but they may even leave the Faith temporarily or for good.

It is true that an adult can get hold of a poison (false teaching, false doctrine) that makes him sick for a while, and this illness could be contagious; therefore, he spreads this poison. But usually, a combination of flesh out of control and the attack of satan will cause an adult to become retarded or to revert to a younger state.

*\*\* An adult will get out of balance by refusing to be organized, not setting priorities, procrastination or by experiencing burnout.*

WARNING: If you hear these comments in your head, you are in trouble!!!

When he (satan) lies, you didn't see what you saw (denial and rationalization). (When you hear a lie, you need to realize what it is and face it.)

\*I'm the only one working here.

\*Nobody understands... nobody cares.

\*I'm the only one that is righteous and is working hard here.

\*If I quit, the whole thing goes down the toilet.

\*I just can't go on another day.

\*They're a hopeless cause, not even Jesus could save them.

\*I'm the best Christian here.

\*I'm the worst Christian here.

Problem: Jesus says to the churches in Rev. 2:4:

*"Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love."*

Solution: Fix your eyes upon Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith. Get back to basics - time with the Lord. Adults need to remember they are still kids at heart. Stir up that relationship with Abba – Poppa. Go get a hug from the Holy Spirit and remember: God's still on the Throne. This is the key to all growth due to, naturally, one Jesus moment at a time.

**Jesus Appointment Time**

When we have identified a person with the potential to multiply we must look for the right time to call them into training and begin serving the Lord.

(Transcript from Discipleship Class)

*Pastor:* “Now, training is learning how to effectively take what you’ve learned from Bible study and make disciples. The Holy Spirit puts them in your face by appointment. There is a supernatural time when witnessing will be effective, because God has arranged a Jesus appointment. When I saw you come in the church door here I said, “Praise God, the Lord has done a work with him and he’s ready to sharpen his sword”, and the training process began.”

*Young man:* “Just sittin’ here, I was thinking, ‘Oh, no, I’m back in school again. I just hate it.’

But I have to do what God says. God called me and I have to know because I can’t live by myself. I can’t live in the world without really learning what God’s purpose is for me.”

*Pastor:* “You will.”

“Got that? This is the deal. We’ve got our Sunday activities. We’re pulling people in from the pool of humanity. You’ve got Bible study. From Bible study we advance to training, and that’s what it’s all about.”

*Question:* “Pastor, when did you make that switch from just loving the Lord to being a man who loves the Lord *and* casts out that net?”

*Pastor:* “From age 7 to 20 I did some fishing at times, but got in the boat to cast the net at 30-ish. It is different for different people. There is the church-going little kid, and then there is the little kid that has a heart so much for the Lord at a young age that you can see he’ll multiply. Let the Holy Spirit lead you to seeing him.

“Eli knew that Samuel was going to be a disciple who could multiply. Eli knew it. Though

Eli had missed God concerning his own sons he still knew the Holy Spirit and His ways, so when God called Samuel, Eli knew this child was the next chosen prophet (See 1 Samuel, Chapter 3). The Holy Spirit will lead you.

“The prophet Samuel is going through all the sons of Jesse and he gets to David, the little runt, and he knew the anointing was on him. Seventeen years later, David was a king and doing a great job, and he’s still multiplying today through the Word.

“You have to have your antenna up, and a lot of times - like an earlier question that was presented - it may be the child that you’re planning to throw out of the class... *he’s* the one.”

*Sunday School Teacher:* “I’ve got three boys in my class that are too much!”

*Pastor:* “But... they have something! You then have to use wisdom, the right attitude, love... and bring order. Then... they’re teachable. You have to find the parameters, the Jesus appointed time, and then train them.”

Jesus, in John 14, 15, 16, and 17, made it very clear, “I’m going away...” It was time for the disciples to fly without Him physically on earth. There is an appointed time for well-trained disciples to be pushed out of the nest. Many church leaders get used to the adoration and assistance and hold people under them and on their team beyond the “Jesus appointed time” for them to leave. The goal is growing and enlarging the Kingdom. If a trained disciple is willing to take responsibility for errors and is not afraid to make the “calls” but is somewhat afraid, a good kick is often necessary.

If this timing is missed things turn sour and disrupt the order for God to accomplish the

goal, “*go ye, therefore*” and multiply. Personalities clash, power struggles begin and the Love of Christ is tarnished, and people go away hurt and mad, ‘driven away ones’ rather than ‘sent ones’.

This happens because the Spirit had prepared the trainee, but the leader did not facilitate the transition with encouragement, finances, prayer and a push. We raise our children to grow up and go. There is no shortage of sinners.... but the “*workers are few*” (Luke 10:2).

Identify the multiplying disciple, watch for the Jesus appointed time, and then reel them into the net and start the training with the plan to help them go on into the ministry God has called them to do.

**Discipleship, Knowing 4 Big Things**

Now, four things we need to talk about: (1) **Know the goal**; a. discern the goal, b. believe – have Faith for the disciple, have Faith for the goal, c. sidetracks, d. relationships, e. numbers, f. harvesters (2) **know the rewards**; (3) **know the cost**; and then the last one, (4) **know the limits**. These four areas will have to govern the inner personal life of the disciple and the potential disciple. These four things have to be not just something that happens by osmosis, but is thought through, prayed about and acted upon.

You should *know what the goal is*. You should *know what the rewards are* and you should *know what it's going to cost you* (time, self and money). Jesus said to “count the cost”. You’ve got to *know your own personal limits*. You also have to know the limitations of the person you’re focused in on as well as your own personal limitations in ministering to the disciple.

**What’s the Goal?**

1. Know the Goal: a. Discern the goal b. Believe – have Faith for the disciple, have Faith for the goal.

What is the Goal? Matthew 28 - making disciples. The Holy Spirit is going to target the people for you. The Holy Spirit is going to place people in your sphere of influence that are potential multiplying disciples. Remember, there’s nothing wrong with developing church-goers. Your target population, though, is multipliers, people who get so much into the Word that they’ll multiply. The church-goers are wonderful; we’re glad to have them. They’re wonderful and we love them, but we’re looking for multiplying disciples, because any church-goer may become a multiplier. Thank God, the Lord says that He is bringing us to perfection - if a church-goer sits in that pew long enough and it’s a righteous pew and, if there are multiplying disciples around them... they’ll catch fire eventually, we hope.

*\*\* Wet wood will catch fire if you keep a fire under it.*

If you have a bad kid in your class, and the other kids are getting something and they’re getting enthused about Jesus... he’ll get the fire. The first way that you follow through is that you just...be, just *be*. Just be the Christian you say you are. Just be...just be. Just - walk in love and just be. Be there for them. Be there about them. Be there with them. Be praying for them. Just be like Jesus.

Think of yourself as a “baggage remover”. The goal is making disciples but they have baggage, lack of knowledge, emotional pain, sin, etc., etc. Jesus met the woman at the well and removed her sin baggage (John 4:6-26). For Nicodemus (John 3:1-21), Jesus removed his lack of knowledge, and for the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-22) - he tried to remove his trust in wealth. **The goal** is to facilitate discipleship, remove whatever is keeping the person from reaching God’s goal - **being like Jesus**.

This is **calling for discernment**. Spiritual discernment and good observation calls us to watch what’s going on. Did they (the disciple) show up at church? Did they not show up at church? What’s their life like? Are they having trouble? Go over and say, “Sister, I see you’re having trouble. Are you O.K.? You want to talk? Do you need somebody to talk to?” Non-judgmental. Just see what’s going on and ask the Holy Spirit to give you discernment as to what’s *really* going on. Have Faith.

**Believe for the disciple.**

And then, believe for them. By that I mean, believe that they’re called. Believe that the Lord has a call on their lives. Believe that God is going to raise them up and use them.

Believe that they're saved, sanctified, delivered. You want to believe no matter what you see and observe in the flesh. Have "Faith." Believe, no matter what you see. Just because they drop out of fellowship doesn't mean that they've lost salvation and the fire forever and they're blowing it out. You just keep believing for them. If they don't show up at church for two weeks, you be a good Christian and call them up and see if they are O.K.

The Holy Spirit *targets* and *delivers* them by His schedule and in His time. You follow through. You be a good Christian around them. See what's going on. See what you are doing - see what they are doing. Know the goal - multiplying disciples.

**Believe the goal** means = have Faith that this goal is a mandate from God, not the cry of a member hungry pastor. Since God has mandated discipleship, then know by Faith that if you move to accomplish this end, God will supply. God will give you the means, material, and the disciples.

*\*\* Don't beg God saying "send revival and workers",  
But by Faith - thank Him, and call it done!*

Church growth and disciples are acquired by Faith as are all things in the Kingdom of God. Our Lord will send rain in a drought, food in a famine, people when no one else can find them. Church growth techniques will not work unless you believe they are a response to what God is doing. Pray them into your sphere of influence by Faith. Jesus has promised us the *whole* world - why would you doubt that they'll come in from *your corner* of the world?

I would stand in the window of my office, looking at the parking lot and thank God we had no more space to park cars. I then began to plan for more parking. After all, if God was filling the space we had, then it was time to expand. I did the same thing in the sanctuary – thank You Lord, we are out of room in the pews. The Holy Spirit spoke in my heart, "then remove the pews and I'll fill chairs." We didn't have any chairs – Oh, I get it we do now, I thought. Our church began to explode with new people. "*God has given each of us a measure of Faith*" (Rom. 12:3). What are you doing with your cupful? Are you calling it half empty and complaining about how hard it is to fill it? Well, I'm getting bigger vessels to hold the overflow. Praise to God the multiplier!

Knowing the Goal

Sidetracks

In any of the work of the Lord, you always want to *know what the goal is*. There are many sidetracks. Satan sets sidetracks for us that seem important and seem really as if they've 'gotta be done.' Next thing we know we're off doing something and we've forgotten what *the goal* was. It's like, this is where the Lord Jesus wants us to go, and here's the starting line - we start out here, and as we're going here, all of a sudden something happens over there and it directs our attention, and we get stuck over there for a while. And then we kinda' get lost.

One of the big ones we get lost in, of course, is interpersonal relations. Not that relationships aren't important, but we can get involved in relationships that are not directly related to the goal - we can get hung up in relationships that are mega- 'sidetracks'. These lead us away from discipling others and even ourselves. So, we need to know what Jesus' goal is in everything, because we end up getting off into *relations* and disregard *discipling*. Here's how to tell: We get so busy with people that *activity* can be *without substance*. We get off into gossip, romance, socializing, sports, etc., and...

*\*\* we end up so involved that deep feelings stir in shallow water.*

It's not that we don't want to have friends and mates. We do. And it's not that we don't want to socialize with people. We do. But we need to remain focused on, "What am I doing in this relationship right now? What is the nature of this relationship?" Intellectually examine your personal relationships with people and see what the basis and goal of the relationship is. Are we friends? Are we acquaintances? Are we potential mates? Are we associates? Are we co-workers for Christ? Am I setting the example and they are following? Am I discipling them or are they discipling me? Am I saying to this person, "Let's go out to dinner tonight?" And then you have to say to yourself, "Am I going out to dinner tonight to minister to them or are we just going out to eat?" Are they thinking, "Is this an introduction to dating?" "Is this a social function?" It seems quite calculated. It is.

As a Pastor I have many people that feel they are close, personal friends of mine. They call often to discuss problems they are having in their lives. They call this a friendly phone visit, but I call it a phone counseling session. It may look like fellowship, but it is discipleship. When the disciples had a need, Jesus was there for them with comfort and counsel. Yet in the Garden of Gethsemane, He cried alone. His disciples were called friends, but were still acting as disciples. A friend shares the good and the bad, but these disciples were not ready to go all the way yet.

I believe this is why He tormented in the Garden. Jesus knew the Scriptures He must fulfill and would have to cry out: "*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*" that is, "*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*" (Matt. 27:46) I believe His anguish is "Father, let this cup of abandonment pass." The pain of abandonment was upon Him - first His disciples, friends, brethren, would not pray with Him and soon would desert and deny Him.

Jesus was clear about the events and the relationships - He would gladly go to the Cross but was sorrowed for the pain of relationships. Know the goal and who's who in your relationships.

Jesus had to choose who He was going to go to dinner with. When He said to Zacchaeus in Luke 19:5, "*Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down (from the tree); for today I must abide at thy house.*" He didn't say, "I'd just as soon go roller skating with you. We're buddy buddy, pally pally." No, He was saying, 'I have a relationship to develop with you. If it's

necessary that I go to your house to accomplish it, I'll go to your house to accomplish it. Let's hang out.' But what was the 'hanging out' for? He wasn't off track. He was hanging out with Zacchaeus to win him for the Kingdom, not to sell him stock in a carpentry business, insurance, Royal Jelly, Amway or anything else.

As a layman, I was for a time a homebuilder, and the Lord showed me that He would build my business without exploiting or networking in and among the Christian brothers. I was glad though to hire some Christian brothers that were out of work, as an act of temporary kindness. My business was better used to hire the unsaved and by being as good a disciple as possible, win some to the Lord.

Sundays are not a day to try and advance your business. To call it helping others while you stand to gain a benefit is in a way false advertising. Bringing business cards to church and Bible Studies will cloud the spiritual purpose and distract your communion with the Spirit. We must be careful, for Jesus beat the moneychangers for doing business with wrong motives in the house of God. Don't be sidetracked. God will give financial growth and will send you those of the flock who see you are prospering. God will have them pursue you and He'll give you greater success - but it will be on a Thursday.

Outside business relations inside the church spill over with disastrous results. Satan has great power in the areas of sex and money. I have seen people make bad business errors - hand shake deals, business loans, business failures and even successes can be used by Satan to spill over into the pews. Division, jealousy, etc., etc., etc., - cause a disciple to judge another, involve the deacons and pastor and **bang!** Everyone's choosing sides over "who done in who" and in the meantime, no one's growing or getting saved. End result - someone leaves the fellowship mad and the Spirit is grieved.

We should help mediate and seek to help Christians avoid litigation, yet if our main track is good discipleship, then "good" money stewardship occurs and money comes to the church to be a blessing, not baggage. Money relationships and profit schemes generally cause 'sidetrack' problems.

Sometimes you'll see Pastor Don '*hanging out*' spending enormous amounts of time with certain people and you wonder, "Well, what's with that relationship?" And if you forget the goal, you'll be examining my relationships - assuming I'd chosen a social friend with a bad report. A better way of thinking is, "Now, *why* is he '*hanging out*' with this person?" *Knowing the goal*, we come to see that God has led me to make an investment in a life that has great potential to multiply. In some situations you may need to give a clear signal as to what you are doing and what you aren't doing and where the relationship will go, but you do need to know what and where it is going, in the context of discipleship.

One day, while doing a routine Bible Study in a jail, a quiet young man asked an advanced question from the very deep Book of Romans. I was startled, shocked, and overjoyed - I wanted to hug him and dance around. Here was before me a damaged, broken piece of pottery that Jesus was planning to use. That journey involved many sidetracks for him, but our relationship is and has been one of discipleship training. I wondered about my level of involvement with him but knew God was leading, and I even saw my ministry put at risk when he was sorely tested by Satan. Yet, through it all, he did multiply and help build other disciples, even when he failed. Our relationship was always clear between us and the goal is achieved, and the fruit is just beginning to ripen.

Heterosexual relationships often get confused, especially with single people. There are many people that if you show them any attention they think it's the beginning of a romance.

When they are told, “Hold on. I just want you to love Jesus Christ the way I do,” etc., the potential disciple disappears. We must know the goal so the correct signals are sent.

People come to the Lord and are under construction. It seems the last area to be demolished is the area of sexual-social conditioning. I mean people have habits of self-image and sexual desires that are hard to give up. Men that won't control their eyes and focus on female body parts are acting as if they are still 18 and hunting. Men that change voice tones if the waitress is cute and take 5 minutes to order a burger and fries. They laugh aloud flirting to get attention. Men that corner new female church members and try the same bar room techniques that didn't work in the world.

*\*\* Using spirituality and intellect as a cover for sexual advances is the highest form of hypocrisy, and makes bad relationships.*

Overly aggressive men cause women to leave the church or call for help, as they fear abuse and harassment.

Women do much of the above but it takes on a feminine flavor. Coming to church or studies on the nights “he” will be there; seat engineering (control of seating arrangements); running interference - use negative gossip to eliminate their competition; join the choir or be a youth worker cause “he’s” doing it; dress to seduce - cleavage, mini-dresses, see-thru blouses, and anatomy revealing leggings and tights have no place in the house of God.

Knowing the goal means knowing when something else is getting in the way. I noticed many times that when peoples' romances collapse, I lose a member. This usually means the relationship went outside of the boundaries of proper Christian relationships.

A good looking man visited the church a few times and a fight broke out among the single women over who had first rights to date him. Would that they were fighting over who was going to disciple him.



**Knowing the Goal**

**Relationships - Termination Points**

In John Chapter 6, we watch Jesus terminate some relationships. This whole passage follows along in a strange sort of way, but let's take this as one discourse through verse 25, where Jesus is talking about being the bread of life. Then He makes a bold statement in verse 28 & 29. The question that was put to Him is, *"What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"* In verse 29 He says, *"This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent"*. Is that what they wanted to hear? No! They wanted a formula, and they were hoping that the basic formula was to keep doing what they were doing; which was the keeping of the law. In verse 30 they asked, *"What sign will you perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will you do? Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat'"*. He goes into this discourse in verse 33: *"For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world"*. Verse 35: *"I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst"*. Verse 39,40: *"This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day"*.

Now, this life that He's talking about, it's actually the word 'vitality.' So, He's not just talking about eternal life. He's talking about the *vitality* that eternal life gives from the time that you believe and the time after, that you will go to Heaven. Without the cluttering of the things of the world, you will have a pure *enthusiasm* for the things of God, a pure vitality for God. In the meantime, you can live with that *vitality* and *energy*, now. We are in the Kingdom of God now for the King has come and is present by the Holy Spirit.

Then the argument starts in verses 41-44: *"The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, 'I am the bread which came down from heaven.' And they said, 'Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?"* Jesus therefore answered and said to them, *"Do not murmur among yourselves. No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him"*.

Now, follow along and go to verses 51 and 52, *"I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."* The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, *"How can this man give us His Flesh to eat?"*. Already they are completely missing the goal. The goal here is to get people saved. He is saying that He is the vehicle by which everyone is going to get saved and get eternal life. They are going completely off goal. Jesus is speaking spiritually and not about the flesh and cannibalism.

Now, watch what happens in verses 60-64, *"Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, 'This is a hard saying; who can understand it?' When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, 'Does this offend you? What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?'"* (v. 60-62). This is the goal here - the outcome of everything Jesus is teaching - He is Messiah, looking for disciples of the Kingdom of Heaven - Jesus went on to say, *"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing"* (v. 63). There's the goal.

Now, He says, *"The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you who do not believe."* For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did

*not believe, and who would betray Him” (v. 63,64). In other words, Jesus not only knew the goal, but, as He is pursuing the goal, He knows the relationships. He’s identified who’s who in this puzzle. And who’s a player and who’s not a player. Who’s along for the ride, or should we say the bread (money)? Who can He invest His time in and who not?*

Jesus continues in verse 65, “...Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father”. And verse 66, which I think is really amazing - John 6:66 (note the mark of the beast and the number of man - ‘666’) contains this amazing statement, “From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more”. In other words, they were disciples and they knew He was the Son of God... they saw the miracles, they had tasted of the heavenly gift... yet they blasphemed the Holy Spirit by rejecting the Son of God (Read Hebrews 6:4-6, the criteria for the ultimate sin).

That’s an excellent example of them going down the road, going into relations, and He sees that the time has come to terminate some of their training programs. Now notice the way that He made the decision. He didn’t reject them. He let them make that choice. This is a hard thing for us, but it is in the Bible. We let them make that choice. Some people say, “Well, why don’t you throw so-and-so out?” Or “why don’t you go get so and so on...” Well, if I can find examples that Jesus did it, I’ll start throwing people out, or begging them to come back, but in the meantime, no.

You just continue to minister to those that stay. Identify what the relationship is and then let it be. You have to let God be God. The point at which you recognize a relationship is a sidetrack, at that time you just have to redefine and get busy. Has their sidetrack taken them sooo far away that God is allowing them to go off track forever? Focus in, ask the question “Who’s in, who’s out?” You’ve been around here long enough to decide - “you in or you out?”

*(Following is more actual dialog from class.)*

*Student:* “But isn’t that just for people who the Lord puts in your path to disciple? - like relationships amongst the body? Because some of us have multi-faceted relationships and discipleship goes back and forth. Isn’t this just specifically about the people or the person the Lord brings you that you know that you are supposed to work with?”

*Pastor:* “Yes, the Lord brings across a person’s path the person that he can disciple. But the Lord is just and gracious - He gives so many the chance to be a disciple, and He doesn’t always tell us who’s going to make it and who’s not. Won’t every believer be given the opportunity by the Holy Spirit to disciple someone? Jesus wants everyone to be a fisherman, to believe and to walk within the gifts of the Spirit. And the people who are going to disciple the most are the people who are called with a special gift for that. But everybody is going to disciple somebody and love many others.

“If you work at Burger King, you’ll disciple somebody. A housewife would disciple other people that she comes in contact with, children, the neighbors’ kids, etc. There are a zillion opportunities. “The harvest fields are white,” meaning ready to be harvested. Therefore, broaden your path to include more potential saints and the Lord will put more people in the way.”

**\*\* Jesus said, “Go ye,” not build a church and tell them ‘Come ye’**

“We do find some disciples in the pews, but for the most part they are out there in the world. When we find a potential disciple we may lead them to church for training, if the relationship is leading the proper way - to Jesus.”

*Student:* “How do you harmonize the fact that Jesus never asked them to leave?”

*Pastor:* “The harmony is in the love and grace of God – ‘whosoever will come after Me... follow Me.’ They weren’t doing anything obviously wrong that was defaming the fellowship or anything on the surface, yet Jesus knew that the real relationship was shallow on their part. Heaven and hell are choices that we all must make and that choice is voluntary. Some spectators get off the bench late in the game and become players. He was talking specifically about people that were in the Body that had given their heart over to satan and had a relationship with the wrong friend.

“The case He was really dealing with was a yielding to the flesh, and having a weak relationship with God and choosing the wrong lord. Jesus was letting the relationship determine the outcome. We don’t have to worry about driving people out. The Word will drive them out. Eventually they won’t want to be around the Word. They won’t want to be around the presence of the Lord. People that are determined to drink all the time will not want to hang out with a total sold-out believer, because the sold-out believer is going to minister the Gospel to them. They’re not going to want to hear it because they’re going to want to stay in their sin. That relationship is gonna change.

*\*\* How many of us have the same friendships as we had when we were in the world? - Probably none, unless they got saved.*

But even those friends are new friends, because they are born again, they are new creatures. It’s not as if you are hanging out with the same old cronies. Look at Juma (Ed Lewis). The old Juma don’t hang out with the new Juma. He doesn’t like him either. So, it’s going to change, but what happens in discipleship is this; you do have to hang out with your old friends until the Lord ministers to you that they’re set in the direction in which they’re going and that it’s not the direction He wants you in. A point will be reached, if it’s a side track, when the Spirit of God will be saying, “You’ve done enough; you can do no more. Enough. Put it down. Cut them loose and let them go. You just can’t do any more”.

And a lot of times your giving up and letting go is what will save them. When you just drop out. It’s important to listen for that message from the Lord. The reason is, that if you hold on too long, satan can use them to drain your spiritual juices, and it will just bring you down or return you to the “old man”.

*\*\* As you leave the “world” old friends will follow... if you leave them a path.*

Isaiah 52:11 tells us, “Go out from there... You who bear the vessels of the Lord”. If the relationship doesn’t line up with the goal, then it will have to go - someone will have to leave.

As you continue on the narrow path,  
They are drawn to the broad path.  
Yet, despair not, for there is still more joy  
in being able to focus on the beauty of this journey  
than being distracted by their bottomless patter.  
After all, it was the thought of them that was greater  
than the reality of them.  
While this path, though narrow, is greater still than my broadest thought.  
And this narrow path holds a promise that I shall meet Him  
and the width will accommodate us all.

Selah

**Knowing the Goal**

**The Numbers Game**

You have to identify the nature of the relationship. You have to think about it. “What am I doing? I’m seeing this person four nights a week and I’ve been doing it for four months and they still won’t even come to church.” Let’s get real here. It’s time to either change your tactic or pray to the Lord to send somebody else, but it’s a *side journey*, it’s not producing fruit.

Our flesh wants people to get saved and reach a certain point of spiritual development, but that doesn’t mean you’re as wise as God. We’re not God. We’re not to determine who gets to where when. Give them a chance, but don’t forget the goal is to minister to as many people as possible in your lifetime. Telling them the truth of the Gospel - that the Spirit is life, Jesus is Lord and Heaven’s on the way.

That’s a key to remember. ‘The numbers game.’ Let’s not lose that goal. Jesus knew the whole time He was ministering to the twelve exactly how many those twelve would produce. Do you think for one minute that He didn’t know that after the Holy Spirit fell upon them that there would be three thousand? Do you think that He didn’t know that after three years there would be ten thousand? Don’t you think that He knew that within two thousand years there would be over 7 billion? He says that when we get to Heaven there will be a number so great no man can count - a sea of people. It’s His desire that none will be lost. And that means for sure He’s counting on a whole bunch of people.

There’s the example of the bucket of oysters. You have a bucket of oysters and you are looking for pearls. You can either open one oyster and wait to see if it grows a pearl or you can keep opening oysters. If you open enough oysters, you’re gonna find a pearl, but if you just sit there with the one oyster and try to talk it into growing a pearl it might never bear fruit. It appears as if you are making a numbers decision, but you are looking to minister to those the Lord has provided, and our flesh will miss it every time. Our spirit will miss it some of the time because we aren’t always tuned in with God’s Spirit.

I would love to be in the Spirit 24 hours a day. Ephesians 2:10, that’s the key. It’s the one that makes the difference in the walk of Faith. Is God doing it or are we doing it? “*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has **prepared beforehand** that we should walk in them.*” All you gotta do is not miss anything on your list. Sometimes, it may be discipling just one. You hear, “Stay with this one; stay with this one.” But, when you get that message that says to move on, it’s time to move on.

*Student:* “Brother James said something to me that really moved me. He was picked up hitchhiking by this woman in Martha’s Vineyard, an old black woman, and he had been searching for God in a lot of different places. This woman had been blind and she’d had her sight restored by the Lord and she was so beautiful and so humble and so full of God that he said at last, ‘This is God.’

“It turns out that this woman who was so humble, (who was blind and who could now see) had spoken the Gospel to four sinners that became Pastors. She picked James up hitchhiking; she thought maybe this would be five. By now, she’s probably up to twelve, and she doesn’t go looking for them. They just drop in her lap. She just waters the ground, and to her joy, finds that the Spirit planted seeds.”

We don’t have to worry about the numbers that are produced. We just have to recognize if we are *producing* or if we are *on a side trip getting detoured*. Where there’s no production,

there's nothing happening. It's not working. Then we have to say to ourselves, 'Maybe I made a goal of this person out of my flesh. Maybe I see the value of them, maybe I'm looking for too big a fish. Maybe it's time to kill this relationship'.

*\*\* Another way to know you're on a side trip*

*is when they're winning and you're losing.*

A new Christian teenager was ministering to this other teenager who was into the occult. I asked him what was happening at their house. He said, "We've been seeing manifestations of demonship, things moving things and rattling things in the night. It's wearing me out!" So I said, "You're not ready to do that (deal with demons). You're in a situation where you're weakening, and then you'll lose. Bring the boy to church to win him to Jesus, and disciple him and deal with the devil later." So he invited the young man to a youth group skating event. The boy got saved and the demon talk left. Right relationship - now in the right environment.

There's no way that a teenager can come to the Lord and in a few months be ready to deal on that level unless the power of God is totally permeating them. The power of God has got to be flowing so great that they'll be able to take that on. He wouldn't know where God begins and where Satan ends. I'm saying there's some water that's just too deep for us and we have to recognize that. It's like sending someone who's just quit drinking alcohol to go into Tinker Street Cafe and minister to the guys in the bar. In two weeks, he's drinking along with them. This is not good – and it is definitely not God.

There is a time to recognize if you're on a side journey or in a relationship that's not beneficial. A friend of mine told me he had to stop partying with his wife. His wife was still in a nightclub mode and he said he had to stop doing that. Pray for her yes, accompany her - no. His own spirit just couldn't stand being in that environment. He had to make a choice. And his choice was to stay home and babysit because it was just not healthy at all. That was a relationship he just had to terminate and, along with that, dart throwing with his drinking buddies. He'd say, "We can still go play the darts, but I don't want to get drunk." So, eventually they axed him out of the group and he got some new friends. He could not produce disciples in this setting and almost could not maintain his own integrity. He kept his integrity though his wife wandered a while - she has returned to the Lord and to her husband – Praise the Lord.

**Knowing the Goal**

**Harvesters and Co-Workers**

Now let's look at Matthew 9:36: "*But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd*". This is the key - verse 37, "*Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few'*". Now, verse 38, "*Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest*". You could also pray for more workers into the harvest field. Now there's another way to read this. The harvest around me is plentiful. Therefore, I've got to work efficiently and fast. Why? Because there's few workers and I have to be busy creating more workers. And that's what we're doing now with this discipleship stuff and through prayer - getting more laborers.

Now look at verse 38, "*Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field*". That's the goal: more workers working fast and efficiently will get the harvest in, in time.

*\*\* There is a time constraint here; Jesus is coming.*

*"Then there will be a time when no man can work." (John 9:4)*

We're going to be held accountable for what we did in the Hudson Valley, US, Europe, India and the ends of the Earth. When Jesus says, 'I had this amount prepared. How many of them did you reach?' We can't be saying, "well, I was... uh... umm..." Jesus wants to know. He says, "I prepared 'X' amount of people in a certain area. How many of them did you get to?" We'll have to say, "Well, Lord I... uh..." He's going to say, "Well, why didn't you ask in Faith for more workers, if you needed them?"

**Prayer:** we have to be *consistent*, and *continually* in prayer; "Lord, send us more workers. We need more workers to bring in this harvest. Please Lord, send us more workers." That *has* to be our prayer, our constant prayer. "We need more help, Lord. We need more workers. Lord, send us who we need. We need this; we need that." We have to be constantly before the Throne, praying for workers, for helpers. This prayer must be a prayer of Faith, not begging, but believing "I have received" as in the previous section "Believe the Goal – have Faith in God's mandate." More people who can do the work. Stop right here and pray in Faith believing!!!

Now, here's what will happen. Mixed in with the **workers** and **helpers** you'll get the *wheat* and the *tares*, but Jesus said, "*Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, 'First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn'*" (Matt. 13:30). That means that your next prayer becomes discernment. So, the goal is workers. We need more workers to bring in the harvest. And then we need discernment.

The reason is when we send out the call for more workers, God hears us, but who else hears us? *satan*. he's going to say, "Let's send them people that look like workers. Let's send the people that talk like they're workers. Let's send them workers of iniquity mixed in with the Lord's workers. They'll really take up a lot of their time with nonsense and get them off on one of these sidetracks." Off on one of these relationship sidetracks. That's how it works.

You pick out a seventeen-year-old kid. He's cranking and burning. It seems like he's one hundred percent on it. He asks all the right questions, all at the right time. And then you find out a year later that he's been playing you for a fool. He's got no interest whatsoever in living

for Jesus, working for Jesus. He could really care less. He was just doing it to get your attention, and didn't even know he was manipulating in that way. But none of the seeds you planted are getting through at all. That's when you shift your attention from that seventeen-year-old boy to the seventeen-year-old girl or to a different boy.

It has to be conscious. You have to consciously say, "I put all this energy into watering here and it's not bearing fruit. Time for a change." You have to do it. You have to be fair and righteous about it. You can't waste God's time and your hard energy when you're looking for workers. You have to discern who is and who isn't. Separate out. It doesn't mean you don't love them. You are just recognizing they are not a multiplying disciple but a church-goer, or they're a tare.

Now, if they are a tare, you know that the work that they're doing is the work of satan, or whatever, and therefore the Word of God will drive them out. You usually do not need to drive them out. The other disciples are watching you, if they see you driving someone out, they assume, "Maybe I'm next". They fear that you may deal harshly with them. You also never know whom the Lord is going to bring out. They could have been the worst of the worst and turn out to be a powerful worker.

I was praying with a guy who could be a disciple, but had a strong demon. And the Lord spoke to me so clearly. He said, (from the book of I John) "*They went out from us, but they were not of us*" (v. 2:19). And I pulled my hands back from this person and I said to him, "You don't want the demon to go". "That's right," he said, "He makes me feel strong and powerful." I said, "O.K., have a nice day but don't wait too long to seek the Lord and get free for he (the demon) plans to destroy you and take you to hell!" Finding disciples calls for discernment. The Lord will reveal exactly what you need to know.

**Rewards (on Earth) of Discipleship**

Rewards –

1. Christ mindedness and peace
2. Provision and wealth
3. Kingdom values and character

**Christ mindedness and peace**

You begin to get **more Christ-minded**, which means that you are not as influenced by judgments of your fellow man as quickly. Your response to peer pressure changes once you begin to see yourself as a multiplying disciple under the Headship of the Lord. You begin to focus on, “Now I’m doing this for God, rather than others or myself. I don’t care how other people feel about me”.

This brings a blessed freedom and great peace. What a peace to have your mind on Christ instead of ourselves. Also to think on everything from Jesus Christ’s perspective frees us from a works mentality.

Another reward is **inner confidence**. You are going to develop new inner confidence you never had before. You become aware of constant love and care from Heaven. You are a child of the God Most High, you do matter to God, and therefore, you count. God loves me and if I mess up, He will help fix it. What a point of confidence – Christ working in me – “*Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; ... He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it*” (1 Thess. 5:23,24). There is a confidence in knowing that God’s got it all covered and He’s given it to you and me by His Grace.

You’re not going to be danced around now because your focus is on Christ. You can see Christ in everything you do. You begin thinking, “Well, what would Jesus do?” as opposed to, “What is the group doing?” “What’s popular?” or “What’s in?” or “What do **I** want to do?” “What Would Jesus Do?” becomes more than a slogan on a T-shirt, piece of jewelry or on a hat. It becomes a way of life. There is a great peace and confidence that comes from knowing Who you are modeling your life after and knowing your purpose in life.

**Provision and wealth**

In Mark 10:30 we read, “*who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time - houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions - and in the age to come, eternal life*”. Oh yes, persecutions.

In Matthew 6:31-33 we find, “*Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you*”. **Material wealth and financial security**. What the Gentiles seek. The wealth, blessings and beauty of the world are here for God’s children.

**\*\* God wants us to prosper, but with a different value system  
– we control things, they don’t control us.**

Jesus speaks about being good stewards and multiplying what God gives us. Proving we are trustworthy, wise and functioning with Kingdom values. This means God’s Kingdom first - and wealth exists by and for the Master and His kids.

**\*\* Prosperity is a reward but never the goal.  
... And an AMEN goes right there!!!**

A disciple called to a poverty mission-field will still be rich and have his needs met.



Ravens were dispatched to feed Elijah. Widow's oil vessels were supernaturally refilled to save the man of God. Angels fed Jesus in the wilderness. We will thrive even in poverty for we are never truly impoverished. Paul teaches us this in Philippians: *"for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content; I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"* (vs. 11-13), and *"my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus"* (v. 19).

Learning to be successful, rich or poor, and having a new Kingdom value system will cause you to be persecuted by friend, family and the enemy. Look at Romans 5:3: *"but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance character; and character, hope"*.

### **Kingdom Values - Character**

Your **personal character** is going to develop. Tests and trials make us stronger. They mold and shape us, as we are clay in the Master's hands. He will bend us but He will not break us unless we need it. Your own personal character is going to sky rocket because you are going to take your eyes off yourself and your eyes are going to be on serving the Lord, which means that the Holy Spirit is going to equip you in special ways. You will be involved in self-examination. Once you involve yourself in self-examination, your character improves. The Holy Spirit brings up in our conscience (inner man) what is displeasing to Him and we receive supernatural help to correct flaws and weaknesses. This gives us a better character.

Throughout Scriptures the Holy Spirit directs His children to notice their shortcomings. The Father warns us of character flaws that must not be neglected – here are some examples of character flaws that God put His magnifying glass upon in the patriarchs:

Moses – head strong (killed the Egyptian, failed to circumcise his boys, striking the rock)

Eli and David – discipline – failed to control their sons where the temple and righteousness were concerned.

Solomon – wisdom – was his strength, but also his failure – it was politically wise to marry foreign king's daughters, but better to obey God. These woman brought idols into the land.

Samson – women – enough said!

Balaam, Gehazi, Judas – avarice – lust for earthly wealth destroys the peace in a man and men fall into its trap by lying and deceit.

I believe Dr. Ed Cole said "Being a male is a matter of birth but being a man is a matter of choice". "Character is who you are when no one is watching."

Discipleship builds character by instilling Christ-likeness into every waking thought and sleeping meditation. All this self-improvement on the earth and then "bang" in an instant Heaven's rewards come next.

### **Rewards – Living in the Kingdom**

Let's see what's going on in the ninth chapter of Matthew. Jesus is going to send out twelve disciples. And then a few passages later in chapter 10, He is going to send out seventy-two; in Acts a hundred twenty, and then the rest of them all with the same instructions. Let's look at some of these instructions.

In verse 5 of chapter 10, *"Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans."* Now, that passage was temporary and specific to this group of early disciples because **our** command is what? *"...Go into all the world..."* (Mark 16:15). We know that verse five has been revised, expanded. Let's continue with verse 6 (Matt. Ch 10),

“But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel”. This command has not been changed but added to - “...to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile” (Romans 2:10). Continuing with verse 7 (Matt. 10), “And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand’”. The King is here; therefore, His Kingdom is ever present now as then. In the prophetic sense, it is near, as these are the end times. And as in the coming of Jesus, He is near.

In the sense that the Kingdom of Heaven is near, the presence of God is near. That’s as valid now as it was then, because Jesus said, “...For indeed, the kingdom of God is *within* you” (Luke 17:21). So, that Kingdom is near. He meant that the power of God is with you in the person of the Holy Spirit. If you are standing next to someone who doesn’t have the Kingdom of God in them, they are standing near the Kingdom of God, because the Kingdom of God is in you.

**\*\* What a reward, getting to live in the Kingdom of God!!!**

***Because the Kingdom of God has come into you!***

*Comment from a student from a discipleship class:* “That reminds me. I just thought the other day, when the crown colony of Hong Kong was shifting from English control to China. We are a ‘crown colony’. Like Hong Kong was a crown colony of England. It belonged to the king. It didn’t matter that it was in another place. This just came to me when there was all this publicity about Hong Kong and China. It just sank into my spirit. Wow, we’re a crown colony. Wherever we go, we’re the King’s. Wherever we go is the King’s territory. It doesn’t matter that it’s the other side of the world, because it still belongs to the King.” Hmm... very interesting.

*Pastor continues:* “So, in verse 7 He says, “And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’” So, we need to recognize and walk at all times in the understanding that once we become a believer, the only limitation of God’s power at work in our lives is the **exercising of our Faith**. If we arrive at a level of Faith and recognize the full amount of power that God would manifest to us, *by Faith*, it would shock us. We don’t walk in that awareness. We need to continue to grow in that. The power of God wants to work through you **all the time**. God wants to manifest Himself through your prayers, through your hands, through your life **all the time**. He wants to manifest all of the time, for His Glory.”

**\*\* If we will give Him all that we are, He will give us all that He is!**

“It says, ‘if the Holy Spirit is in you, the Kingdom of God is in you. If the Kingdom of God is in you, it’s in there to work peace, joy and righteousness all the time.’ Which means, then, that all the other promises of God that He gave us - to disciple and to minister - come with power.”

### **Rewards – Living in the Power**

In a sense, Jesus is saying, “The Kingdom of God is near you because of the words I have spoken to you. The Kingdom of Heaven is in you”. The Kingdom of Heaven is in you, near you, around you. It’s all here, **therefore; heal the sick**. And, **therefore; raise the dead**. And, **therefore; cleanse those who have leprosy**. **Therefore; drive out demons**. “**Freely, you have received; freely give**” (Matthew 10:7,8).

**\*\* Salvation is a free gift for the taking,**

***but discipleship costs everything that we have and are.***

***The reward is God’s unlimited grace and power!***

If we do not have these, we should not feel condemned, but we have to recognize it is just like a little kid whose father gives him a car. The kid says, “What???” The father says,

“That’s your car. There are the keys, right in Daddy’s desk.” And the kid says, “That’s my car??” And Daddy says, “Yes, that’s your car.” “Can I drive it now, Daddy? Can I drive it now?” “Well, no, you can’t drive it now. As soon as you get your learner’s permit, we’ll go out and drive that car.” “Why can’t I just go out and drive it now?” “As soon as you get your learner’s permit.” That is like the growing of our Faith, when we are twelve, thirteen, and fourteen.

All of us can believe God for some things, but none of us can believe God for everything. The reason is we have so much of the flesh to counter in our experiences, so we haven’t arrived there yet. But that doesn’t mean it’s not our car - it *is* our ‘car’ - when we attain Faith. Some people just don’t believe ‘Dad’ and never go for the ‘learners permit’, they don’t even go and ‘sit in the car and pretend to drive.’ Eventually they go and tell people, “My Dad’s a liar and there is no car.” So, we just have to be honest about it - we either believe Mark 16:15, “*These signs will follow*” or we don’t believe they will follow.

We have to say, “Boy, I really would like to believe the Lord for a thousand dollars this month. I know I can believe for two fifty.” Go for it. Believe for the two fifty. And then, once you get to two fifty, praise God, thank Him and say, “Lord, next month., I’m going to believe for five hundred dollars.” And then, next month, go for the thousand. Your Faith will grow. Just like this guy who built a large orphanage in England in the early 1800’s. He started with nothing. And he said that it was just as *easy* for him to believe God for a million dollars as it was for one dollar.

At that time he had about seven or eight orphaned children. They sat around the table with absolutely nothing to eat. There hadn’t been anything for a couple of days. And he told them all to go upstairs and put on their best clothes. They all went upstairs and put on their best clothes and they came down and they sat down and he said grace and he just sat there. And they said, “Well, where’s the food?” And he said, “Don’t worry.” The kids said, “Well, what should we do?” And he said, “Let’s just thank God for the food.” While they were praying, the doorbell rang and it was some people from the village that had come out and brought them some food.

*\*\* So, the moral of that story is:*

***Go put on your best clothes and thank God.***

He gives an instruction in Matthew 10:9. God tells us this. “*Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food.*” Well, if the worker is worth his keep, who’s paying him? The Lord is going to get someone to pay the worker.

So He goes on and He sends out the twelve disciples and the others later on. Now, watch what He says, verse 12, “*And when you go into a household, greet it. If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.*” Do you see how powerful we are? We have a very important responsibility.

**Rewards – Blessing and Cursing**

As long as you know the goal and you are aware of the rewards, then, as you are ministering to a potential discipling person, you know you have great gifts that God wants to give to them through you. He wants to pour a blessing out on you for being faithful, but then he wants to pour a blessing wherever you point your finger, wherever you think the blessing should go. This is powerful stuff.

*\*\* Blessings, Blessings, you give them, you get them to give them  
to give them you get them then...*

*you get the point by now, be blessed (happy, prosperous).*

You can also direct a curse, and we have to be very careful about that, because we do have that power. If someone rejects you and you don't like it, you have to be very serious about directing a curse upon them. God has to honor it because you are His servant. God says, *"If anyone will not welcome you, shake the dust off your feet and leave. I tell you it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah than the judgment on that day and in that town."* Now, this applies more to the evangelists than to some of us. We should practice not returning evil for evil, by an outpouring of forgiveness. When you go to somebody next door and they curse God to your face, they put themselves under a curse, but sometimes an action on your part is required.

You pick someone up who's hitchhiking and he's cursing like a sailor in your car. You ask him not to and he continues to do it. You're under obligation to pull off to the side of the road and ask him to get out; he's now cursed to walk! First of all, God gave you the car. It's a Godly car. It's a Godly place. This person is an affront to everything God is doing and everything God is saying. You have a responsibility to draw the line. You don't have to put any other curse on them, but you do have to draw the line. Or else you're off on some ridiculous side-trip, allowing a pagan to *"trample the Son of God underfoot"* (Heb. 10:29). Sounds silly, but it does happen.

I mention it because it happened to me. I said, "Listen, man, you keep talking like that..." "Does it offend you?" he said. I said, "Yeah, it offends me." He didn't say another word. I dropped him off on his corner. I know this guy. He's old enough to be my father. I pick him up because at the first of every month he needs a ride into Kingston to get his social security check. But he curses like a sailor. He's bitter. He's angry. When I pick him up now, he keeps it clean.

We must all recognize that you have a gift to give people. That is one of the rewards.

*\*\* One of the rewards is that you are  
the blessing to give.*

Look at Matthew 10:16 now. *"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves."* Christians fail in this area so often. To be wise as serpents means don't forget the goal. Be wise in worldly ways as well as spiritually so you don't get trapped in sin. Satan is setting his traps for good people and you are one of them. Innocent as a dove means you don't have to carry out the vengeance of the Lord. The important thing is to be bold and humble at the same time.

*\*\* You be bold in the glory and you be humble in your flesh.*

*"But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles"* (vs. 17, 18). That hasn't happened often in the United States, but look out, it's coming. *"But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you"* (vs. 19,20).

The teenage girl at Columbine High School, Cassie Bernall, heard the young gunman ask who believes in God and, I am sure without thinking, the girl said by the Holy Spirit, "I do." Her testimony shook this nation and sent a challenge to the Christian body. She paid the

ultimate cost, her life.

*“Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents...”* In terms of knowing the goal, knowing the rewards... it says here, this is one of the **costs**. *“Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. All you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I will say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes”* (vs. 21-23). When you stand up to become a multiplying disciple, the first and strongest opposition are the people closest to you that love you the most. And they are not often aware of what they are doing. In most cases, if you’re more than two years saved, you have already worked through that.

And here is what also happens. When you go to disciple someone, when you are winning them to the Lord, their relatives may hate them; their friends may hate them. You will have to minister to them, to steady the new disciple. What’s happening is that the Spirit of God is manifesting in the disciple you are reaching and the spirit of the world in the other people just cannot stand it. We misinterpret it sometimes and say, “Well, that one’s full of satan.” That is not the case, though satan may be agitating and encouraging them.

It’s like they live on block A and you’re on block B and they’re afraid that the two streets never meet, and that communication is going to break down and that they are losing the person (the disciple). That’s when real love is the basis. They feel, “I’m losing control over them”. It also feels like they are becoming a different person. “I love this person and now that they’re hanging out with Jesus, they are all different. This Jesus stuff makes me feel uncomfortable” - is what they are thinking.

The new disciple’s friends are also very afraid that they are going to come under your condemnation. The condemnation, though, isn’t going to come from you directly. It’s going to come from the Spirit of God. John 16:8 says: *“And when He (Holy Spirit) comes He will convict the world of sin.”* This work of the Holy Spirit will cause division and loss immediately, but great good later on. The new disciple does become divided from his family and friends, but they actually will get a better person eventually, when God finishes His work. Also, the disciple will cause his family and friends to come to the Lord, hopefully. But they don’t understand that in the throes of losing people that they love. You can say, ‘God’s going to improve them’, but at the time they want what they had, not realizing they are going to get a better person out of the deal.

Romans 8:1, is one of the most misquoted, misunderstood Scriptures in the Bible today. *“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.”* If we reverse that, it becomes: therefore, there *is* condemnation for those who are *not* in Christ.

Now when I was not in Christ, I was really uncomfortable around people who were walking the walk and talking the talk. Thirty years ago, the Rhythm and Blues band I was in was performing at the Apollo. We were called the “Children of God”, but none of us was following God in the least. They booked us as the opening act for a famous Gospel group. The contrast was just too much. My parents were just lovely. They said, “Wonderful show.” They didn’t say anything demeaning. They didn’t put us down. But... you talk about feeling it - oh, man. There was condemnation. There was division; mother - son, father - son, friends, associates, etc. Jesus divided us up and it was easy to see, we were on a detour, a

sidetrack. Named for God and living for the world. 2Cor. 6:14 in action - *“For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?”* - None.

*\*\* The cost is great, the rewards greater,  
the limits worth breaking if they're man made,  
worth keeping if they're God-made.*

So what's the end of the matter?

Eccl. 12:13,14:

*“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:  
Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all.  
For God will bring every work into judgment,  
Including every secret thing,”*

There is a P.S....Heb. 11:6:

*“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”*

The key word here is rewarder – God is a rewarder. Being a disciple of Jesus the Christ is the best paying job anyone can ever have. Praise God!

Every disciple must be a student of the Word. The Bible does cover all we need to know to do every job in the church and the world. One morning my heart was consumed with the problems of the small country church I was called to lead. I turned on the radio and Pastors Clinton and Sarah Utterbach of Spring Valley, N.Y. were discussing leadership. Pastor Sarah quoted someone she heard say, “A leader is the one that knows something's wrong, knows what to do and is willing to do it.” Thank God for an answer to prayer. From that moment on I knew that if I had a clear idea where the Lord was leading - then go get it done.

**Just like a Gentile 'Lord'**

Let's look at this in terms of multiplying discipleship. You disciple somebody. How could you lord over them in a detrimental way? For example, I'm bringing Jimmy to the Lord. He's smoking cigarettes, and I say to him, "Listen, when I got saved, I got instant deliverance from cigarettes. And when you get saved, you'll be delivered". Which, of course, means if you did not get delivered, you must not be saved. Now, what have I done? Am I Biblically correct? No. You can't find chapter and verse for that anywhere. As the older brother in the Lord or the more mature "saint", I've just lorded my Christian experience over him.

There are subtle ways of lording over the people you are trying to disciple. They're very subtle, but they're very, very detrimental, very damaging. If we're not careful, we'll be crushing people as we push for the higher seat. We may have authority over them, but it's not to be used in a put-down or self-elevating way.

In the Kingdom of Heaven, we are servants. And in a servant's role, lording your authority over them by saying, "I'm above you and you're beneath me," is wrong.

*\*\* The higher the pedestal you are on  
the harder the climb for your disciple.*

Now, I'm not saying you should lower yourself by actually participating in whatever weakness or sin they have. I'm saying don't verbally put yourself on a pedestal and demote them. If you harp on something when they miss the mark, you may elevate yourself and empower satan with each defeat, whether real or imagined. The weak can become discouraged and yield to the will of satan. You do not want to empower satan and make him bigger in the situation, so do not emphasize the negative, brag on yourself or put down the disciple. Compared to Jesus we are all beneath Him as Lord.

Jesus says in Mark 10, verse 43, "*Yet it shall not be so among you*", meaning 'not so with you' - the rulers of the Gentiles lorded over them, and their high officials exercised authority over them. Becoming a real leader, a real disciple, you have to be the one that's not striving to be the leader. You want to be the servant. As you do the 'servant-ing', they will follow you. And, as they voluntarily follow you, then they will follow that example, *being a servant*. They will not be driven, but will be led. You can't get behind people and drive them, but you can go ahead of people and they will follow. Just walk it out as a true servant and they'll follow you. Remember - If you drive sheep from behind you'll step in a lot of sheep poop.

A person who is *striving* to be the leader is more likely to *fall* than the one who recognizes that he must be focused on *following Christ* and that he is a *follower*. I heard it said of someone that all his life he wanted to be a star, and now he learned to follow *the Star*, which is Jesus. What did Paul say? "*Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ*" (1Cor: 11:1 KJV). The New King James Version says, "*Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ*". If my eyes are on Christ and you follow me, then you're not going to miss it because that's Who I'm following.

Now, back to Mark 10, verse 43, "*shall not be so among you*", meaning you are not to be exercising your authority over anyone in a negative way. After all, you can't anyway. The Holy Spirit has the true power and authority and He distributes them as offices and gifts for the sake of the Body, not the sake of the individual. So say to yourself, "Not so with me." "*whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant*". Therefore, I must be a servant. That's following the lead servant who happens to have other servants following him.

## **Amen.**

Now, notice an interesting thing here. Jesus doesn't speak against, nor does He criticize a *desire* to be great. In our society, we tend to do that. But He says, "*whoever desires to become great...*" (v.43). He's saying that it's O.K. to want to be number one under Him. Not everyone will sit on a throne at His right hand. There are rewards and crowns, and God wants us to strive for them. In Matt. 6:33 He tells us: "*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you*". And in Matt. 20:26 He says, "*whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant*".

God does not have a problem with our aspiring to higher levels. He does have a problem with us aspiring in a worldly way. We cannot build for Jesus a desire to reach the top for self. If our motivation is to reach high heights for the Lord then we can be blessed.

So then He says, "*And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all*" (v.44). That's the one that makes you want to go ... "uhh!" Our flesh wants us to qualify whom we will serve. You know, churches do it sometimes. You hit the door and you know this is a \$30,000 and up church, meaning, "Don't think about fellowshipping here unless you make \$30,000 or more annually".

A friend of mine was pastoring one of those churches, and he had a heart for poor people and the downtrodden. I just asked him straight out, "You've got a problem here, don't you?" And he said, "I don't think I'll be here much longer". Sure enough, a year later he finally had to leave because there was just no way that that congregation and this pastor were going to see eye to eye about accepting all people.

This pastor accepted anybody who hit the door and he treated them all the same. They had a system set up that, if you didn't fit in, they just cold-shouldered you (ignored you). If you had needs they just ignored you. In another small town, all the school teachers were Methodists, but, when they moved up into the school administration, they moved across the street to the Episcopal Church - more money, more pomp, a bigger staff, less volunteerism, less servanthood. Many examples like these exist - unfortunately, selfishness *is* in the church!

A church should contain "haves" and "have-nots". Those that need to give and those that need to receive until they can become givers. From Joseph of Arimathea the rich, to blind Bartimaeus the poor; the church needs both.

Back to Verse 44, "*And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all*". That's really strong, because He's saying you become servant to any and every body. That's what He means; look at verse 45, "*for even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many*".

Continue with verse 46; watch what happens: "*Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me."* The many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "*Son of David, have mercy on me!*" So Jesus stood still..." If, in normal circumstances, Jesus is the One with the Authority and the One with the Power, He doesn't have to stop for a beggar. Let's translate the phrase "*have mercy on me*". It could read, 'Jesus, Son of David, meet my need; do good for me'.

Now, 'the many' tell him to hush because he's a beggar. They are basically saying to him, "We lord over you and so does Jesus. And, since we lord over you, you shut up". Bartimaeus is basically saying in the spiritual realm, "Not so. I'm calling my Servant, Jesus". And his



Servant stops in the road, ready to serve. See it? In verse 49, “*So Jesus stood still...*”. You have Jesus, the King, and the Lord of the universe, stopping for a blind beggar in the road. Who’s serving whom here? So, Bartimaeus stops Jesus still in His tracks. And Jesus “...commanded him to be called”. Now the only reason He had to command him to be called is that there’s a great crowd pressing, and Bartimaeus is blind.

Back to verse 49, “*Then they called the blind man, saying to him, ‘Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you’.*” They’re still lording it over him. They still don’t have it right. Bartimaeus is the one who’s called for the action - “You, You over there, You stop and give me what I want.” And Jesus is responding to that. The followers of Jesus are like, “Oh, cheer up. The One in Authority is calling you”. Bartimaeus could have said, “Not so, He’s a willing Servant with great ability and I called Him.”

Jesus becomes Servant to Bartimaeus because He must always respond to Faith and compassion. The Holy Spirit says, “Jesus, stop. Call that blind man and serve Me. Through him, do the work I’ve anointed You for.”

Let’s see the outcome (vs. 50-52): “*And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus. So Jesus answered and said to him, “**What do you want Me to do for you?**” The blind man said to Him, “Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.” And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.*” Jesus - servant, and Blind Bartimaeus - the boss. Jesus - slave, Bartimaeus - lord. Wow! We have no right to hide from those we serve. We must remain until we’ve prayed with everyone that calls upon us.

Whether we serve in a prayer line or a coffee line -

*\*\* lord over none and be a servant to each one  
and the Lord will raise you up.*

**Character Matters**

**Being a Servant!**

The key word is **servant** – that is what makes a disciple a **success**.

Mark Ch. 10 - we'll start with this reading. Go down to the 32nd verse, *“Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him: “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.””*

Then we get to verse 35, *“Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying,*

*“Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask.” And He said to them, “What do you want Me to do for you?” They said to Him, “Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory.” But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” They said to Him, “We are able.” So Jesus said to them, “You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared.””*

The key here is that servanthood leads to an appointed place. They are asking for seats of high honor. These seats are for **ultimate servanthood** with **maximum sacrifice**. There is no asking or demanding for these high seats because, only the appointed and those anointed will be placed in these seats. Since Jesus, as the “Word”, is God (Who was and is Highest) became a Man (a lower Spirit being), He made the greatest sacrifice and therefore earned the greatest seat at the right hand of the Father. Jesus died for all and served all.

The Son made this great sacrifice for us, so by *servanthood* He is given the **high seat**. Ever think why God - Father - has the highest seat of all? The Father is the greatest Servant of all. As Creator of all He is also the *Sustainer* of all. He sustains what He has created for **its best** end, even though it costs Him so much more than the created thing can imagine.

As a father and pastor I experience great pain, concern, and giving of self as I see the children of God struggle and suffer. *How much more then does God – Abba, Father - who continually shows that His hope and concern is for our well being.* His desire is that none would be lost (2Peter 3:9). To best serve His creatures - mankind - He made the ultimate act of servanthood - He sent Himself in the person of His Son to be a Servant to all. Then He, Father - God - gives authority over His creation to the Son and vows, *“Sit at My right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool”* (Ps. 110:1). So the great God, with all the power, uses all He is and has to serve the Son and the creatures He has chosen to love.

He is such a Servant that He does good things for all – *“He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust”* (Matt. 5:45). Therefore, we understand what Jesus was saying when He says, *“I speak what I have seen with My Father...”* (John 8:38) and, *“Many good works I have shown you from My Father”* (John 10:32). Jesus is telling us ‘My servanthood comes from the Greatest Servant to all, **The Father**, who is also our God’. Keep in mind that servanthood has two important characteristics, *ability* and *willingness*.

Luke 12:48 *“For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required.”* Your ability, (skills, talents, financial power, etc.) determine how you’ll serve and how much you can serve. Your willingness determines if you will. God is the Greatest Servant, for His ability allows Him to serve billions of humans, spirits, plants and animals, all at the same time. The more we know God the more we realize He is always willing and able to serve. *“Whoever calls on the Name of the Lord will be saved”* (Joel 2:32).

Notice in Scripture that **no one** that came to Jesus was turned away - He was always willing. Even in death while on the cross He ministered to people, and served the criminal on the cross while His body was racked with pain; what a Servant. Never was He too busy, too important, too righteous, too clean or too Jewish to help others. In Luke 10:25-37, we learn about another example of a true servant - the Good Samaritan. This man became a servant to a total stranger that had been beaten and robbed. He gave time, money and energy to someone who could not repay.

Most people are very selective about who they will help or serve. People are even more restrictive about who they’ll do without for. ‘I’ll help the poor, but I won’t do toilets.’ The Creator of the universe, at the appointed time, used His anointing to wash common men’s feet: that’s servanthood. James and John have a good desire to sit at the right hand of Jesus, but as yet they do not fully realize the way up is to take the way down. When other people find out our plan is to rule over them, they usually don’t like it. Consider the rest of the Scripture.

Continuing in Mark 10, verse 41, *“And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.””*

Now, as for the “Gentiles” ...He’s talking about the rulers of the Gentiles. It’s not so much that the rulers of the Gentiles are the rulers, but the drag of the whole situation is that they lord it over them. What does He mean by that? He means that they oppress and degrade (put down) those they rule over. How do they do this to them? Basically, they were like governors and they over-taxed them and took others for granted. What other way did they oppress them? They would take special privileges for themselves - manipulate them, control them and discriminate against them.

There is a more subtle way that they lorded it over them, more devastating, and it applies to us today as to who’s over whom. There’s a kind of arrogance we have in churches like who sits in the front row and who’s on the deacon board and who’s a big deal. The attitude of the heart is to flaunt power and position. For example: “Remember, I’m the pastor of this church, and you better do what I say.” Reminding people, “I’m lord over you.” Some more examples: “Willy, you’re just a kid and don’t forget it.” “I’ve been here a long time and I know all the Elders.”

The most resented authority is the one who lords over you, and the way he lords over you is reminding you constantly that he is up and you are down. If a person is going to lord over you, it’s bad enough that they have authority that they can exercise, but it’s most devastating when they put themselves in a higher position by reminding you that you are in a lower position. They let you know, “I’m the boss; you’re not. I’m important; I’m in control here;

you're not. I'm the authority here; you're not." That's what Jesus is trying to point out. He is saying that the Gentiles, by virtue of position, lord their power over the people.

Now, the exercise of power is a given, but lording of power isn't. It's unnecessary in the Body of Christ. If you have the power, and you can exercise it, that's one thing. But to allow the ego to say, "I'm the boss, here. You're a peon; you're a pawn in this thing and I'm the knight." It's devastating to the ego of the peon, and it's damaging to the ego of the boss.

The Romans had an interesting series of laws. If you were not a Roman citizen, you were below all the Romans. If they were walking down the road, not only were you to get off, but if they came over to you, it was required by law that if a Roman soldier said, "Carry my bag; take my cloak," the Jewish citizen had to carry his bag and take his cloak. One mile, I think, was the legal distance. That's why Jesus says, "*If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two*" (Matthew 5:40,41). In our culture, we don't really get the picture. If even by law it's required that you go extra, then go the *next* 'extra' as a good servant.

Another example of this is when Jesus was carrying the cross. What did they do? Jesus couldn't carry His cross due to the severity of the scourging, and He fell down. They took Simon of Cyrene, an African Jew, and required that he carry Jesus' cross. This was quite an introduction into the ministry for Simon. He and his son, Alexander, got saved and became heads of the church at Jerusalem following this forced act of service. The Romans exercised authority over the people, but they also lorded it over them in overt as well as subtle ways that really hurt flesh and ego.

*\*\* In Christ we are equal*

*with different time appointments for our anointing –  
all servants seeking to serve.*

To be called to be a servant is a blessed appointment that has a blessed anointing. This anointing is to be truly Christ-like; a servant of the Father serving others. This death of self prepares us to join with the Spirit of God. Intimacy with God is only possible for those that will wait upon and rest in God. True worship is not saint entertainment, but passionate servanthood. We bring a sacrifice of praise. Our lives should become a sacrifice of praise unto our God. No applause, no thanks, no fame, we just live to serve our God directly and through others. The beauty of His system is that if we succeed at this then we do reap applause, thanks and fame by the Holy Spirit. We get to dwell in His Glory, where all our needs are met. The way up is to take the way down. Amazing.



# *Evangelism*

**‘Christianese’ Language Problems**

As believers we need to be aware that we have a language filled with colloquialisms that are confusing to the unsaved. For example, “I have a *burden* for missions.” “Backsliding.” “Spend more time in your *prayer closet*.” “I’m *standing in faith*.” “*Rebuke* that!” “He’s an *intercessor*.” “God is good, all the time.” “*Washed in the Blood*.” There are many, many more, none of which make sense to the unsaved or new believers.

Speaking *Christianese* to non-believers brings confusion and says they’re an outsider. If some term slips out, take the time to explain, but try to remember whom you’re speaking to. If you are talking with someone at work who is telling you his troubles, don’t say, “That’s all right, brother, you are on my prayer list.” That makes no sense to him at all; wrong terminology, wrong lingo.

Non-believers expect us to be weird, so don’t prove it by speaking a different language that doesn’t include them. “*On your face; while we tarry for the Comforter; you resurrected body of demon fighting flesh*.” What? Huh???

**A Winning Witness**

A disciple should be able to answer the question, “Why are you a follower of Christ?” The answer must be in plain English without using religious terms. It makes no sense to say, “I needed to be washed in the Blood of the Lamb!” but it does make sense to say, “I felt dirty and trapped in self-destructive cycles. I knew I needed help so I...” Now we’re getting to the heart of the greatest need of humanity - we all need a Savior.

When you emphasize how low you went and how bad and sinful you were you can hurt your cause. The listener thinks, “Wow, I was never that bad, he sure did need something. If I get that bad off, then maybe I’ll turn to Jesus too, but compared to him, I’m all right.”

*\*\* Everyone cannot identify with the depth of your sin,  
but they can identify with the feelings that got you there!!*

Everyone in the pool of humanity has experienced the loneliness and defeat of sin. The battles of life have given us all a time of crying out for help. We all have wondered, “Is there help from Heaven for our situations?” How wonderful to tell someone, “You have felt as I have felt and there is a Helper.” When the listener responds, “I hear you but I’ve been sooo bad that there’s no one that would help me.” You then can tell of how your pain drove you to the bottom. Then tell of the grace and forgiveness of our Lord. Tell of the thief on the cross (Luke 23), and how “*while we were still sinners, Christ died for us*” (Rom. 5:8); then reel him in, out of the pool of humanity and into the healing pool of the Lord.

*\*\* Who else in the history of man ever lived and died for you?*

This is the need of all humans, but some people are in denial until life gives them a wake-up call. Our job is to be ready with the information, freely distributing it without condemnation.



**Evangelizing the World**

In America we want to find a method, a breakdown, a formula that will always work. There are helpful things to remember, but following the Holy Spirit is the only sure method. We can call upon techniques that worked for someone else and learn how to apply them, but we must remain flexible to what the Spirit is doing.

In an earlier section I spoke on telling people your feelings rather than ‘how low we went before conversion.’ There are other keys to remember; here are a few to examine:

Describe your world view and religious view. In very general terms, tell what mindset you aligned with. For example; “I felt the world was all screwed up. My goals were to get very wealthy and be successful in business. I felt that religion was O.K. for some, but wouldn’t make a difference in my life.” There, in three sentences you have set a stage to painting a picture that’s easy to see or identify with.

Notice, we have:

- 1) a broad view, (“the world”),
- 2) personal goals are stated,
- 3) and religious position is presented.

Next:

4) “...and then it happened!” Express the main event, the experience that led to a “Jesus moment!” Focus on how you felt rather than all the step-by-step details. “It was one of those days where I felt like *something’s got to change* - like I just can’t keep doing this...” rather than, “the sky was over cast with dark clouds, my mom called my Uncle Fred and by noon, I knew it was noon ‘cause the hall clock...”

5) “I realized” (came to know, observed) that “there was a change! I felt like my view of my goals had been too narrow - I felt a new peace with my world, a shift in my goals and a joy about the Lord.” This moment is what I call the “Prodigal Moment”. In Luke 15:17, the prodigal son “*came to himself*” – the soul gave way to the inner man. Most people either had this moment (mind-emotions) or long for it because this is the moment when a life is changed.

6) locate the person (close the gap). “Have you ever felt anything like that? Do you want me to tell you what else happened?”

7) give them the Gospel. Short, sweet and to the point: God = good, devil = bad. Man = a sinner, Jesus = a Savior. God from Heaven came down = Jesus. Jesus paid price while we were yet sinners, sent Holy Spirit = power, and ability to live the victorious life as a witness, with a personal, knowable Savior. “Do you feel like you would like Jesus to do this for you?”

When the answer is;

- a) “Well, I have questions first.” Answer their questions or find someone that can, or
- b) “Thanks, but no thanks.” Politely end the discussion and thank them for listening.

Note that a seed has been planted, in a non-condemning way, and move on.

If the answer is,

- c) “Yes!” Lead them in a simple prayer of repentance, invite the Lord and dedicate their lives to the Lord.

People call it the “sinners prayer” but there is no written, formal prayer, so be flexible and listen to the Holy Spirit’s leading. Let the person pray and you quietly agree. Romans 10:9-13 contains all that need be covered. Also, Mark 16:15-20, Acts 2:29-39, Acts 10:34-43, John

3:13-18, John 11:25-27, Luke 23:40-43, Ephesians 2:1-9, Galatians 4:4-7, Matthew 16:15-16. These all contain the main idea - coming freely to Jesus as Savior.

There you have 7 neat steps to follow that may or may not work. The only method that always works is the Holy Spirit. Jesus says the Holy Spirit convicts the world, so once that's done and the person has it in his heart to repent, then any prayer or delivery will bear fruit.

Remember; you don't know whom or when - just be faithful and ready to tell your testimony. I've had many look totally disinterested and then... BANG! So, sow seeds and watch God grow souls and free spirits.

**All Of Us Are Fishing From The Pool Of Humanity**

All of us are fishing in a pool of humanity. That's why I go to the Woodstock Community Center (a non-religious gathering place) - I'm fishin' in that area. I go to the jail - I'm fishing there. There's a pool of humanity out there. You have to identify where you can fish. Some of you can fish on your job; some of you can fish socially, many fish in AA or NA (Narcotics Anonymous). Fish where you are. Where can you be an example of Christian life and be a model of peace, joy and righteousness? Our testimony is most effective if we walk the talk and talk the walk. A good saying is: Be real before you start to deal.

Fish are caught in the world. When they get to church we confirm, dedicate, fellowship and disciple them. Sundays are for worship and edification. Bible studies and classes are for training. You have to catch them before you can cook them. You use your walk, love, attitude and conversation to draw out of people what the Holy Spirit is putting into them, and this draws them to the Jesus in you. We are on the sea listening for the Lord to say, "*Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch*" (Luke 5:4).

*(The following is actual dialogue from Class)*

*Pastor Don:* "Do you know when I zoned in on you? Three years ago at the mall. Remember that day?"

*Young man:* "Yup."

*Pastor Don:* "That was the day I started praying for you, believing for you - and then the next time I thought I had you was the day you came to the outdoor concert. Remember that day? I followed you around, wanted to talk to you. We ate hot dogs together, remember?"

*Young man:* "Yeah."

*Pastor Don:* "That was it. I had other things to do at the mall, but I was also looking for multiplying disciples. I knew you could multiply."

*Young man:* "What do you mean by that?"

*Pastor Don:* "Multiplying disciples are people who can go through this process of going to Bible study and getting the Word in them - get Word, get Word - and then go to the next level of training. Once you get to the next level of training, you are a disciple who can multiply."

*Young man:* "So, if somebody says, 'Show me in the Bible...', I'm ready to open up the Bible and go to Psalm 38:1, and like that. I'll be able to go into the Bible just like that and know where different verses are."

*Pastor Don:* "You don't even have to be that good, but you have enough Bible study training to know the Spirit of the Word. You may not always know chapter and verse, but you know it's in the Word and you say, 'In the Bible it says such and such...' And you can't do that unless you have been in Bible study a certain number of years. Somebody says to you, 'Well, I stole this on my job and I think I'm entitled to it, whatever, whatever...' Everybody in this room has gone through enough Sunday school activity and Bible study to say, 'The Ten Commandments says: 'Thou shalt not steal'.' After which you could minister the loving forgiveness and grace of the Lord.

A disciple must know his or her personal testimony and the heart of the Gospel.

**\*\* *Any one can debate your theology***

***but they cannot discount your testimony.***

We must study: "*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*" (1Tim. 2:15). Our testimony should

answer this statement: “God said what He would do in His Word and He has done that for me - and He’ll do the same for you!” This type of fishing requires some knowledge of the Word and a personal knowledge of your personal Savior. Effective training includes Bible study and practice giving your testimony. Then you’re ready to fish anywhere in the pool of humanity whenever the Lord says, “Put down your net for a catch”!

You are not ready to win disciples until you can give your testimony in 2 minutes, 15 minutes or one hour, to anyone at any time. A disciple of Christ must be ‘ever-ready’.

**Dealing with the Worldly**

I have this neighbor. Every Monday he hitchhiked to town, and I picked him up. He smoked like a chimney stack and cursed like a sailor. The first time he got in my car, I couldn't get a word in edgewise. This guy put down the government, the neighbors, all his friends, his family, and all with four letter words. Halfway down Rt. 28 I said: "Could you stop smoking? And I would really appreciate it if you could do something about the language." I just told him: "Man, it's a little intense for me." All he said was: "Oh, oh, oh, O.K..... O.K." Now, he's fine... we're fine. He says hello to me, he came over to me and wanted to talk. I treated him nice. I wanted to say: "Brother, you keep talking like that, you're going straight to hell." But I didn't say it. I don't know what God has planned for his life.

*Comment from a student:* "You should have told him, "you should respect me"".

*Pastor:* "No, I didn't say that. I ask you, what's the attitude that goes with that?"

*Answer from a student:* "Arrogance."

*Pastor:* "Yes, that I'm better than you. That's not the attitude you want to present. There is a less offensive way to say it. The way I said it was: "It's a little intense for me." So, I was asking him to have mercy. I wasn't saying: "You're a bad fellow with a filthy mouth and I wish you would shut up." Thanks be to God, I'm not there anymore, but when I was on the streets of the Bronx, my mouth was like his mouth and I wouldn't have been offended then. That's the way the guys on the football team talk when the coach isn't around.

"The world is a rough place; sometimes we must confront it and sometimes we must withdraw from it. By withdrawal, I mean this; if the joke is too rotten or too coarse... if I can - I escape, I just withdraw. I don't preach to people about it. If I can't withdraw, I will sometimes just say: "I really don't need to hear this" and excuse myself out of earshot.

"The people we disciple will need time to get the world out of them. Once born again the Spirit will convict them of sin and we need only help them along. Don't shoot the wounded or wound the babies. Jesus changes our "want to", and sometimes, worldly ways die – they may die slowly, but they do die. There are times when we must stand up and say, "Please, in my presence do not use the Lord's name like that - as a curse word". If we are rude or coarse with rude and coarse people we prove them right! Two passages that help us to understand this are: "*Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand*" (Phil. 4:5), and "*A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,...*" (2 Tim. 2:24,25). We don't have to get down to sounding like the world to win the world, yet sometimes we may have to use some slang just to communicate with the people we want to reach. I cannot speak to a women's club the same way I'd speak to a jail population, or to teens. Paul said, "*...and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law;*" (1 Cor. 9:20). There are things we have been allowed to experience that we can use to reach the worldly. We are not *becoming like* the world, but are *using wisdom* to win the world to Christ. That does not mean I get drunk to reach drunks, or use profanity to reach cursers, but I do loosen up and lighten up to get the 'worldly' comfortable enough so they can receive the message. I don't use college words with children, or act, dress or pretend to be the enemy. I am *in* the world but not *of* the world.

Therefore, since "*God so loved the world...*" (John 3:16) I, too, must *care enough* about

the worldly to *use all I have* to win them.”

**Expectation, Exposure, and Condemnation**

**Expectation**

What you *expect* to have happen has no bearing in spiritual matters. The new Christian is the Holy Spirit's, not yours. You must not put your expectations on the Holy Spirit's work. You may believe that this person is saved and is going to receive the Holy Spirit tomorrow. Your expectation is that they are ready to receive the Holy Spirit. If you stand them up in a Bible study prayer group or at church and introduce them and say to them the first time they are hearing it, "You are going to receive the Holy Spirit now." Well, excuse me, that is your expectation. What about them? What about the Holy Spirit?

Don't set people up to meet your expectations. We can daydream, pray and hope that this or that happens, but we must not push ahead of the Spirit. If they voluntarily come, (in Faith, up in a prayer line) that's different and that is what is needed - they need to come asking and seeking. You need the unction of the Holy Spirit to know in advance what God has planned, and our expectations must be based on the unction or the "Word" and the Spirit. We can expect that God will fulfill His Word. *"Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me"* (Acts 27:25).

If you see someone you've just witnessed to and they've received Jesus, and you happen to go over to their house and they're sitting there smoking pot and drinking a beer, don't go off on them. You thought that you ministered to them so well that they're going to clean up their act instantly. Well, that's *your* expectation. You're expecting them to perform to your expectations too soon. Some 'fish' take longer than others to land, clean and stuff. Not only are you judging, but also your expectation puts pressure ahead of ministry.

Sit down and minister to them - why are they using drugs at this time? Do they know that the Bible calls drugs sorcery? Has the "Word" been ministered to them concerning habits, damaging the body, and sorcery (pharmakia in Greek - drugs)? Are they taking drugs to escape a pain? Do they know Jesus can take away the pain? etc. Minister to people where they are, not where your expectations are. Why do people sin? Because sin feels good, and they may not know the dangers of sin. We should always expect the very best and fastest conversion, but good food takes time and so do good Christians.

Do you want them to be righteous because you have put a righteous expectation on them, or do you want them to be righteous because in their heart God has convicted them to change? Your expectations have to be following the leading of the Holy Spirit and not following your flesh. When we expect too much we can become judgmental and disappointed. Peter made bold statements (see Matthew 16:16); if Jesus had expected a better performance from him He would have been disappointed (see Matthew 16:22, 23) and then disqualified Peter from later taking a leadership role.

*\*\* Jesus knows us so well and He expects that with time and discipline  
we all will find our way to Him.*

*"Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5:23,24).*

**Exposure**, (in and out).

If you expose a new possible Christian before they are a disciple, you may do damage. Don't witness to somebody, bring him or her to church, stop the service and say that you have just won him or her to the Lord. That's *exposure inside*. *Exposure outside* is when you witness to somebody in the coffee shop and you go to the waitress and you say, "I've just brought this person to the Lord." Don't expose them. A new Christian should not be exposed, they will die from exposure; they're not ready yet.

For anybody to be exposed, it has to be voluntary. You have to say to them, "Listen, you've just accepted the Lord. Are you ready to make a public statement and come before the Pastor and the Elders and receive the hand of fellowship or the Holy Spirit? Are you ready for that?" or "Would you like to give your testimony?" Don't expose them inside the body till the Holy Spirit leads them and they are ready.

Don't expose them outside the body, in the world, until they are willing to confess the Lord themselves. The world, which is under the control of satan, will be quick to bring persecution upon the new candidate. If he is not grounded he can be shaken before his roots are established. The fish may feel you are showing him off as a trophy. After all, you didn't save him, the Lord did. The new Christian is not confessing you but the Lord, therefore let them give glory from a grateful heart as the Lord leads. They must stand or fall by their own voluntary confession.

If I prayed for people with certain problems, in private, then I don't get up in church and elevate myself and say "I prayed with so-and-so..." and tell all. Not unless I have their permission. And then I say, "Do you want to share this? Is it O.K. to talk about it?"

One Sunday a man named Howard came up in the prayer line to have vision restored to his right eye. I removed his eye patch, placed my hand on the eye and prayed the prayer of Faith. After he got home he called to say half of the vision was back. He asked, "What should I do?" So I told him to "Come back next Sunday, and I will pray and God will give you the other half". The next Sunday Howard's healing came to his eye. Later that week I went over to his house. I said, "You can see now. The Lord healed you, didn't He?" He said, "Yes". I said, "Are you willing to share that?" He said, "Yeah, man". He came Sunday to church, stood up and said, "The Lord healed my eye, I can see, praise God, I am healed". He gave his testimony about what **God** did for him. **I** didn't heal him - so don't use the new Christian for yourself. You're stealing God's glory and his testimony.

If you bring somebody to the Lord, and publicly, without permission announce, "I brought them to the Lord," the new Christian may hear that and may feel, "Why, you just used me. You just elevated yourself on me". Sometimes you see it one way and they see it another. You feel you led them to the Lord and they feel you were an obstacle but the credit goes to God. In reality we may assist but the Holy Spirit is doing the leading. You just happened to be the one that was there, being used by the Holy Spirit to witness His most holy work.

If you are blessed to be used evangelistically then let the fruit speak for itself. If you invite people to church and they never come back, it's a good bet you could be part of the problem. Do you tell other people about them while they are standing there? "Look who I got to come to church finally!" "It took a while, but look who I brought to church..." etc.

Every time I have stood and listened to someone brag about, "look who I got to come to church", I know this is most likely their last time at church too!! In all things give God the glory and you shut up! People want to be our equals not be beholden or described as poor



sap-sinners. If you'll give a smile and say "this is my friend who's our guest today", we'll all be blessed and Jesus will be pleased. Let the Holy Spirit speak to your friend's heart. Don't show off, just pray for God to move supernaturally.

Another example of 'over-exposed' is when you bring someone up to the Pastor and force the person into an 'I pledge allegiance to the Lord' recital or say, "He's almost ready to accept the Lord". Maybe they just came to have a nice time and to see why you are so nice. Wait and let the person speak for themselves. Don't force your badge of approval or disapproval on him. Don't over-expose him inside the church, or outside.

Provide opportunity for commitment but don't be pushy or threatening. Disciples must be willing volunteers, as Jesus is still asking, "Will you be leaving me also?" and the true disciple must answer, "Where can we go? To whom? For you alone have the words of eternal life". Let's read John 6:65-69: "*And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father." From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*"

### **Condemnation**

Don't stand up and identify anybody's sin, behavior or actions. Let's say you have a friend visiting who's "living in sin." Don't stand up and say, "I'm bringing this guy to church and he's breaking God's law." or "He's not living right." or "He's got to get straightened out." Don't demean people or over-expose them to criticism, judgment and condemnation. It's embarrassing, and you have to give people time to come to the Lord and get right first in their hearts.

*\*\* People must first see the Power and Love of God  
before they'll receive the correction of God.*

Jesus met the woman at the well, and it wasn't until after a foundation of conversation was laid and she recognized that He was the Teacher that He prophesied a Word of Knowledge over her in a non-condemning way, pointing out her sin. We want to be like Jesus. Look at how He did this.

Turn to the Book of John Chapter 4. Jesus is at Jacob's well. John 4:7: "*A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."*" Now verse 9, "*Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.*" Actually the Jews considered the Samaritans dogs. So Jesus breaks down the wall of prejudice and accepts her by two things. First: she's a woman and He's speaking to her, second: He knows immediately she's a Samaritan, but goes beyond prejudice.

Let's look at the scene. They are on a journey and it was about the sixth hour. The sixth hour is about high noon. She is doing a most difficult labor that no one chooses to do at the hottest time of the day. The reason she would do it then is because she's trying not to meet people at the well in the heat of the day. Her reputation is soiled and she's probably avoiding the 'respectable' women who draw water at the cool of the day in the morning. Then she speaks to Jesus and identifies the fact that she's a Samaritan woman and He's a Jew. She says, 'How can You ask me for a drink?' Jesus is immediately saying, 'I'm going to meet you where you are, at the level where you are. I'm going to accept you and treat you with

love. I'm going to give you the benefit of the doubt.'

When we over-expose someone, we are not giving them any benefit, doubt or otherwise. We are condemning them, elevating ourselves and putting them down. We are saying, 'I'm saved, born-again, spirit-filled, but you... you have the good sense to come to church with me, but... you don't qualify yet'. Jesus wasn't doing that, though He could have. Not only is He a Jew, but He is the Lord.

In the 10th verse Jesus says, *"If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that that says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him and He would have given you living water."* They continue on and talk about the well and the water. Jesus goes on in verse 13, *"Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again..."* In verse 15 the woman said, *"Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst..."* She has opened the door here. The woman has established that Jesus has something that she doesn't have and now Jesus, by His conversation with her, and the fact that He hasn't dealt with her in a prejudiced or condemning way, has made it possible for her to identify *her own need*.

Next she says to Jesus, 'Give me this water so that I won't get thirsty'. Another interesting thing, if you notice, Jesus said to her, 'Everybody who drinks this water will be thirsty again'. He used *everyone*, therefore, not singling her out. He didn't say to her, 'Woman, if you drink this water, you're going to be thirsty again'. Go to verse 14: *"but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst."* And not, 'Woman, I have the answer to your problem. If you take My answer, you'll never thirst'. He continued, *"But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life"*.

Jesus has painted such an indirect, third person situation that it makes the woman free to accept or reject without condemnation. As opposed to, 'I got it. You ain't. I'm giving it away, if you want it, but if you don't want it, you're going to hell, and I know private things about you too!!' That is very ineffective because by the time the person does come to the Lord, they won't want you to have been the vessel or the messenger. And you won't get the crown or the reward.

In many cases that's why we can't win our neighbors, family and the people closest to us. When we express ourselves in that manner it is seen as arrogant and condemning. You want to avoid appearing to be judgmental. If what you have is so good, you want to express it like, "Man, this is really good, in the sense that it really works for me. I really love the Lord. It's a beautiful thing that really works for me." And leave it at that. They'll get the message. As opposed to, "It really works for me and, if you don't do what I'm doing, you're going to hell." Might be true, but we don't need to say it - except as a last resort and only under the *unction* (leading of) the Holy Spirit.

**Patience - the most important ingredient that's not in the pot, yet makes the whole meal.**

Church-hoppers are the most impatient and must be handled with caution. They move from church to church looking for quick placement into positions of importance. They are very capable, but are easily frustrated and have low perseverance and patience.

*\*\* When the going gets tough they get*

*a "word from the Lord" and vanish.*

They vanish after raising doubts about others or the vision God had for the church. Many members have fallen for their masks and the image they presented as "mature Christians". Take extra time to examine their fruit - i.e., of the ten people they bragged about bringing to church, did any get saved or join the church? Is there evidence that they multiply? Are they just as quick to follow directions as they give directions? Hoppers are quick to grab some attention and tell what was wrong with the leadership they just abandoned. The immature have obvious personal problems and visible examples of poor judgment and misguided vision, and are super quick to guide and advise others, but lack the perseverance to bring forth fruit with **patience**.

Jesus said in Luke 8:15, "*But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the Word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience*". Let's also look at these Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 6:4, "*But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience,*" 1 Tim. 6:11, "*But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness*", James 1:3&4, "*knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing*".

Patience is so important as a characteristic of a multiplying disciple. Babies and teens must grow, by demonstrating Biblical maturity. Remember King Saul (1 Sam 13), he grew impatient waiting for the Prophet to come and offer the sacrifice. So, as king and not a priest, Saul offered the sacrifice to God. God rejected him because of this. Saul was easily frustrated, he had low perseverance and he lacked patience. Psalm 27:14 tells us, "*wait on the Lord and He shall strengthen your heart; WAIT, I say, on the Lord.*" In the church we need dedicated "stickers to it". We need multipliers who are growing in the Lord and bring more peace than disruption, not flashy hoppers with personal problems and bad track records.

Set up training so it not only tests ability, but also patience. Paul warns us not to hastily lay hands upon (anoint into office) a novice until he has been tested and tried. We must purposely allow a disciple to become frustrated and get impatient – what does he do next? Run away? Run for cover? Run to man? Run to sin? Run to God?

*\*\* There is great value in learning to stay in the harbor*

*'til your inner storm passes.*

**Neglect**

We witness to someone or we meet a new Christian at church and our spiritual antenna goes up. We can tell this person likes us and we like them. We fellowship with them; we communicate with them and then we *neglect* them. We don't call them, visit them or follow up. This is not God's best way for making disciples. As a Pastor-Teacher I know my main job is to feed the Word to the flock. The sheep must look out for each other – make friends and graze together in peace. Sheep beget sheep, so members draw members. Once a church gets over 50-100 members, then others (members, deacons, elders) must step up and help the Pastor tend to the flock. Members must look out for each other. What a great opportunity to get involved in being a friend to a new baby Christian. A phone call can often make all the difference in making someone feel comfortable during the early stage of membership. Neglect is not healthy for anyone.

*\*\* “Some sheep get lost, but they should never get abandoned.”*

*Let us find the lost, and not neglect the fold.*

### Labels and Stereotypes

The other day I was in a restaurant eating and the person with me saw a friend of theirs that was not saved and still living the street life. The person came over and he introduced me as *Pastor* Don. "This is my pastor," he said. His old friend put his track shoes on and went to the furthest corner of the restaurant. By using the label "Pastor", this man's stereotyped ideas caused him to shut down all possible communication. So, when he came back by, he stood far away and worked his way around the wall and out the door, to get away from "The Pastor".

Don't wear your Christianity on your forehead; don't wear a badge; don't be a sign on display. That's why I don't allow people to call me 'Reverend'. First of all, we should only Reverence the Lord, and secondly, the title causes stereotypes and prejudices. Call me Brother Don and the door is still open. In the church setting I'm 'Pastor Don' but in the world I can be more effective as just 'Don'. When you call me 'Reverend' the shackles go on and I can't operate as freely in the gift that God has given me, as titles cause stereotypes and pre-judgment. As Christians we are more effective if the wall doesn't go up. Jesus let the woman at the well figure out who He was rather than saying, "Hey you, I'm the Savior of the World, the Son of God, you better listen to Me or you'll go to hell!"

If they see you for *who you are* they'll see the *Christ in you* and want *that*. People most likely will not identify with nor desire a banner saying, 'Christian, yoo-hoo - Christian over here', a stereotype of self-righteousness with which the world has labeled us that turns people off *before* we can give any kind of witness.

Keep in mind that people want to be treated kindly just as you want to be treated kindly. You'll get a measure of how people really treat people if they think you are just people. I had some interesting experiences since I went to Promise Keepers. I kept on my Promise Keepers wristband and some people thought I came from a mental institution! It was a good silent curiosity prop that caught peoples attention and opened some conversation opportunities. Some Christians need to be Christian 'undercover agents' like Jesus Christ, others can be effective by subtle advertising (T-shirts, jewelry, etc.), but no one is effective by using labels and projecting stereotypes.

*\*\* Let people get to know who you are  
and they will find out Whose you are. Amen!*

Jesus did not fit the Pharisees mold of Holiness. Jesus ate and associated with publicans (tax collectors, etc.) and sinners (Matt. 9:10). He didn't fit the religious stereotype, so they hated Him. Paul said in 1Corinthians, "*and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews;*" (9:20) and "*to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some*" (9:22).

This doesn't mean that if you are winning drunks to the Lord, then start drinking. Don't change your values or participate in evil. It means to loosen up and lighten up; be a regular guy - T-shirts or suits, according to the crowd you're in. They want to go bowling, then bowl and use bowling to reach them for Christ.

Many years ago I got the great idea of taking Gospel music to bars. One night while the band played "Amazing Grace", I noticed the drunks were either singing along, laughing, not paying attention or passed out. The hockey game was on TV, couples were planning the night's escapades and a voice so gently said, "Pearls before swine" (Matt. 7:6). I knew that if we kept playing these gigs, the band members would be picked off by satan's agents one by

one into backsliding. God wasn't in this effort. At the least we would be reaching no one. You can hope to dodge a label or stereotype but if you are too much *in* the world... you *are* the world.

In this particular setting, we were just entertainment and not ministry. So we moved to a different location where the saved could be blessed and those seeking the Lord could find Him. The fruit soon followed as God did bless us after we left the bar scene.

Avoid being stereotyped and labeled as well as using labels against people. In Christ there is no male, female, Greek, Jew, black, white, red, yellow, purple, right-wing, left-wing, losers, holy rollers, retarded, etc.

**People Have a Right to Go to Hell! (But only after they hear the Gospel!)**

**\*\* *You might go to the circus, but you ain't goin' on the rides!***

Every believer can know for sure if they are a disciple of Christ by these easy tests - Do you have a heart for the lost? Do you care whether or not people will go to hell? You should have a desire to see your Faith vindicated. You should want satan and all his demons to stand trial and all those that thought you were nuts to have to admit you were right and that the Bible is **TRUE**. You should want the blood of the saints avenged (see Rev. 6:10). Yet, more important, you should have a desire to keep someone; friend, family and stranger from going to that awful place.

When people come forward to receive Jesus, your inside joy should be as great or greater than theirs is. After all, you know what it really means to know Jesus and the benefits that come with salvation. You should grieve over someone who has refused any mention of the Name of Jesus, and is facing the imminent reality of spiritual death. If you are a true disciple you have a heart for people, even mean, ugly, hard headed, backsliding, lost, on their way to hell people... Jesus did!

Reaching old friends and relatives who reject the Gospel is for sure the hardest situations of all for true believers. Many Christians waste a lot of misdirected energy in this area. For a direct hit, a disciple must use the Big Cannon - **Prayer!** With old friends and especially relatives you have a God-recognized bond and therefore, a 'right', a special position to act in their behalf. Your authority is a matter of Faith and position. Notice these examples: "When Jesus saw the Faith of a few close friends; the centurion and his servant; Jairus' daughter... Jesus called her mom and dad together into the prayer room; Jesus asks about the Faith of the father with the demon possessed boy, etc. Study these and notice the Faith and cooperation of those in authority or close position (association) was important.

Prayer is the key to reaching anyone for salvation. Look at Hebrews 1:14, "*Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?*" Angels are ministering spirits to '*heirs of salvation*'. They want to help and are sent to help by prayers we send to the Captain of the Host. So, in prayer, we can call for angels to come and minister to our loved ones when we can't get through. Angels do not preach (except one example in Revelation), but deliver messages and do signs in accordance with the will of God - that none would be lost and that saints would be preserved. We must preach the message of salvation, and angels can be useful. Pray for angels and other saints to be sent across an unbeliever's path with a divine message, purposed to save.

It is God's will that none be lost (2 Peter 3:9), so let's line up with that "will" and pray for it to be done in the earth. Pray in Faith and count it done, then act, speak and rest in the truth that they **are saved**. Your words often keep people from Heaven, or at least delayed. If you call them and treat them as unsaved, you keep a wall up that they can't or don't want to climb. People are so self-righteous and judgmental that they cause friends and relatives to feel rejected.

Many close to us are kept away because some have made Christianity so unattractive. Speaking evil of the Pastor, church family, constantly complaining about those who struggle and maintaining a "soap opera" atmosphere all keep people away. If they do come to church, you tell their street history and brag how you got them to come, etc. and off they go hurt and put down.

**Let's keep it simple - The "Good News" - Tell what Jesus Christ did for you,**

*and how you love Him. Jesus came to save; lived, died and rose to save us from our sins. Jesus' yoke is easy and His burden is light, but sin is hard and satan is unforgiving and a destroyer. Then pray and pray and believe and believe. Leave room for the Holy Spirit to move and trust Him. After all He saved you, so He can save just about anyone. If we'll pray and cooperate with the Holy Spirit it will be done. Finally, just sweetly talk to them.*

**\*\* "I have a personal relationship with  
the supernatural Lord of the universe."**

*"The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16). You are "the righteousness of God in Him" (Jesus Christ)(2 Cor. 5:21). You have legal right to approach the Throne. God needs our permission and agreement to act in the earth in some areas. Why else are we told to pray the Lord's will be done on earth? Legal jurisdiction over earth was given to Adam, and then satan by deception got control. In Luke 4:6 the devil states, "for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish." In 2 Cor. 4:4 the Scripture says, "...whose minds the god of this age has blinded".*

Through our rights from Adam we can call on God to interact in this world, in the Name (power and authority) of the God-Man, Jesus of Nazareth. Notice in Job 1:10, satan acknowledges that God has a 'hedge' of protection around Job and all that he has. We can remove that hedge of protection by sin, doubt or fear. God will only remove that protection from us as part of His eventual plan for us. When we pray, satan's rights are curtailed. Selah.

**\*\* Angels are dispatched when we pray for information or for warfare.**

Here are some examples:

*Daniel 9:21,22: "...yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, (angel) whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, 'O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.'"*

*2 Kings 6:16,17: "So he answered, 'Do not fear, for those (angels) who are with us are more than those who are with them.' And Elisha prayed, and said, 'Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.' Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of (angelic) horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."*

We see people hopelessly lost when they refuse to call on God. *"For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved"* (Rom 10:13). Should we not also call on the Lord to save others?

The law of agreement is important to this discussion. *"For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them"* (Matt. 20:18). Notice in John 8:14 that Jesus states He and the Father testify that He is Whom He claims to be. If out of the mouth of two or more witnesses - they agree - then their testimony is valid. So if God agrees with God-Man (Jesus), then we can agree with God also or with each other and then our agreement equals a valid testimony. *"...I am there in the midst of them."* So if God is present, then surely our prayers will be answered and people will get saved, healed and delivered. No matter what people do or how strongly they reject the Gospel - **don't give up praying and keep casting them upon and giving them up to Jesus, in Faith believing.**



They have a right to go to hell, but that ain't right, so ruin their plans. Give them the Gospel and pray them into the Kingdom.

**“EGO” - Edge God Out**

Very often people with a poor self-image, or a low self-esteem, will get in God’s way. People that need to be verified and need to be lifted up in the public eye, will often take the pulpit, or fill a room with great words about how they are leading someone to the Lord, or how they prayed for someone and they got healed, or how they took authority over a situation and got it done. We need to recognize that when a person is doing this from their personality it’s to meet their need and it may destroy the work of the Lord. Can’t you hear Jesus saying to many: ‘Tell no one about this’ -- how humble was He?

So often we want credit and recognition from men. “I led them to the Lord”... “Look who I brought to church”... “I have been working on this one for years”... “I finally prayed you in, didn’t I?” etc. In all of these you hear an ego that needs feeding but has not considered the person of the Holy Spirit, which does the work by changing the heart, and He (the Holy Spirit) should get the credit.

At a social gathering or after church I cringe to hear a disciple talk to other disciples about a new disciple’s social, economic or spiritual needs. Or in prayer talk about what you’ve been doing to help ‘poor so-and-so’ stop their terrible sinning. For example, “Dear Lord, I know You love Bill, ‘cause You sent me to his home three times to take him to get food stamps Lord, since he’s still drinking and living in sin, he’s so disobedient, but have mercy on him. Help me to hang in there till my work is done.” Here is a self-image seeking to be elevated, to judge, to condemn, expose and self-glorify. Beware of the urge to tell someone they’re in sin or giving a word about some hidden sin that you suspect or perceive.

*\*\* Supposition and suspicion are the demon’s word of knowledge.*

If it’s “killing you to say something” then maybe it will kill the hearer if you do say something. Self must be gotten out of the way, through prayer and waiting on the Lord to move.

While washing the dishes one morning the Spirit spoke that a brother was involved in a sin. I prayed “Holy Spirit you have shown me this - if I am to discuss it with him then will you have him open the door?” That very day the brother and I stood alone together and he began to discuss some of his problems and asked my help. Bang - the door was open – then, to his amazement, I shared what I knew. I could have been so proud that God gave me this knowledge that I could have called him out in church, or Bible study to demonstrate how God “speaks to me”, build myself up and tear down a brother. We all have ego needs but we must know ‘if we lift up Jesus, He will lift us up.’

*\*\* Because the Spirit tells you something  
doesn’t mean He also told you to tell it.*

Remember, if God told you, let Him also tell you when to tell it, Amen!

**Dealing with Traditions and Fundamentals**

In “Fiddler on the Roof” the song, “Traditions” echoes over and over again, “Why do we do things this way or that?”, and the answer echoes again and again, “Traditions”. Ask some Catholics, and they’ll tell you that crossing oneself and kneeling many times is for sure in the Bible. Ask some Jews, and they’ll say standing to pray and pounding the breast is the only “true” way. Some fundamentalists will say, “My way or the highway.”

A **tradition** is a *habit* or *action* that is repeated annually or with regularity and is held as important to social, religious or family customs. It is the continuance of social attitudes and institutions. Handing down of information, beliefs and customs by word of mouth or by example. Those that follow or accept tradition are **Traditionalists**. Very often Traditionalists will consider *what they practice* as more important or more valid than the fundamentals that *gave birth to the tradition*.

A **Fundamentalist** is one who focuses on the fundamentals, the basics, the foundations, the central issue, and the simplicity of the essence - fundamentals. A Fundamentalist practices strict and literal adherence to a set of basic principles. Webster further says of ‘fundamentals’: “minimum constituents without which a thing or a system would not be what it is.” Fundamentals are basic principals from which traditions may spring or slowly grow. As time and custom merge into a tradition, it may end up very far away from Jesus, the Cross, and Resurrection. Why have I used a Webster’s dictionary definitions? Why don’t I just make up new definitions? For example, I could make up these new definitions: A Traditionalist is a Harley motorcycle rider and a Fundamentalist is a roller coaster salesman.

All I have to do is get the word out; a few thousand TV ads and T-Shirts with “Cool” motorcycles called ‘Traditionalists’, and some annual festivals for bikers. A book or two and a few quotes from some famous bikers like Evil Knevil, and the whole meaning of Traditionalist is now a great holiday with lots of followers, which swear the word “traditionalist” describes their bikes. We could do the same thing with ‘roller coaster salesmen’ equals Fundamentalist, and in no time kids would be saying “I’m going to college for that.” Sounds far-fetched? Well, how about Easter bunnies and Santa Claus? They are now well-established traditions, which have nothing to do with the true meaning of Christmas and Resurrection.

We have Webster’s dictionary to maintain purity of expression, uniformity and continuity of understanding. Having a dictionary helps us to hold to the truth of what words mean. It saves us from confusion and disaster that would result if word meaning could easily be altered, or added to. Webster provides for us the fundamentals of communication.

God knows how man is, and since eating from the Tree of Knowledge, man aspires to alter and add to God’s work and His words. Science and technology has tried artificial intelligence and now even cloning - always striving to match God, improve upon or duplicate God’s achievements. The area of religion is no different. Tradition often replaces or alters God’s plan, truth, meaning, and holidays.

God told Moses to write down the Laws and God’s words. Also, that a Prophet would come (Deut. 18:15) - that would speak God’s words, and He commands, “Listen to Him.” On the Mount of Transfiguration, God identified His Prophet and Jesus continually stated “The Words I speak are not My own, but the Father’s.” Peter tells us all Scripture is God-breathed. Years after God breathed it, John the Apostle closed it, but men and women have felt it their right, duty and calling to add, subtract and twist in their favored traditions.

*\*\* We know the “Word of God”*

*for only here is contained **Power and Prophecy.***

Nothing the Jews, Protestants, Catholics or any cults have written have any power beyond the expressed powers of God versus the power of evil. There are no new ‘truths’, revelations, and no new prophecies concerning the unfolding of history. Therefore, an honest analysis of content always shows where tradition is in conflict with the fundamentals - **Basic Truth**. A study of history will show when a new doctrine entered the minds of men, as well as when a lie or self-serving idea surfaced.

Traditions become established as they give pleasure to the mind, the body, or promote ‘exclusiveness’. “Our way is *the* way, our group is *the* group, our church is *the* church, and our tradition is *truth and fact*.” Yet, a careful examination may discover that a tradition is supported by and established by the institution or group that births it and not by a fundamental, provable source, like the Bible - The Word of God.

There are too many viewpoints to mention here but we will discuss a few. The key to remember is that the Bible is the **proven** “Word of God”; historically, archeologically, scientifically and prophetically. A tradition is “man-made”. It may begin with God’s Word, but ends up in conflict or unprotected by the fundamental truths or facts expressed in the Bible.

If one attacks a tradition, the first defense is usually persecution. Pointing out that a tradition has little or no support in Scripture will get you labeled - prejudiced, bigoted or anti-... You are accused of being against these “good people”; judgmental, closed minded and arrogant. One Rabbi informed me that “all things are subject to interpretation and we are all entitled to our opinion.” I quickly disagreed - God and His Word are absolute, sure and not to be changed or conformed to our interpretation or opinion. Our ideas and traditions are not equal to God’s Laws.

God has verified His Truth by creation, supernatural and natural powers. No king, church, institution or other human authority can boast of creating the universe. Therefore, it boggles my mind that people hold any tradition above God’s Word. I cannot see how we can trust in a church or anything for salvation, protection or truth other than God, Who made everything. You may love your little idols, but God says over and over again that they are an offense to Him and a snare to you.

I guess I am a Fundamentalist, for I believe **God is God and His Word is His Word**. Tradition has its place, but is never to be placed above “The Word.” God has given us days of rest - Sabbaths and Holidays - nothing more is needed. He has detailed worship, praise and songs. He has given us space to express ourselves, but warned against excess and adding to the Word. Because something is thousands of years old does not make it truth - satan has many traditions thousands of years old, but they are still evil - consider child sacrifice, astrology, etc. Also, time causes traditions to be more entrenched, but time also moves a tradition further from its basic fundamental truths and principals.

Churches have many traditions that are not Bible-based. We would be wise to examine all traditions and practice what God has ordained.

A disciple of Christ must know that we will come into conflict with people’s traditions. When the people are kept away from the Truth, they will fall prey to mind control and manipulation from “Traditionalists.” No faith, church or institution is without rules and regulations that are instituted to support and maintain control over the people. Jesus was hated for He challenged the Pharisees to examine their traditions in light of the Word. “Count

it all joy when men persecute you...” Just make sure it’s for the Cause - The Lord and the Word. Help people to see the difference between what they believe as tradition vs. the truth. Let’s get back to the basics.

The Traditionalist and Fundamentalist both develop traditions that are unbiblical. For example, many Fundamentalists lose all sight of kindness, gentleness and respect. This can be a greater sin than Biblical error. Some people push for compromise - ‘my favorite tradition plus your favorite truth mixed with compromise, equals happy coexistence.’ This means we are agreeing to accept new partial definitions and no one ends up with “The Truth”. Your mistake plus my mistake never equals Truth, just error.

The Body of Christ cannot be unified when they are in error with different truths and definitions. An orchestra has many sections, but they must all tune to the same source. If the violins tune to the oboe and the violas tune to a trumpet and the woodwinds tune to the French horn it’s very, very likely that the orchestra will be unable to play since it will be out of tune. This is the condition of the church, and disciples must be aware that man’s traditions are not all born from the Word of God. Preach the Truth. Give people chapter and verse; be specific. Avoid attacking traditions, but tell what God has said and use His definitions. Politely tell people when they are using a different definition or they are standing on a different authority other than the Bible and God. Remember the final choice *is theirs*. But let’s help them make the right decision. In the end it’s fundamentally simple - we all must stand before the Lord; not the church, Elders, Deacons, Pastors, Saints, Apostles, Consistory, Trustees, Governing Board or even Mary. Jesus is Judge and jury and His Word - **The Bible** - is the only dictionary given to men.

P.S. Who’s church is the real church descended from Christ? Well, since you asked, let’s check Acts 15, which addresses the first attempt to change the church before 100 A.D. Remember all the apostles were Jews very strict and full of zeal. They carefully observed all the Jewish Sabbaths, Holidays, the day of the Lord’s Resurrection – Sunday, and showed reverence for the Temple and the Scriptures Old and New (which were being written). Discrimination against women and Gentiles was being reversed but no religious Gentile practices were allowed. Acts 15, verses 7–22. *“And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: “Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.*

*“Then all the multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul declaring how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them among the Gentiles. And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, “Men and brethren, listen to me: Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written:*

*‘After this I will return  
And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down;  
I will rebuild its ruins,  
And I will set it up;*

*So that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD,  
Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name,  
Says the LORD WHO DOES ALL THESE THINGS.'*

*“Known to God from eternity are all His works. Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath. Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren.”*

Therefore, in the true church the following things should still be valid and present since nothing new can be added or removed (Rev. 22:18,19).

Look back at Acts 15, verse 7 – preach the Gospel and people will believe.

Verse 8 – God gives the Holy Spirit and He manifest to new believers as He did the Apostles in Acts Chapter 2 (with signs and Tongues due to receptive hearts).

Verse 9 – Faith purifies the heart for Jewish apostle or new Gentile.

Verse 10 – Men’s traditions extend beyond God’s requirements and no one can successfully perform or bear what man adds to God’s Truth.

Verse 11 – We are saved by Grace – **God’s unmerited favor and empowerment** for us in Christ.

Verse 12 – Miracles and wonders confirm God’s approval and demonstrate His presence.

Verse 15 – The Words of the prophets agree with all these signs and the acceptance of the Gentiles and Jews.

Verse 20 – All idols were an abomination to God, therefore, food sacrificed to an idol was to be avoided as well. Sex out of wedlock, hetero or homosexual is forbidden. Blood, for spiritual and health reasons, was to be drained out and not eaten.

Verse 22 – All apostles, elders, and the church agreed there is nothing in here that God has removed or altered by His Word or Power and therefore, can still be used to identify the church Jesus of Nazareth established as prevailing against the gates of hell.

In conclusion, notice verse 26 *“men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* This then should be the final characteristic of the “true church”; risking it all for that most precious name: Yeshua.

# **Teaching**

**Followers to Leaders**

Let's look at leading and following. In Mark 10:46-52, Jesus the Master says to blind Bartameus, "*What do you want Me to do for you?*" Jesus was saying, 'I'm a servant of all, even a blind beggar.' "*And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road*" (v.52). Blind Bartameus followed Jesus, continually giving praises, saying, 'Look at what God did for me.' So, the Servant (Jesus) is the Master as long as the Servant (Jesus) is willing to relinquish the Mastership and take up His role as the Servant. In the same manner, as servants - we become numero uno; we become a master, but not *the* Master.

A good leader has been or can easily be a good follower as the moment demands. Jesus the Great Leader said, "*I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him*" (the Father) (John 8:26). Therefore, He's a follower.

**\*\* A person that cannot or will not follow is not suited to lead.**

This is the model for discipleship - follow the leader. If we *cannot follow* a leader we **can** see, then how will we follow a leader we **cannot see**? (The Holy Spirit). Conceit, pride and impatience cause a follower to usurp the leader's position and disrupt the organization.

When Peter, thinking he had a better idea, rebuked Jesus (Mark. 8:31-33), Jesus put him in his place. If Peter had taken control, Jesus would not have gone to the Cross and we all would have gone to hell - since there would be **NO** Savior. Peter's pride almost disrupted the organization as he was out of place to rebuke the leadership - Jesus.

There is actually only **one** Master, the Three in One, one God over all. All of us are followers. Any leader that will not bow and yield to the Head - Christ - is in rebellion and out of line. God's Kingdom is always organization by single headship - each leader answers to a leader as his head. A democratic vote is only to accept or reject what has been passed down to a leader to get his followers to confirm. Democracy is not the way of the Kingdom of God. God's system is "Benevolent Dictatorship". God dictates for the ultimate good of all. Obedience is required first and understanding follows after. Our approval is in our trust in our Leader, not in our understanding everything that He does.

Example: God chooses Moses. Moses accepts. God places Moses over the people. Moses presents to the people the Laws and the leadership. The people only vote on whether or not to covenant with God. They do not dictate to God or to Moses. Every time they attack Moses, God takes it very personally and the result is very dramatic. The people grumble against Moses at Massa and Meriba resulting in plague and death. "*Touch not My anointed one, and do My prophets no harm*" (1 Chronicles 16:22). This seems to ring true and is good advice even today.

Moses, Miriam and Aaron (Exodus) prove that in God's Kingdom all organization is under one head all the way up to God. Miriam and Aaron said, "*Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?*" (Numbers 12:2). They felt things should be more democratic and they should have more of a say in how things were run. Well, Miriam broke out in leprosy so I guess God wasn't ready for a democratic vote - Moses was God's man to lead. Leaders chosen by God are anointed and appointed with a holy covering. They have the right heart for the job and usually have spent time learning how to follow.

Paul admonishes us not to appoint novices to office till they've proven themselves (1Tim. 3:6). A novice may demonstrate talent and intelligence, but only testing over time will demonstrate maturity, patience, wisdom, faithfulness, humbleness. Frustration in a novice disciple will turn into destructive impatience and obnoxious arrogance in a leader. Better to



be slow and thorough than to appoint quickly and reap disaster. Remember we are building leaders for the millennial reign and eternity.

**Creating a Sense of Order**

Love and anarchy cannot exist in the same space. Disorder blesses no one. Wisdom cannot be dispensed in anarchy or in a setting of confusion. That is not love; in love there is order. The most *loving* thing that a leader can do is to establish *order*. When I first realized that the Lord had called me to teach, the first thing that I learned about wisdom is this: The leader is the one that knows that something needs to be done. We're talking about leading by example, leading through influence and respect, through wisdom. The second thing is the leader knows what needs to be done. And the third thing is that the leader is willing to do it. If you do all three of those, then you are wise and you are a leader.

Sometimes people just need a little more training. Sometimes it's a situation where you identify that somebody's not effective, but maybe they just need a few bits of information to change. Growth demands change; people cannot lead or become Christian disciples without learning to change. Sometimes a person knows that something needs to be done and is willing to do it, but doesn't know what or how.

A sense of order brings a feeling of well-being and peace to visitors, and especially children.

Order permits and creates an atmosphere where growth is possible. People soft on discipline are not able to establish order and respect is lost and discipleship suffers. Team up creative but poor disciplinarians with someone that can get order. Thus, the group can get the blessing of the creative one once order is established, and then train them to be stronger in the other area. We must also canvas members and kids to see what's really going on.

*\*\* Therefore, we dress for success and act to establish order.*

*Order puts us in a position to lead.*

Jesus would pick the place and the time for the calling to discipleship. We see this in Luke 5, vs 1-11: "So it was as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Genesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him." Jesus just chose the time to call four followers into discipleship.

The Holy Spirit has the perfect time for the calling, so that motivation and commitment will offer good success. Running ahead of this moment can be disastrous. The potential disciple doesn't make the call. Notice that Jesus had extra followers *close to* but not *in* the Twelve, Matthias and Barsabas to name two (see Acts 1:23). Matthias was appointed at the right time, not when he thought so. Misguided saints saw the anointing on my life and spoke

too soon and too often, which caused me to reject their out of season prophecies. God calls, we follow orders, 'FYI' is not a command to action. We as leaders have the privilege of calling out the new disciple at the right time.

**Look Good Also**

Not only must we look the part of leaders and establish order, but we must have our church and/or rooms say ‘order’. Disorder can be behavioral or physical. Noisy, disorganized, out of control meetings and services are a poor witness. Physical settings should be clean, healthy and decorated in good taste. No disciple of Christ’s should live or work in a dirty, cluttered setting. In all things we should meet or exceed the worldly standard. Our homes should be a place fit to invite a prophet, or the Lord Himself.

When you go to disciple someone you need a place that is conducive to no interruptions and says order. If their or your home is in chaos, then go somewhere else. Noise and visual stimuli need to be controlled. If art is too abstract and confusing in its message, replace it with the simple and concrete. Everything should glorify God and point to Jesus Christ. Nothing should compete with the Holy Spirit and the message. “*Let everything be done in decency and good order*”, said Paul. Remember, establish who’s in charge, where the ‘buck stops’ and in love be a disciple that leads and makes the followers secure by having order.

Clean your home, and if need be, hire help. Reexamine your schedule and priorities and get your space clean and in order. You may work well in confusion, dirt and clutter, but it’s a poor witness before an orderly clean God. At least be kind and don’t invite anyone over.

A final warning - order and discipline are acts of love but should never have preeminence *over* love. Love will always flex and bend rules to achieve the higher goal. This calls for discernment. Jesus allowed loud blind Bartemaeus to stop the traveling train (Mark 10:46-52). Jesus allowed the woman of the night with the alabaster jar to disrupt the evening meal (Luke 7:36-50), by anointing Him with oil.

While visiting a church, I was once forced to sit where I was ordered to sit and was told that’s the rules. The seat I wanted remained empty in the name of ‘rule and order’ and I remained a visitor. That’s not love, but it sure is order.

If you are going to serve the Lord, you’ve got to serve the Lord even if it goes beyond your personal comfort, which is to love somebody or do something about a situation where you might not personally feel comfortable, but you know what needs to be done for the proper order.

For example: Church is out, everybody is downstairs. Somebody came late to church. They come through the inside backstairs door. You just got up from praying. You just had a great Holy Ghost moment and this stranger came in the back door and you know everybody is downstairs. You would prefer to just continue floating in the prayer spirit, but you know this person doesn’t know where to go. And you don’t like talking to strangers. You’d rather not talk to them, or anyone, at the moment. You figure that they’ll just wander around and hear the noise downstairs and get there, but you know that in terms of “*Go ye therefore*” and discipling you should walk across the room, introduce yourself and escort them downstairs and bring them into fellowship. Even if it means hanging out with them for the next half hour, even though you don’t really want to be bothered. That’s what we are called to do.

Discipleship means that even though “I’m uncomfortable about it, I don’t like it, I don’t want to be interrupted or disturbed or bothered, I have to do it. I have to do this with a good attitude”. This person coming in the door may be the next Paul of my county. Or they may just be a disruption, only God knows for sure.

We were playing a concert and in walked these two young guys who were drunk, smoking cigarettes and being disruptive. I watched the action and after a while I see things are starting

to escalate and get out of control. The Holy Spirit moved me to go back there and talk to those guys. I was able to usher them out and quiet the situation. One guy was talking about how he was homeless and the other guy was making him drink. I really didn't want to talk to those guys, but I knew that as soon as they came in that something was out of line. Inside I knew I could diffuse the situation without getting them totally turned off. Part of wisdom is knowing when it's part of your job to do it and when it's your job not to do it. In this case the pastors and elders of the church were not present, it was my concert and the unction to act was on me.

Now in a situation like this, you may feel you lack the inner confidence to deal with these two drunks, but I assure you that had the Lord needed you to do it and there had been no one else to do it, you would have gone over there and said, "In the name of Jesus... this is not going to happen! I want you to put those cigarettes out ... let's not get upset or anything, let's go outside and talk". They would have said, "Oh," and gotten right in line and gone outside following the leader.

When we got outside and began talking one guy said, "Well, my parents let me and blah, blah, blah". And I said, "When you are at home in your mom and dad's house the rules may be different, but this is God's house and I'm in charge, and I have to do what God tells me to do, and we don't have that going on here". I was reestablishing position and order. I was saying, "I am the authority here. At home, you can fly off the walls; you can bounce all you want". I'm going to go all the way around the room to get back to number one - I must establish position, then order. Leadership knows what needs to get done and does it.

Regardless of your comfort zone, you have to exercise some influence. Your wisdom says, "I have to act". Your attitude says that you have to act with strong authority. Your action was to establish order. But if you don't establish position by the proper means and have order, nothing will get done, except disorder and disruption.

**Dress for Success**

During the 60's and the 70's there was a cultural revolution of rebellion. The revolt was spiritual and had physical symbols and manifestations. The most obvious were changes in dress and growing long hair. The mature believer is above cultural symbols, but must be aware of them and use them to the advantage of the cross.

You begin thinking differently in this way: There are social codes. Let me give you one quick example: Let's take any teacher, any person that's going to teach, be it Sunday School or be it a deacon in the church or an elder, etc. - you begin to look at your own personal appearance from a godly standpoint of leadership, with less thought about your peers or what people are going to think or about personal comfort. The reason is that now you are thinking in terms of *goal* and *function*. 'What's my goal?' 'My goal is discipleship.' 'My goal is to *'Go ye therefore, and make disciples'*. You're going to dress differently, according to the motive and the goal of multiplying discipleship.

I'm dressed for authority tonight. I'm the best-dressed person in this room. I've got on a great pair of pants, a nice tie and a white shirt with lines in it. Because, when I come in here, I'm concerned about, "*Go ye therefore, and make disciples*". I need your cooperation and your attention. I don't need to spend time jockeying with someone for leadership position; therefore, if I look like the leader, I'm one up on the situation. If I'm one point up on you, then I at least get the initial attention because I look the role.

I don't have to establish myself and jockey for position if I have already made the move, at least visually. If I come in here in a tee shirt and jeans, the people that know me will give me the same respect as if I were well dressed, but not so with new people. They will be thinking about how I'm dressed when they should be focused on my opening statements.

A person that looks prepared to lead is the one whose appearance tells people "be attentive to me; I'm ready to lead, I am the leader now." I at least initially win the game when I walk in the room dressed for authority. I'm not subject to peer pressure even though someone in the congregation may say, "Man, he's dressed like such and such. He ought to be dressed more casual." If they are coming from that place, I'm not subject to that. I'm above that. I'm beyond it. I'm dressing for '*Go ye therefore, and make disciples*' - not to 'fit in' 'conform' or 'do my own thing' by making a fashion statement.

So, even though I may not want to dress up to go to the jail Bible Study, I'll dress up to go to the jail to accomplish my goal. If my goal is, "*Go ye therefore, and make disciples*" and it's a picnic and I'm just invited as a guest I don't wear a shirt and tie. I'm going to make disciples and I'm undercover so I look to fit in - "*I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some*" (1 Cor. 9:22). I'm not subject to peer pressure. It's almost like being a 'secret agent' for God. Remember - the prime commission is to make disciples.

If I'm going to an AA meeting, I don't wear a suit and a tie. That will not serve the "*Go ye therefore and make disciples.*" That won't get it done. But if I'm speaking at the jail, and I need to establish myself, then I don't wear the same orange clothes that the prisoners are wearing. This is calculated. It is very calculated. Am I being for real? Yes, I'm being for real. My prime directive is to, "*Go ye therefore, and make disciples*". My *comfort* or *ego* is no longer important. *Peer pressure* is no longer important.

If I'm a Sunday School teacher and I've got children eight, nine and ten, and, when I hit that door, if I'm dressed in authority, they're immediately going to say, "This is the teacher. This is the one in authority." It's just like when you go to court. When you go to court for a

traffic ticket or something like that, you put on a suit and a tie because automatically you don't look like a criminal, and your clothes say, "I respect this court and give honor to the judge."

If I go to court well dressed, although I'm still 'li'l ol' me', I'm sitting in the front row and people think I am a lawyer. I have already taken a position of authority, so I can stand up and represent myself. In the same manner, when I dress up to go to the jail I am dressing for authority, not only for the inmates, but also for the guards. An amazing thing happens. If I were in certain situations in a suit and a tie, it could impede the work I needed to do.

So, how do you know what 'uniform' to wear? Here's the key: You have to recognize that the clothes that you wear are a *uniform*, even in a situation when people say that what you wear doesn't matter. Example: I went to a church that was a "casual" dress church. I was dressed just like I am now, and somebody in the crowd, who turned out to be one of the elders of the church, came over and started taking my tie off and saying, "Brother, you don't need that here".

Now, what was he really saying? "You have too much authority to come in this building" or "You're out of uniform". He couldn't get beyond what I was wearing. He was saying that in our church the *uniform* is casual dress, even though I was very comfortable in a tie. If we are going to be disciples and leaders for the Lord, we're above all that, and must use wisdom and overcome the world.

How do you know what uniform is going to be the most effective in the group that you're going to? You're going to have to let good sense and the Spirit lead you in this area. Have inner confidence by praying first, and then you may, if needed, make a phone call and ask. When I realized that I was out of uniform, I took the tie off and put it in my pocket and loosened two buttons on my shirt.

We have to become like Paul. Paul says, "*I have become all things to all men, that I might...*" do what? "*by all means save some*" win them to Christ. "*To the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak...*" or in another way, "*I am a Jew to win Jews and a Greek to win Greeks.*" A hippie to reach hippies, a businessman to reach businessmen, etc. Of course there are limits, I don't go beyond our moral code; I do not get tattoos and pierce my body to win over punks or dress indecent to reach people of the night.

Worship is coming before a Holy God as a king and priest unto the Lord. Therefore, out of respect and reverence, just as the priests in the Temple of Old, special clean clothes were worn. When at worship, I can not come before God in the same clothes I fixed the car in or a MegaDeath tee-shirt. Church is a special place where special things happen to special people, therefore, special clean clothes.

*\*\* God does see the heart, and He sees hearts that reverence Him  
enough to do something about the outer man.*

When we get to Heaven we will be given special robes - white, clean and worthy to wear in the presence of God. Is God in our midst? So we dress to honor God and to win men and women to Christ.

**Elevation**

**Promotion**

Don't put a fish (a new convert) up in any kind of position of responsibility. Don't let a novice move to where he can destroy or be destroyed. After they get trained and the Holy Spirit tells us to do it, then elevate and promote. I encourage a supervised training period, 6 months to 1 year, for learning and discipling. 1Tim. 3:6 - "*not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil*".

satan is a bully and will easily attack a prideful beginner or a prideful veteran. Baby Christians that are prideful are boasters and not wise concerning 'their sin', and therefore satan brings condemnation - he avenges himself upon them. People that talk too much are given to sin with their tongues and judgments. The telephone is most often a **tool of destruction** instead of a **repair tool**. Test a novice. Give them information and wait to see if it travels on the phone express. If it does - withhold promotion. Gossip is a deadly sin, a knife cutting out the heart of the defenseless.

Often women, more than men, are phone addicts. They practice self-elevation at the expense of others, assassinating the character of others. They make themselves out to be idols of wisdom and candor but demonstrate that they are damaged egos with small captive audiences.

*\*\* Somehow we foolishly think phones are private  
but they are party lines, with Jesus listening.*

A disciple with this habit no matter how gifted is not ready for promotion.

Men destroy with shortcutting comments and critical digs that at first sound like counsel, correction or recommendations. While waiting to say, "I told you so." Men who judge and gossip, usually hope you will fail. Prideful men are angry little boys that want their way - pout, pout!

Both men and women err because they traffic in idle talk and are usually negative, weak willed and idle "doers". They have not done much but talk a lot about what others are or are not doing, or how they can do it better. This causes division, and pride destroys the prideful. A novice that has not been trained and outgrown the phone will not hold up under pressure.

Face to face is pressure and every one is bigger and braver on the phone. When we run peoples' lives and second guess on the phone we forget that these are the brothers and sisters we are called to serve - they deserve a day in court face to face, heart to heart. Phone counseling is a highly developed skill and calling. Steve Solomon, (Praise in the Night) who has prayed with thousands, is quick to let people know that he is *not a counselor*, but a telephone evangelist/preacher. Most other phone counselors are for entertainment purposes only.

We are not ready for promotion until we know who we are and what we're suppose to be doing. *Surely, we should not be on the phone talking about others.* As people get promoted they get access to more and more private and personal information. There are placed where a flesh word can do damage in the body, therefore, we give safety scissors to kids and pruning shears to grown-ups. Information is power and power should not be abused.

Elevation is dangerous with new members that come from another church. No two churches are exactly alike. We must be patient in getting to know the theology, doctrine and personality of the transferred member. Most Christians from other churches are usually disgruntled, hurt or worse - neglected.



A neglected member is looking for “elevation” or attention... *not* service. If you aren’t careful they will push the fish out of the way to get the attention and the power. Make them sit down and serve by learning and being disciplined. Notice that Jesus started with 12 and sent them out (Matt. 10:5), then disciplined 70 and sent them out (Luke. 10:1), then 120 (Acts 1:10), then 500 (1Cor. 15:6), etc., but only after they sat and learned, then they were sent.

There must be a time of training, prayer and testing. Christianity is a service business, therefore anyone that is pushing to be elevated to lead is not suited to lead. Jesus came to serve, not to be served. I would rather disciple a new fish than *re*disciple a disgruntled, hurt or neglected Christian.

*\*\* Relearning is hard, and people seldom unload  
their baggage outside, but bring it inside.*

So discernment and lots of love are essential. We must encourage and provide opportunities to grow, but elevation comes through the Holy Spirit. *Service* is an *act* that the Holy Spirit *rewards* with *elevation*, if we’re faithful in the small things. Encourage the novice and the fish to see a need and meet it, expecting nothing and no attention. Pastors, Elders and people will elevate that which the Holy Spirit has appointed. If I’d just met you, I’d never put you up there in the pulpit. I’d be elevating you too soon. The Holy Spirit elevates; you have to wait for His leading and promotion.

Take notice of who stays for clean up, comes early for set-up. Take notice of who comes to pray and study. Who brings their Bible and a notebook? Take notice of who volunteers to work with the children. Who gives consistently and without fanfare? Take notice of who stays obedient when they don’t agree. Take notice of who is quick to repent and say I’m sorry. Take notice of who gets up after they fall. Take notice of who knows the answer but waits patiently to give it and is content to let someone else shine. Who’s willing to do the work and not care who gets the credit or the promotion.

I was preaching and teaching for years and then others, sent by the Holy Spirit, came to give me ordination papers. If they had not ordained me I still would have continued on. God does the promoting and no man can stop His will and purpose.

Paul’s letters to Timothy cover all the requirements for elevation to offices but not to specific callings. Someone may be called to preach as an evangelist, but they may not be ‘installable’ as a Pastor. Someone can be called to teach but not be an administrator. Yet everyone in the fivefold ministry must have a good report, must have good moral character, must walk according to the “Word”. A spiritual gift (see 1 Cor. 12), i.e., Tongues, interpretation, healing, Word of Knowledge, etc., may manifest through a tarnished vessel as the Spirit wills. But the Spirit will not appoint to office and continue to elevate and anoint someone not worthy of promotion.

Sometimes, due to need, we elevate to office people that are not ready - because we need the position filled. This happens most often in the areas of Music Ministry and Sunday School teachers. Because someone is talented and available does not mean they should be elevated to such a high position. If they are “repentant and trying to do right” then this is the minimum required to enter service.

We should not bar all sinners from being able to serve in some capacity, but not as leaders or without supervision. We can often use service as a way of winning and pulling a sinner into discipleship. As he is involved, he can develop a desire to change to comply with God’s laws. I had a musician that was super talented but he was still drinking regularly and using cocaine, and questioning the authority of the Bible. Better to sing a’capella then elevate him

to lead praise and worship.

The disciples were with Jesus 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for about 3 years. He sent them out on test runs and often many disciples quit (see John 6:66). Jesus maintained 11 out of 12 in leadership roles and sent them out trained with 3 years experience. Should we do less? I don't think so. "Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, not share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure." This is not only a reference to Transference of Spirits (see Chapter on this subject in this book) but also for appointment *into* a promoted office.

Correction with Teenagers

Teenagers are in the situation where they're moving toward adulthood. They're moving toward making decisions for themselves and they tend to take correction as an attack. When you are giving correction to teenagers, you have to remember that they are in a different category. Remember key #5: Let teens choose from appropriate options.

A correction given to a seven or an eight year old is a little bit different. When they start getting to be eleven and twelve, what worked before may not be effective. You sound silly talking to a teen like he's still seven, and they don't like it. Correction is often taken as that you are putting them down. You are infringing on their freedom, you're infringing on their growing. You are assaulting them; and they often view it that way.

*Question:* "You don't think that would be the same thing when you are correcting a fourth, fifth or sixth grader? If you are correcting them, do they think it's a personal attack?"

*Answer:* "Not unless they think you have it in for them. A ten year old is still used to being corrected and therefore receives it better. Teenagers are getting tired of being corrected, and do much better if they perceive themselves as making the decision, and exercising their judgment. To disciple a teen, you must ask the questions and then lead the search for the right answer. Correction goes better in the atmosphere of cooperation rather than commands. Cause them to do self-searching and self-examinations, i.e. "How could you have done that better?" "What do you think we should do about this?"

"They tend to learn better by being led into the process of *self* examination through effective questioning, i.e. - "How did you approach 'x', 'y', 'z'?" "What else could have been tried?" "What would have happened if you said 'a,b,c'?" A teen will hear you loud and clear through a soft question. WWJD (What Would Jesus Do?) is an effective approach - get them to compare their behavior to JESUS, not you, their parents or older sibling. Let them judge each other and express themselves. Remember, anger and frustration are to be expressed and the outlet controlled."

**Rebellious teens can turn out to be parents with rebellious teens** - the old 'reap / sow' - 'roosters to roost' - 'goes-around-comes-around' thing. So get to know the keys, the parents, and then help the teens mold and *get to know themselves*.

**\*\* pig-heads usually have piglets.**

**The Holy Spirit and Teens**

The Holy Spirit loves teens, and will manifest with signs and wonders for them and through them. They may take a little more “in your face” ministry, but once lit they burn bright. They will speak in Tongues, shout, fall, dance and minister with great fervor. They only need to be shown clearly how to enter in.

*\*\*Zeal need not be controlled as much as directed.*

When teens know they are right they can be overbearing. A hug and an office visit (at a diner) can clear that up. The hardest problem they face is peer pressure from the world. Teens are motivated by opposition, but need support and encouragement. Don't disappoint them by stopping a dream because you're unconvinced. They glow super excited and cool quickly, but don't get discouraged. Just re-light and get a new dream plan cooking. Mary was but a teen when Gabriel came to her, so know teens can be pure of heart and serious about the Holy Spirit.

## **Tough Teens to Disciple - On the Home Front & at Church**

### **Be Creative**

Let us look at problems with discipling and teaching kids and teens.

I remember, when I was just getting into this whole process, I had a really strange Sunday School class. I had a dear sister's two daughters (who were something to behold), my son Jamin and some of the other kids. And I said, "Man, I can't get them to tune in." The Bible lesson was about Noah. So, I said, "Let's go," and we all went out to the parking lot and I went out to my car and I pulled out a hundred foot tape measure and I had them figure out the dimensions of Noah's Ark. They realized it was wider than the church and longer than the parking lot. It got the group so involved that *they* were asking *me*: "What's the rest of the story?" After this 'creative' activity, I could get them to listen to the Bible.

You have to use wisdom. You have to use manipulation. You are going to have to be coming up with creative stuff, digging it out. Nathaniel the disciple was not at all interested in following Jesus, until Jesus, by Word of Knowledge, described him being found by Philip under a fig tree (John 1:48), then ...bang! He was interested. The Lord tells the disciples, "You feed these people" (5,000 plus). He manipulates them into realizing that *in the natural the task is huge, but in the supernatural... just a prayer of Faith away*. Kids are tough, so use consistent discipline and be *creative*.

### **Discipline, Dismissal and Interdependence**

Successful discipline is built by giving and demanding respect. "Do as I say to do" is only effective if *you do* as you *say* you do.

- 1) Keep your word
- 2) Don't change the rules
- 3) Limits are safety borders
- 4) Be the authority before being friendly
- 5) Let teens choose from appropriate options
- 6) Rewards are greater motivators than punishments
- 7) Compromise, negotiate and agree on actions and responsibilities

These keys help to be consistent in leading teens. Discipline is a must and never an option. Losing control is to lose respect and lose the program.

*(Transcripts from Discipleship Class)*

*Student:* "I'm taking authority now. My authority has become stronger than when I was playing games. It's getting clear. I can't throw my son out of my home, but the Word says to respect the laws of your country. And the law says that if I throw him out and he's under age then they'll come after me."

*Pastor:* "There is a time to throw kids out. For instance, if you have a belligerent young person whom you know can be successful on their own if you throw them out. You never throw someone out unless you know 1) they can be successful or 2) they have some other program or support group, or 3) you've established a way back. You never throw someone out unless you know they can swim, *and you equip* them as you throw them out."

*Student:* "How do you equip them?"

*Pastor:* "You make sure that they have somewhere to start. A starting place, then they've got a chance.

"One guy on the radio (it may have been a Dr. Dobson Focus on the Family Show) was saying that his kid came home real belligerent, and he says, "I want to leave". His father said,

“O.K., but you can only leave with whatever is really yours”. He packed a whole suitcase. The father opened the suitcase and said, “No, I bought you this and your mother bought you that. You can take a suitcase and whatever is on your back”. He only had a couple of shirts he had bought himself. And he says, “Well, what about the car?” His father said, “Well, it is your car, but I just bought you those two tires. Take those tires off”. He made the kid go out and jack up the car and take off the two tires. By the time the whole process finished, the kid changed his mind and was ready to negotiate.

“Let me say this, it is very dangerous unless you know the kid - know his options and his breaking point. The father in the example wanted to make a point, not destroy the kid. This is very different than working with someone that has a personality or learning disability. It’s better to equip a child. If you know that he’s got a plan and he can make it, then give him the car, with tires. Say, “On such and such a date, the insurance on this car will end and you’ll have to get a job. Let me know where you’re going to be because I love you and want to see you make it, but now it’s time to go”. That’s an extreme case and most of us will never see it. This strong tactic is needed with the disobedient and disrespectful.

“You must see a transition to responsible interaction. An ungrateful child will expect to live in the house, eat your food, wear your clothes, never work, never get a job, never contribute to the family, and show disdain for your Faith and refuse to be led by God. He is able to fly, but sometimes refuses to fly. That sometimes calls for tough love, a push or a shove out of the nest... you cry at night as you pray they will fly. This could’ve been done at home gradually, if they were respectful and teachable.

“Children, teens and young adults have to be equipped. You don’t want them to fail. Your manipulation is used to see them succeed. Too often in anger a parent will blast off and cause a rift of bitterness and place a teen in danger before they can fly. Behind the scenes, you’ve called Uncle Fred to tell him that you’re throwing your kid out Wednesday and can he give him a job Thursday. There has to be a manipulation and the goal is that the kid will succeed. If you are a disciple, then you surely want your children to become disciples, even the tough ones.

“So, if you have a difficult kid in your Sunday School class, the goal is not to throw them out but find a way to create a successful disciple. The goal is to separate them to save order - and for you to make the effort, *the extra effort*, to expend the energy to minister to that child more directly. One on one, if you must, to get the job done. Find out what is bothering them about the class. Maybe that’s the one to whom you should say, “You teach the lesson next week”. You class. Maybe that’s the one to whom you should say, “You teach the lesson next week”. You have to try everything.

“There’s this thing about kids growing up to become mature and independent. This is a big illusion to become ‘independent.’ This is a frightening thing for a child; that they’re going to grow up and be independent. That’s the way the world works, which is a false set-up.

*\*\* The fact is that they are not going to grow up to be independent.*

*They are going to grow up to be interdependent and  
in harmony with God and the Holy Spirit.*

“They’re going to be *sustained, nourished and loved by the Creator*, who created them, who is *not going to leave them.*

“It’s a frightening thing that these kids are growing up with; that they’re going to be on their own. Our society promotes rebellion and isolation. Without ever thinking about it, kids

chase off their parents, along with their heritage. They're going to be having their own gods and their own cars, etc. It's horrible. I told my kid, "You're not going to grow up to be independent. What are you going to do? Start your own universe?"

"To deal with teenagers is to recognize that they are teenagers - meaning, between ages, not kids, not adults. They are on their way to adulthood. You must help them get there, not hold them back. Responsible adults take care of their bodies and property. They call if they change plans or are going to be late. They have jobs, pay bills, go to bed early and don't stay out all night. Don't lie about where they have been or are going, and put gas into the car. This is only a partial list but gets the point across. If a teen does adult things, then remove the teen limits, i.e., curfew, a phone call is required. Negotiate toward the proper behavior - can they do what's adult without rules or supervision? Make the teen accept responsibility for his growth, attitude and actions. At home or in church it is all the same. To establish this they must be given responsibility and freedom, with clear instructions. Let them know it's a test and let them take it, but help them pass.

*\*\* Want more power? Take more responsibility.*

*Want more freedom? Be more mature.*

"That's a dark future to think they're going to be independent, to be alone, to be on their own. They are taught from a young age that they have their own homework and their own this and their own everything. What happened to sharing and working together? We all need to be in *fellowship with the Lord's people, surrounded by love and hope!* To raise responsible disciples we need to focus on making us all a part of the Christian community, Christian family: husbands love your wives; wives love your husbands, and no lone rangers. Lone rangers are lonely. The Lone Ranger had Tonto to be effective.

"You will have to make arrangements to give special kids attention and learn what is wrong or missing in their lives. We don't ever in *spiritual* things want to get like the public school system, where, if the kid doesn't fit the mold, we discard them. If they are 'walking to their own beat'; that is what Jesus is looking for. We are looking for that. You may have to do something special, something different, but you are still going to have to have order. You are still going to have to have love, and move people along."

*Student:* "I just have a question about if you are in a situation, where you are not in a classroom, like a youth group going skating, and you had an adolescent who was very disruptive and using vile language. You had asked him not to do that and you were in a confined place like a car."

*Pastor:* "First, get their attention, I would pull the car over and stop, and I would have told him that the car sits here until they are quiet. That failing, I would drop off the good kids and return the disrupter to his parents. Limit his skating time, say 'this trip is a privilege, and you have lost *x, y, or z* as a privilege.' There's nothing more effective than peer pressure. You have to deal with it, get help if necessary - teacher assistance, deacons, gatekeepers, parents, etc. Respond, take authority and responsibility to ensure group safety and privilege.

"Also, find a way to draw attention to something positive about the difficult teen. What ability does he have that you can encourage? Seek to win him over and redirect him to showing off in a positive way. Yet, at no time show disrespect or receive any disrespect.

"Children are really pressured all week long, so the weekend should be different, and there's something about keeping the Sabbath holy. I'm not talking about works or the law. We celebrate the Lord's Day - Sunday as a Sabbath Day, or Sabbath rest or Special Day. It seems to be a thing about keeping the whole day for the Lord. I have a heart for the children

who are in school all week long and then they come to church. Church should be a more loving, active, hands-on environment. I think love really has to dominate, nurturing with a heart for these children. I hate to think that they're in school all week and they come here and they get beaten around, and bored to death. They have to hear the Word, so there has to be some structure. Without the Word, how are they going to know and grow?

“What we're moving toward is that we are raising up enough teenagers that they could run, for themselves and the littler ones, a junior church. We need to raise up enough teenagers that love the Word, that love the Lord, that love the music of the Lord. When we're gone, they can fill our places. That's the goal here. How are we going to do that? If we have some order and some love and they see the joy we have in loving the Lord and praising Him, they're going to want to do it. My heart is bubbling over because this Sunday the youth are going to sing. They're going to have a great time doing it instead of just sitting there watching grownups. They're going to have more fun doing it, and it's going to light a fire that they're going to want to do more. And we are going to give them the lead, with love and order. Get the youth and children involved, and there will be less problem kids.”

### Team Play

The songs of the day and sports reflect this change to 'self' and 'solo' performance vs. being part of the team. Michael Jordan, Larry Bird and Magic Johnson, three of the greats of basketball were great *team players* that won *Team Championships*. Unfortunately, more attention is given to their solo exploits than their team exploits. This is a big problem to anyone that works with kids today. They will hurt the team by selfish behavior, seeking self-glorification.

*\*\* The greatest rewards and accolades we give should be for self-sacrifice and team play.*

In the church we see a lot of self-promotion. Recently someone told me they cleaned the church twice so now they should be given a slot to preach. Well, did they clean the church to serve the team or serve themselves? Why are there sooo many small, lone ranger ministries? Has this "I" "Me" "Mine" thinking taken over the adults as well as the kids? I fear so. Sadly, I must comment on the observance that mega-ministries tend to only promote, share and help other mega-ministers. Back scratching, pork bellying, self-promoting, clique keeping, but we call it "networking". After conferences when pastors meet each other, I've noticed too often friendly pastor's talk, followed by attitude. "Oh, you have 2000 members, we should get together, here's my card, let's 'network'. Oh, you have 200 members?... So...How'd you like the conference?" The motive is self-promotion and money, when the motive should be team play and Kingdom goals.

*\*\* It's nice to be important, but it's more important to be nice.*

If kids think we only honor "big shots" then they will not think that they matter at all.

In conclusion, there are no short cuts with tough teens. Too often you are trying to disciple people that have been very damaged. They are acting out against a world that has rejected them. Parental figures have proved undependable and unloving. Consistent concern, positive language and reward systems will stop the tide of rejection.

*\*\* Activity is the key word*

*- people need to be doing something...*

*- sitting and watching grownups is not church.*

Most grownups don't realize that they are raising kids to be adults. Let them go. Let them



practice being grownups by making decisions, by having more and more responsibility. Tests have to be real, not “you prove you can clean your room like your sister” vs. “you can get a learner’s permit when you go to the Department of Motor Vehicles, pay the fee and pass the test on your own”. Set limits they can successfully achieve and then reward them. Hold too tight, too long and they’ll rebel and break free. A diamond in the rough is tough enough to take it and make it!!! (with a lil’ help from...)

**A Tough Leadership Call - "Remove them"**

Kicking someone out is kind of rough. In order to maintain order, you have to sacrifice. If you have to sacrifice a lamb to save the flock, you're going to do it, but there is a way to do it. It has to be in love and the purpose has to be order. You have to communicate with that one that you know is destroying order. I'm talking about adults and little kids as well. You are going to have to spend more time with the individual that is causing a problem. You are going to have to draw closer to them. You are going to have to make every effort to spend more time with them in order to fix the problem and salvage the group and the person as well.

Usually we do the opposite if someone causes us trouble. People's difficulties get worse by procrastination.

*\*\* There is a time of confrontation that is necessary...  
but before confrontation, get information.*

Are you having a tough time right now? Can I help you? How do you like being here? etc. Guard your flesh till you know who and what the problem really is. The devil loves a tempest in a tea pot, and to gain center stage.

We have people in this church that have been extremely disruptive, and I've spent hours and hours ministering to them. If it is necessary to remove them from the group, then private sessions may be the only answer. You need to identify if we are just dealing in personalities or "powers and principalities". Is the person a diamond in the rough or sawdust?

I've had to ask people to leave Bible study or discipleship classes. I've had to tell them, "You can't come here anymore until you change your ways. You're just not right in this group". Or, "You're of a different mindset and need different training." That's extreme, but I will not, for the sake of one lamb, destroy the group. Pray for wisdom because that person you want out might be a Peter in the rough, or he might be a 'worker-of-iniquity-skunk'.

You are going to have to make a special effort. You are going to have to spend some time with them, explaining why you are taking them out of the class, that you really love them and care about them, but that things must be changed and your decision and position has to be respected. You must approach them from a position of cooperation first, saying perhaps, "How can we work this out? Are you bored? What's the problem?" And you must realize that maybe you need to work with them one on one.

After everything has been tried and the only conclusion is, "they refuse to cooperate" and "we are dealing with someone who is cooperating with the wrong 'power'", then, and *only* then they must be removed for the sake of peace.

No decision to bar or terminate someone from a class or group should be made in isolation or by one individual. Get more input from others; seek spiritual discernment. Maybe they are a problem because they are hurting. Remember, hurt people hurt people. Place them where they can be ministered to, but protect the group, remember the goal. Disruptive people will multiply if not checked and that's not the multiplying action we are after!

**Time Constraints (butts wear out)**

You are with someone talking about Jesus, and as you get intense they say, “Hey, what’s for snack for today?” or, “Got any coffee?”, realize that they’ve come to the end of their listening. You have to understand that folks come to the end of their listening, and then start to lose attention, so finish the last point and take a break. You can’t keep poking at them and pushing them if they’ve soaked up all their blotters will hold.

For those of you who want to disciple individuals or groups, remind yourself that the mind can take so much and the butt can take so much. Whichever one wears out first, you have to be quick and quit thirty seconds before they’re turned off, because when the butt wears out, the mind goes right after it and, when the mind wears out, the butt goes right after that. People can only think so long and they can only sit so long.

It saves time to disciple people in groups but usually you need to go one on one, two on two. Try not to spread yourself too thin. Go to their house to establish the personal touch and friendly relationship. I’m looking for multiplying disciples and, if I have to do it one on one, then I’m coming to your house. This makes people feel important and helps you see what’s really going on in their lives.

Short and sweet is always better than long and boring. Research shows people learn best in 15 minute blocks of time. For example: 15 on, 15 off = 30 min. + 15 on, (45 min.) 15 off = 60 minutes. You can see that 45 minutes is better than 1 hour. If you go to 1 hour then a summary is a must and you have to restate the conclusion. A preacher went on preaching for 2 hours. All efforts to stop him failed - people remember nothing he said, only that he wouldn’t quit. In Heaven there is no time, but down here we must be aware of how precious time is - don’t waste it.

**Learning by %'s**

It's so important to get someone to the point that they thirst for the Word and retain what they are drinking. People retain only 5% of what they hear when they sit and don't get to participate. When people ask questions and make comments, learning goes up to between 75% and 85%. The person teaching will learn 95%. The 75% to 85%-ers are the ones who jumped into the discussion and were participating; they learned a lot. The ones who just sit like a lump on a log, as if they were in front of the TV, they retain only 5% of the information. That's all you should get when you are watching television, since most of TV is carnal and mindless. But we need to get the highest learning retention levels to multiply and reach the world. Therefore, we should teach as Christ did.

Jesus sat the people down and taught them; He answered questions, He posed questions. There was debate, retort, explanations and illustrations.

*\*\* People sit Sunday after Sunday listening to the preacher get smarter.*

Even with great preaching, the law of the parable of the sower is played out again and again. "...the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart" (Matthew 13:19). We are in an era of great teachers, but many of them are so proud that they fail to realize the learning curve is against them. The 5's of retention are in satan's favor. Looking good and sounding good doesn't automatically equal good learning. Preach yes, teach yes, but you must also disciple. Learning in discipleship is a give and take. We step out from behind the power of the pulpit and become vulnerable, even accessible. Find out what people think, know and feel, and admit when we don't know an answer to a question - never hiding behind our authority or fearing a challenge to "our truth".

This is one of the best ways to help the wounded learn the difference between God's Word vs. the teachings and traditions of men. For example, my wife and I sat while a disciple told how she sat under a pastor for 20 years. This pastor preached the sin of divorce and once divorced she could never marry again. Yes, divorce is a sin, but God forgives sin and the Word does not prohibit getting married, but fornication and adultery (See 1 Tim. Chapter 4).

Jesus said adultery is a just cause for divorce, but in any case a writ of divorcement must be given, or the women once put out would be a fornicator. Just as the woman at the well (John 4), who had many husbands. She had joined her flesh to many men (the two become one flesh when joined together). She had officially married one and divorced none. Jesus told her, "*You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly*" (John 4:17,18).

The sister my wife and I were talking with, this dear woman cried tears of condemnation for 20 years... but the truth has now set her free!!! God has now given her a godly man and they are in premarital counseling and plan to serve the Lord together as a ministry team.

This type of error seldom gets exposed from the pulpit because people are not open to asking questions. Wrong thinking and error is best confronted in an open forum the way Jesus disciplined. Pastors must take time apart from pulpit preaching for back and forth discipleship to take place. The learning curve goes way up on a dialogue vs. a speech. I have also found that periodic testing; multiple choice, essays, etc., really helps people move up higher on the curve toward better retention. Testing also exposes ego problems, pride and academic deficiencies.

A disciple is a student of the Word, and novices should be tried and I believe even tested. Jesus sent out the 12 after they were ready, and then the 70 after they were ready. Jesus got

them ready by preaching to the masses often in parables, but wanted a higher learning percentage from the disciples and sat down with them in smaller groups. We should do the same.

If a pastor is uncomfortable with this closeness, then he should humble himself and get over it! If he is poor at it, then find someone else who is more “apt to teach” and continue to shepherd, but get the sheep fed. 1 Tim. 3:2 speaks of a bishop (overseer, shepherd, pastor) and that he should be able to teach, but he is not a “teacher”. That is a different anointing and unfortunately this has not been understood.

You can care for a flock and lead them to good pasture where an anointed teacher can feed and help clarify things for them. Each church may not have a representative of each of the five-fold ministry (Apostle, Pastor, Teacher, Evangelist, Prophet - see Ephesians 4:11), but in the body of Christ all are present and should be shared. Amen.

Pastors should encourage interaction since learning is by percentages and degrees. Churches that are wise ought to value all anointing and use any and everyone that can help in training.

Finally, the mark of infallibility must be removed. Pastors do not know everything, do not retain everything. A wise pastor knows how to find an answer.

*\*\*A real pastor makes himself available to be questioned  
and interacted with - for the sake of the cause.*

**Signs & Wonders**  
**Power Ministry**  
**The Old End Times Enemy**

**Tools of the Trade - Good News and Signs**

In Mark 16: 15-17, Jesus gives disciples clear instructions on what the **Tools of the Trade are:** “Go into all the world and preach the gospel (Good News) to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe:” The NIV translations reads, “these signs will accompany those who believe:”. In other words, the disciples, the ones that are going to multiply, have two main weapons going for them: signs and Good News. You tell the Good News, God will confirm it with signs and you *will* multiply. Signs and Preaching Good News will get the job done.

*\*\* You do some believing, and God will do some accompanying.*

Jesus goes on to delineate the signs. He says, “In My name, they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover” (v.17-18). Is that just the pastor of the church? No! - That’s any and all disciples, *any* and *all* believers have these signs - *and* they have the *Good News*! The *Good News* is Isaiah 61, paraphrased: ‘My God is a good God Who does good things for His children’. Let’s read beginning with verse 1, “*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord*” (v.1,2).

So... the kid is in Sunday school class and he needs prayer. I don’t expect somebody to run up and get an elder. No, I expect the teacher to say, “In the name of Jesus, let’s pray.” If you notice in verse 18: “*they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them*” - this is on the *natural level* as well as the *spiritual level*. Yes, if a snake bites ... for example, the Apostle Paul - a deadly viper bit him (Acts 28), hooked itself right onto his hand - he shook it off into the fire - then everyone sat back and waited for him to die. And he just went on eating his dinner and then they praised the Lord. *A sign*. After this, many received the Good News and were saved. In this example, the unbelievers saw a sign, and then Paul preached to them the *Good News*.

Now that the Old Testament has been fulfilled, you are acceptable to the Father, through Jesus the Christ. Anyone who does not accept Jesus as Truth, will be condemned by God. You have to speak the whole Gospel – there is a Heaven to be gained, but there is also a hell to be shunned. This is the surmised meaning of Isaiah 61:1&2.

Now let’s get back to Mark 16, Jesus is talking about deadly poison, natural and spiritual. He’s referring to the fact that we must bless our food to protect us physically and spiritually. I can remember years ago, when I was working at a rehabilitation agency, the Gateway Industries, we used to go to this greasy diner to eat. On one particular day the mayonnaise was bad. At that particular time, I was not in the habit of saying Grace in public. Boy, do I wish I had said Grace - then, because that rancid mayonnaise, when it hit down in my stomach two and a half hours later - I felt like I was going to die. I’m telling you, it was painful.

I believe sincerely that since then I have eaten bad food, but I believe, without a doubt, that the Lord has worked many miracles to keep me from getting sick. The Spirit purifies the food or warns us not to ingest it. That’s what He is talking about in the *material* realm. In Mark 16:18 Jesus tells us, “*if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them*”. This is especially important on the mission field. Prayer in Faith will protect us from bad food or

water, and the Spirit gives us wisdom in these matters.

In the *spiritual* realm, He's talking about drinking in a bad teaching. You drink in (ingest, listen to, take) some spiritual poison. When Jesus talks about serpents and scorpions, He's talking about the work of satan, evil demons and their workings. Let's say some believing Christian says to you, "Here, read this book, it's really great stuff!" You're going along, and it's really, really great, and you get to page 55, and on page 55 it says, "While Jesus was in India, He went into a cave..." (The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ). All of a sudden, Jesus is in some cave with a bunch of women carrying out some hocus-pocus. Deadly *poison*. But some of the book reads really nice. The book shows Jesus as loving, kind and just a wonderful guy, but not Lord of lords. Wait a minute! Something in your heart, because you've got the Holy Ghost, will say, "Wait a minute, there's something wrong about this book. There's something not right about this 'poison'".

You're reading something, or you're sitting in church, and somebody gets off of Scripture. They get off into their own opinion, and their opinion is that if you don't listen to them, you're going to hell. You're drinking in that deadly poison and you go, "Huh???" You're listening to the radio ... and some guy says to a woman whose husband divorced her, and he has married someone else, and the radio guy says to her that she can never marry again. Something should go off and say, "Huh??? Why can't she marry again? If she's divorced and he's remarried, why can't she?" And something should say, "Let me check that out in Scripture".

And then you go through the Scriptures and you find out that Scripture says that if the unbeliever leaves, or where Jesus said except for marital unfaithfulness - you're free to marry (1Cor. Ch.7 and Matt. Ch. 19). And you say, "That was a deadly poison... I almost drank that in. 'She can never marry,' sounded good, had a ring of truth, but...! I almost believed that!" That's what I'm talking about. When Jesus says, "*if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them...*" He means you!!! Meaning the Holy Spirit in you will bring you out, into the truth. **The Spirit and the Word must agree.** If adultery and fornication and divorce are sins and all sins, save one, can be forgiven, then 1 Tim. 4:1-3 must be right: "*in latter times some will depart from the faith... forbidding to marry*".

You have to believe that you will not get into theological error and stay there. You have to believe that the Holy Spirit will direct you. You have to believe that supernatural signs and power will accompany the Good News. You have to believe that the message itself is supernatural and will produce disciples. Jesus said to teach them "*all things that I have commanded you*" (Matthew 28:20) - well that's what we're going to do, examine what He taught His disciples by example and demonstration.

The debate over signs and wonders is a waste of time. Consider that we believe the preaching of the Word changes peoples' hearts, and that being Born Again is a wonder of wonders - Jesus will come to lead our lives and change us. How can we believe that great miracle of being saved and dismiss all others? Strange, Jesus never had anyone pray the sinners' prayer or did He ever say, "After I leave and the Apostles of the Lamb leave earth, you can discount all other signs and wonders". Some things are just too big and important to surmise on the basis of conjecture - we need proof. The proof on the experience side is *overwhelming*.

Jesus still heals and does signs and wonders today. The only people that are against it and don't believe it, are those who have never experienced or have denied this experience and disbelieve the testimony of others. In the final analysis:



*\*\* If you don't believe, then signs don't follow you. Jesus said so.*

Due to a spirit of religion people conclude, "I'm a most excellent, good Christian and it never happened to me, so these people are of the devil or deceived". Jesus never put on a miracle show for a Pharisee then and He still doesn't now. Jesus said, "*And these signs will follow those who believe*" (Mark 16:17). He did not say they would follow those who don't believe and are skeptical. People that say, "I'll believe it when I see it" are usually wrong. Their skeptical attitude causes them to be skeptical about what they see. Many people see and still do not believe for believing is of the heart, not the head.

Lastly, let us look at ignorance of the Law of Faith. Heb 11:6: "*and without faith it is impossible to please God.*" 'My mother was a good Christian, she prayed and still ain't healed - so God doesn't do healing anymore...' That doesn't prove God doesn't heal - but it may prove that some "good Christians" may not have God pleasing Faith. It may prove that *God isn't moved by our goodness, but is **moved** by our **Faith***.

How can a supernatural God cease to do the 'super'? How can a good God cease to do the ultimate good? How can a loving Father not show compassion for 2000 years to His own children? How can a Bible believer believe something that's sooo important without one clear Scripture to refute Mark 16; Isaiah 53; Acts 10:38; Hebrews 11 and 13; James 5; 2 Peter 2:24; Mark 11:23,24; and all the testimonies of millions who have been healed, seen angels, heard the Spirit Voice, spoken Words of Knowledge and Wisdom, seen great acts of Faith and prayed in Tongues, had Tongues with interpretation, seen visions, been drunk in the Spirit, fallen under the power of God, been delivered from illnesses and addictions, prophesied the future, and lived clean moral lives as good as or better than those who stopped at being Born Again? If God needed signs and wonders, we do too. If Moses needed signs and wonders, we do too. If Mary and Joseph needed signs and wonders, we do too. If Elizabeth and Zacharias needed signs and wonders, we do too. If the 12 'sent ones' needed signs and wonders, we do too. If the 72 'sent ones' needed signs and wonders, we do too. If the 120 at Pentecost needed signs and wonders, we do too. If the 3,000 at Pentecost needed signs and wonders, we do too. If Cornelius the Centurion needed signs and wonders, we do too. If Paul and Silas needed signs and wonders, we do too. If Charles Finney needed signs and wonders, we do too. If Smith Wigglesworth needed signs and wonders, we do too. If Katherine Kuhlmann needed signs and wonders, we do too. If Oral Roberts needed signs and wonders, we do too. If Kenneth Hagin needed signs and wonders, we do too. If Benny Hinn needed signs and wonders, we do too.

If satan is going to do counterfeit signs and wonders then let's give him some real great stuff to copy - because Jesus said, "*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go My Father*" (John 14:12). Don't let anyone with an argument take this great God given Tool out of the disciple's Tool Box.

*To remove signs and wonders*

*is to leave us helpless against a supernatural devil,*

*and that was not God's plan!*

**The Practical Approach - Accept the Challenge**

We are the quick fix generation that practices procrastination. This greatly hurts our chances of becoming Faith people. If it takes a long time and work we quit and chase after the quick fix. The Apostles took a 3-year intensive with Jesus. Paul, 10 years of Holy Spirit teaching, after 20+ years of studying the Books of Moses and the Prophets. Why do we think once a week for less than one hour will do anything? Well, it can build strongholds of doubt and weak theology, if that's all we're doing. We surround ourselves with people that think the way we do - that's why we have so many denominations. A 'like' people doing the things they like in 'comfort zones'; this makes us comfortably unchallenged. Jesus challenged and drove the disciples ever higher.

While in the south a Baptist Preacher said he and his wife very reluctantly went to a "Holy Ghost, laughing, healing meeting." His wife declared, "If any of *that* stuff goes on, I'm leaving!" Well, he said the worship was great and then "it" began to happen, he wanted to stay, but up and out his wife went. He was still wondering what these meetings were about since he couldn't find Scriptures against them. I told him of some of my experiences and pointed out that God touching His people with joy was better than a good comedy, and that supernaturally inner burdens were lifted at these meetings.

We should not let fear or ignorance keep us from seeking the Truth. Paul fought against a move of God that is described in Acts Chapter 2. So much of what we see today does look just like the scenes in the book of Acts. What then should we do?

Be practical, do a study on the "Will" of God. Go to conferences, put in years of faithful study on the work of God. Study good health Bible style. Develop the ability to help others get set free from the work of satan - sickness. Go to where miracles are happening, speak to people that have seen or had God move. Play Faith tapes and read Faith books all the time. Until Jesus comes satan will be making people sick; why wait till you're sick to know what to think or do?

Don't be afraid to examine for yourself God's supernatural processes. Be confident that Jesus' promise is still valid, "*I will never leave nor forsake you*" (Heb. 13:5). ***God is greater than the devil!!!***

One of a disciples strongest weapons is a testimony of healing and the power to heal. This is a key to reaching the unsaved and securing the saints. A demonstration of power is God's way of building the Kingdom.

Read and listen to the great men and women of Faith; read their biographies. Memorize healing and deliverance Scriptures, practice words of Faith in your own life. Prov. 4:20-22: "*My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart; for they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh.*" To attend means to pay attention, that means to listen to, watch, write, memorize, speak, etc., etc.

Have a quiet time for God and self-examination. What do you believe, where are you out of line with God? Seek the counsel of Pastors and Elders; do they see your shortcomings? Have them critique your words, your confession - does it line up with the Word? Do you speak power or is it unbelief? Record what you say on tape or paper. Put positive sayings on the fridge, bathroom, car visor, everywhere you turn, have the Word of God in your face. Avoid negative people, loud people and gossip. Police your mind and arrest any doubt, take thoughts captive and demolish mental strongholds, etc. (See 2Cor. Ch. 10).

**Hearing the spirits and the Spirit**

God's ideas are spelled out in the Bible and are revealed in our spirits. Nothing can replace prayer time and times of meditation. Learning to quietly sit and just think on the Lord helps us to differentiate between us speaking in our minds and the Spirit of God speaking to our spirit, which speaks to our minds. The disciple must know the voice of his Commanding Officer.

1) **Our spirit's voice (inward voice or inside witness)** is not loud or even commanding in nature. Our spirit's voice has authority and comes as completed thought, not usually a string of words. Often, as my mind is reeling through details, my spirit waits for a pause and eases in a message. Sometimes it's a different subject or an answer to a prayer that was days old. Sometimes it registers an idea from God that is bigger than my own thoughts.

There are ideas, revelations, truths that register on our spirits at selective times. These are often called "Rhema words" - living, spoken words that burst forth onto our minds from our spirits. These happen in prayer, praise, worship, and reading the Bible, or in sermons or songs. They get our attention from the inside of our hearts. Sometimes it is just a "knowing".

*\*\* There are no premonitions, intuitions or psychic events,  
but only spiritual episodes that are birthed in our spirits or by God  
and you know who else (demons).*

Throughout this next section, please note: lower case "s" in spirit denotes the human spirit, while capital "S" in Spirit identifies the Spirit of God.

"We are spirits that live in a body and have living souls," as Brother Hagin so aptly puts it. Our inner man (spirit) speaks to us, so we need to develop our listening skills. The soul is our will, personality, intellectual mind and our emotions. The soul is earthy, carnal and opposes both the human spirit and the Holy Spirit. Our emotions and logical-intellectual mind must be trained to hear and accept the voice of the Spirit. The soul can only be spiritual when it is dominated by a spirit that is 'in tune' with God's Word and His Voice. From God's Word and God's voice there come messages.

Becoming a renewed mind and a Spirit-filled believer is to become an inward spirit listener. The message may be new, old, profound or truly simple. Our spirits know way more than our souls. This is the part of man that is most easily in touch with the 'spirit realm'. In error we have called it the subconscious, the super-conscious, psychic, deeper-self, Christ consciousness, etc. It is the inner-man, the hidden man of the heart, the spirit, true self and man's message center.

Though the message is not loud, it has authority, a ring of truth that demands focus and gives comfort if we listen to our spirit. This is the human spirit acting upon the mind.

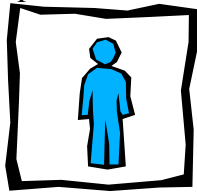
2) **When the Spirit of God (Voice of God) speaks**, He can be more dramatic and speaks aloud to the whole being. This is rare and is a very special event, which we cannot cause to happen: a supernatural God interrupting our natural day or night activities. This may occur by God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit or an agent - an angel of the above. This voice **is very audible to the human ear**. Others may hear a sound or rumble but only those intended to hear will clearly know what was said.

For example: God speaking on Mt. Sinai and Mount of Transfiguration.

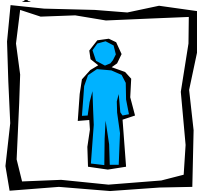
3) **The Godhead or agent may speak but the voice is not naturally audible**, it is **spiritual**. This voice registers upon our mind and spirit at the same instant - very

dramatic, authoritative, attention grabbing, then inspiring and peaceful. This voice is God speaking to the inner man and mind of man but not the ear of man. “And the voice of the Lord came to me saying...”

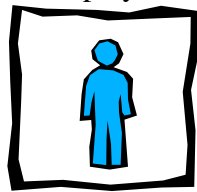
4) **God or His agent speaks or has spoken in our spirit, our spirit tells or retells the message to our mind.** This is often by dreams, visions, and revelations. The mind is being reminded of what the spirits have exchanged or talked about. It can be instantaneous or delayed, as during prophecy, Tongues, interpretations, preaching, teaching, healing or during any anointed time of ministry. The Spirit speaks and leads. Our spirit follows and the mind plays catch up.



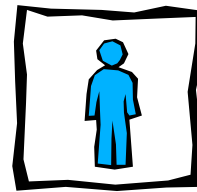
**Our spirit's voice**



**God speaks aloud**



**God speaks to mind**



**God to man's spirit**

**and inner man man's spirit to man's mind**

To summarize: 1) Man's spirit speaks to man's mind - this voice is our own spirit speaking to our own mind. If we are born again, filled with God's Spirit, then our spirit has in it the Words of God and the thoughts of God. Therefore, we are regenerated and can trust what our spirit tells us. Also, we can and should allow this voice to dominate and lead us. Not the emotions (flesh) or our minds, but our spirit (the inner man). 2) God speaks to man audibly, 3) God speaks to man in his spirit and mind, and 4) God speaks to man's spirit, which speaks to man's mind.

We must learn how to hear our spirit and yield our will to our reborn spirit. We use words like “feel, instinct, premonition, vibes, voices” - these are all wrong, for it is a present knowing of an inner thought that registers on the person and is interpreted in the mind and translated into a thought or sentence.

Finally, God is God and can speak to us any time and any way He chooses. We can hear from our spirits' voice any time if we take the time to listen.

**\*\* *“The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD,  
searching all the inward parts of the belly” (Prov. 20:27).  
Have you heard from your inner man lately?***

**A Fisherman's Definition of Sin**

Sin is behavior in thought or deed that is contrary to the nature of or in violation of God's laws. The Bible says, "*whatever is not from faith is sin*" (Romans 14:23). Doubt, unbelief, worry, any fear other than fear of God is also sin, especially if improperly given more place than Faith. Any thought or action that is 'unloving' is sin. All of the above separate us from God and ultimately violate self. We are created beings capable of violating our own best interest and design. God's love for us and His need to be loved caused Him to give us "free will". This "free will" means that we can and must continually make choices. Sometimes we choose *immediate gratification* based on false information and violate God, self and others. Sin usually has instant rewards. If nothing else, sin is the result of the flesh (carnal nature) pleasing the self.

*\*\* A spiritual person realizes that ultimate satisfaction comes from serving self through serving others.*

Avoidance of sin may mean postponed gratification, but the pain of righteousness is far less painful than the results of sin.

God in His sovereignty has established certain laws concerning sin:

- 1) All sin is sin – there is no big or little sin. To break the law is to be a law breaker. Picture a fresh baked apple pie. Mommy has baked it for company and it looks great. Whether you pinch a ½ inch piece of crust off for a taste or if Dad cuts out a 4" wide slice before company arrives - either sin ruins the pie. This is God's view of sin. Cheat on your taxes or rob a bank, it's all stealing to God.
- 2) All sin is sin and they are equal but all consequences of sin are not equal. You may be arrested for murder or a traffic violation but the consequences are varying in degree. One may cost you a night in jail and loss of driving privileges, the other may cost you your life. Blaspheme (speak evil) about your brother and *risk* hell's fire, blaspheme the Holy Spirit and be *guaranteed* hell's fire.
- 3) Sowing and reaping are guaranteed. What you do will always have an impact on the future. Your deeds set an outcome into motion. Based on your repentance and heart attitude, God can delay, postpone, increase or reduce the harvest you will reap due to what you have sown. David sinned sexually with Bathsheba. She was spared and David was spared, but the child was allowed to die. This was because of David's contrite heart. God could have destroyed them both and all the work David had accomplished in Israel. The child was lost but was replaced by the wisest and richest king to ever live, Solomon. Showing that even when we sin God's grace and mercy can produce a crop better than what we planted, Praise God!!!
- 4) 1 John 1:9 says, "*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*". All unrighteousness. God is forgiving and kind. Though sin feels good and has pleasure, it produces pain. When we realize this we joyfully receive God's Mercy and Grace through repentance. The mystery is that saints will always repent and confess therefore, we do not sin as a true sinner does. (See 1 John 3:8 and 9: "*He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because*

*he has been born of God*".) Sinners practice sin continually. They have little or no remorse and justify their behavior, but not a saint. At the least amount of conviction a saint drops to his knees *willingly* to reconcile his soul condition to righteousness. Saints don't take God's grace for granted, but rejoice in pleasing our Lord. Sinners love their sin and stay in it, while saints hate sin and work to get rid of it.

- 5) Your committed sin damns you if your sin is to omit Jesus. The Holy Spirit convicts of sin. The sin of avoiding, neglecting and rejecting the Lord of Lords and His Grace toward us will result in damnation and leads to hell. If we refuse the beckoning of the Holy Spirit, then we sin by rejecting the One Whom He brings – Yeshua the Anointed of the Father. All other acts of the flesh are covered by Jesus' Blood. In Luke 23:39-43, we read of the criminal on the cross. He was a robber and murderer with no good works, yet he obtained Heaven: "they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony" (See Rev. 12:11, and Rom. 10:9) – he confessed Jesus as Lord!

**\*\* *Jesus goes in and sin always goes out!***

The disciple of Christ must always remember that we are not focused on fighting sin; we focus on fighting the *good fight of Faith* (1 Tim. 6:12). Our focus should be on getting more of Jesus, and as a by-product He will cause a reduction of sin. My heart and mind should be focused on walking like Jesus more than on *not* walking like the devil. What Jesus is doing is more important than what the devil is doing. If my eye is on sin and the devil, then I will live in condemnation and failure. Each sin or improper thought must be turned over to the Lord quickly and after repentance put aside.

Jesus was tempted of the devil in one great confrontation in Luke Chapter 4. While Acts 10:38 tells us Jesus "*went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him*". Jesus quickly got the disciples to get past their sins and move on, (i.e. Jesus said to Peter, "*Simon, Simon, behold, satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*" – Luke 22:31,32. And also, "*Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?... Feed My sheep*" – John 21:15-17).

**\*\* *People sin in an instant and suffer for a lifetime.***

**\*\* *Let us help them get over sin in an instant and thrive for a lifetime.***

Our goal is to lead the unsaved to salvation, which frees them from sin. We develop the saints by helping them identify sin and its traps, and increasing their recovery time from failure. We must stress that if we spend all day with Jesus we won't have time to sin. If His presence is a reality and His Word is on our lips and in our hearts, then sin cannot get a hold on us.

**\*\* *The water of Love washes the clutter of sin into the gutter.***

*I stood on the precipice of time  
and gazed over the cliff of life  
and way off in the distance  
at the bottom of the gorge of experience  
I saw small remnants of sin.  
Scanning ever closer to where I stood  
I beheld flowers of fortitude.  
I pondered a thought;*

*from down there, when I struggled in the gorge,  
I could only see a high ledge of wonder above.  
But from up here,  
sin is small  
compared to this vista of Love.*

The war over sin has been won! The price of sin has been paid, the author of sin and death, the devil, has been defeated! Yes, satan and all his demonic agents and bondages are all has beens! Then why do saints fall into sin and struggle to get free if the war has been won? Our problem is a problem of Faith – we don't believe it's over, so we continue to fight. Or, most unfortunately, many love their sin more than Jesus. Therefore, a person who loves their sin and bondage continues to be loyal and obedient to its urges.

I saw a WWII movie where an English man loved to hate the Germans so much that after hearing that the war was over he smashed the radio, boarded his plane and went to bomb them to fulfill his hate. After the Civil War history records that many freed slaves never took advantage of their freedom and continued on as slaves on their plantation. Millions of dollars are spent on drug rehabs, only to see the patient immediately return to addiction. The moment the demon voice says, "you're still mine, and you're still an addict", the person's soul (mind and emotions) responds in agreement, if there is no help - no way out. "*As a dog returns to his own vomit, so a fool repeats his folly*" (Proverbs 22:11).

Paul wrote in Romans: "*O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God - through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin*" (Ch. 7: v. 24,25). The pull of sin is a spiritual battle and when we try to battle it with the flesh (soul), we are hard pressed to win this war. Some people by sheer will power can control sin's urges, but control is not freedom. Salvation means saved, delivered, wholeness – that's what Jesus did for us, He saved us. He did not reduce the length of our chains, He utterly destroyed the yoke – the ball and every link of the chain. Do you believe this? If not, then the struggle is with Faith, not with sin.

Read Isaiah 53 - What do you believe? Did Jesus do all this or not? Sin has no hold on us, but our minds hold us to wrong thinking and unbelief. The disciple must bring himself to see and receive by Faith what our Lord has done. Our minds renewed by Christ, (Romans 12:1-2)- accept our freedom and begin to walk in it.

*\*\* When sin comes a' calling, I'm not home!  
A disciple must become so confident in Jesus  
that he is continually resting,  
not in what he is doing,  
but in what Jesus has done.*

Mercy & Grace

A person on his deathbed makes a confession to the Lord. He's not been obedient to the Lord and has no "good works", but on his deathbed, he is saved - through **grace**. We understand the term **mercy**, but few Christians understand the true meaning of **grace**. Mercy is the supernatural compassion - kindness that a loving God bestows on the undeserving people. God's justice would require punishment to pay for sins. God's love (compassionate mercy) foregoes that punishment and extends undeserved blessing (grace) to people. Forgiveness is readily available as God is merciful to sinners. This kindness is clearly extended in the Old Testament to the patriarchs of the Faith. Then enters Jesus, the compassionate and merciful Savior, the Holy Spirit, victory from the Cross and resurrection. Therefore, something more than mercy enters the world. To call grace "unmerited favor" is to serve the appetizer and dessert, then call it a meal! Mercy is unmerited favor; grace is something more. The purpose of the cross was favorable empowerment. Pentecost was the giving of the Holy Spirit to empower the believer. Grace is God's merciful kindness given us so we can overcome, be victorious, prosper, be delivered and utilize His love to great effect. Mercy is what God does and grace is what we do with that mercy. The disciple must be aware of Jesus' voice always saying, "My grace is sufficient for you!" Paul, in 2 Cor. 12 had a tormenting, buffeting, demonic spirit to deal with - Jesus had to remind him, "I'm in Heaven, you are on the earth with Holy Spirit power, so use it. My grace will give you the victory. Because of My mercy I give you grace (favor and power)". Therefore Paul finally stops begging and in Timothy 3:10&11 he states, "*But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra - what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me*". Amen. Grace is the ability of God. Strong's definition of mercy in Hebrew: geshem; a shower; - rain, shower. Goshem; from geshem - rained upon. Strong's definition of grace in Greek: charis, from chairō (to be cheerful), graciousness, (as gratifying), of manner or act (abstract or concrete, lit., fig., or spiritual): especially the divine influence upon the heart and its reflection in the life; including gratitude); - acceptable, benefit, favour, gift, grace (-ious), joy, liberality, pleasure, thank (-s, -worthy). Charisma - from charizomai; a (divine) gratuity, i.e. deliverance (from danger or passion); (spec.) a (spiritual) endowment, i.e. (subj.) religious qualification, or (obj.) miraculous faculty; - (free) gift. That's how we are all going to get through - grace.

The supernatural gift of grace is much more than the kindness of God. The Scriptures say, "*There is none righteous, no, not one*" (Rom. 3:10), and "*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*" (Rom. 3:23). If all have sinned and fallen short, then no work of the flesh can attain what the grace of God can offer. Ephesians 2:8-10 shows that God's grace even provides the good works that we do as His children: "*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them*".



**Glorying in The Flesh**

How can you obey and have works unless God gives you the grace and strength to obey and “work”? Our flesh wants to glory in its works. We have to stay humble. Our flesh wants to glory in a religious manner, “I’m obedient, humble, honest, etc.” *All the glory goes to God.* Many situations occur when we would take the credit for what God’s doing or has done.

Consider the example of King Saul. Saul offered the sacrifice unto the Lord, in disobedience (1 Sam. Ch. 13). Overview: Israel was about to go into battle. Before fighting the men wanted to have God’s blessing and awaited the sacrifice to the Lord to bless the battle. Saul was given his instructions. The prophet as priest unto God does the sacrifice. He was planning and waiting for the prophet. Some were saying, “We’re gonna fight; we’re gonna fight. No, we’re not gonna fight.” Some people were getting tired of waiting for the prophet to come and were going home, and so Saul said, “*Bring a burnt offering and peace offerings here to me*” (v.9).

He was functioning from the tree of knowledge. To his flesh it was a good idea in an emergency. He exercised his free will in offering the sacrifice. He thought it was the best thing to do, and when the prophet asked him why he did it, he answered from his emotions and basically said, “I was afraid. We were going to lose the battle if **I** didn’t do something.”

Functioning from his emotions he ended up in a situation where, had they gone into battle, his flesh would have gloried. “**I** didn’t need the prophet. **I** offered the sacrifice unto God **myself**, and **I** engineered the battle and we won.” God put a stop to it right away saying, “*But now your kingdom shall not continue*” (13:14). Now we can see the lesson in: “*Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,*” (1 Sam. 15:22). Next, consider Miriam and Aaron (see Num. 12). They felt that they were doing so good that since they also heard from God they could challenge Moses. Comparison of works and thinking for God can be a dangerous thing.

Let’s read verses 9-11: “*So the anger of the LORD was aroused against them, and He departed.* <sup>10</sup> *And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly Miriam became leprous, as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper.* <sup>11</sup> *So Aaron said to Moses, “Oh, my Lord! Please do not lay this sin on us, in which we have done foolishly and in which we have sinned”.* Both of these examples are of the same type. Saul, Aaron and Miriam are disobedient and are taking glory (honor and power) unto themselves. Notice in each case that they are elevating themselves equal to or over God’s anointed, chosen person.

*\*\* Thinking we are more than we are is a very dangerous thought.*

Another type of example: One of your students thinks you ought to be leading the class a certain way. The student doesn’t know what God told you when you were preparing the lesson or what God put upon your heart. And the student, who thinks you should lead the class a certain way, has his program, and he thinks that he’s got the answer. He’s functioning from his emotions and mind. He’s functioning from the tree of knowledge. That’s exactly what happened to Aaron and Miriam. “Well, we hear from God; we speak to God just like Moses does.” Aaron ended up with a tongue-lashing. Miriam ended up with leprosy. Be careful.

A pastor doesn’t tell you everything God tells him, so, when he’s leading, you don’t know the whole thing. You don’t see the whole picture, until God tells him to tell you the whole picture. You only have part of the blueprint and you say, “Oh, he’s weak or he’s missing it or he ought to do this or he’s limiting the Spirit or he’s not limiting the Spirit...” And this is

not just for pastors. It's for all of us.

Your kids do it to you when they become teen-agers. They think they know what you ought to be doing as a parent. Their emotions are not shelved, nor their thoughts. They eat from the tree of knowledge. They exercise their free will. They're glorying in the flesh; they then act in disobedience to the order established by God. "I know more than Mommy knows so I should be able to have the car this week. She's standing in the way of my happiness. I look great in that car and I'll do what I want."

Next example, James and John (See Matt. Ch. 20). This one comes from a mother functioning from her emotions and her pride. She wants to be proud of her boys and glory in their 'flesh'. She wants them to sit at the right hand of the Lord. She exercises her free will and gets them talked into it. They say, "Yeah, Ma's got a good idea. We should sit with Jesus on the right hand. Hallelujah". They're pumped up too. Read the passage, because it tells you how the disciples felt about it too. They were all jockeying for position looking to get their flesh glorified. Jesus said, "*You do not know what you ask*" (v.22). Greater glory comes with a higher price tag. Better if you let God do the shopping and pick your clothes. The kids in your Sunday school class would like to teach the class, but they don't want to do the work you do. We'd all like to be like Jesus Christ but don't want our flesh nailed to a cross.

One more: Peter. Jesus says that He is going to the Cross. Peter rebukes Him in Matt. 16:22 - "*Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You.*" He gets off into his emotions. He doesn't like what Jesus is saying. He figures he has a better plan. Peter thinks, 'I'm gonna straighten Jesus out.' Thank God Jesus wasn't functioning from Peter's knowledge. If He were, no one could be saved if Jesus did things Peter's way - there would be no Calvary, no tomb, no resurrection, no salvation, no grace.

**\*\* *We all must be aware when our train has stopped at **flesh central**.***

Hang on to this: *God's so merciful.* It's so hard to control pride and flesh. We end up trying to glory in our works and God *still* forgives us. Just remember, He makes us clothes (Gen. 3:21), He cooks us fish (John 21:9). He doesn't dismiss Peter, or fire James and John, He just says, "*You do not know what you ask.*" and points out a better way. As for Miriam, He heals her of the leprosy. He's a loving God.

Our flesh loves to glory. There is that 'spanking time.' We all go through a time of spanking, but He's so merciful that He knows just how many whacks to give, and then He's a big hugger. "*For whom the Lord loves He chastens*" (Heb. 12:6). The Holy Spirit loves to hug us. Just puts His arms around us and says, "You know that was your flesh. You could have messed up if I'd let you keep going. You could have had a really depressing situation. If I had let you go a little bit longer, you'd have been mad at everybody. You'd have been calling everybody names, but I stopped you just in time". We get better at praising God, being obedient and keeping the flesh in check, because the Holy Spirit is our Teacher and Comforter.

**\*\* *I constantly remind myself that the part of me  
that's really something special  
is the Jesus part!***

Anything I do that is good is because of Jesus. Anything I find flattering is Jesus. Anyone that gets healed or saved is because of Jesus. satan fell because he thought he was sooo much and wanted a bigger seat; he wanted God's throne. (Isaiah 14:13 - "*For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;'*").

Remember who you were without Jesus and give thanks that He saved you and made some thing out of you.

*\*\* To get in a mess, glory in the flesh!*

Ever notice how people take the credit for being good-looking, etc.? They inherited the traits and still have the nerve to get puffed up and take the credit. All they did was be born - and through no effort on their part. How sad that we blame and discriminate against people born disabled or unattractive. What a shame we brand children as “illegitimate”, when it’s the parents that deserve a label, not the innocent child.

People take credit for so many things that were gifts and/or advantages that they didn’t earn. God watches to see what we do with these gifts or curses that were given us. Man looks on the flesh, but God judges the heart. I can hear Him saying, “Look at you, My child, you were born into a losing situation but you let Me work in your life and you have become a winner. Come, I will bless you even more!”

God is also saying to others, ‘Look at you, born into so much wealth and talent. You act superior but have become null and void, only an empty flesh pleaser. I’ll do to you as I did to Belshazzar with the handwriting on the wall’ (Dan. Ch.5). Let’s look at these verses, 25-28, “*And this is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of each word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians*”. Remember. “*For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required*” (Luke 12:48).

Belshazzar was given the rule over a great kingdom, but allowed his flesh to be so lifted up that he thought to drink from the cups and plates that were from the Temple of God. He thought himself so special that he forgot Who gave the kingdom to his forefather Nebuchadnezzar, and allowed him to inherit this great blessing. The best thing to do with our “flesh” (self), is to will it over to the Lord. When God uses us, stay humble, stay sweet, glory only in the Lord.

**Dress & Performance Religion**

The flesh is alive and well in the church in many ways. Glorifying in the flesh is most seen in “performance religion”. Dressing to be seen and complimented. Adorning expensive jewelry and gravity defying wigs, ties that require sunglasses to even look at. Fingernails too long to shake hands or button shirts. In 1 Timothy 2:9 “...*adorn themselves in modest apparel*”. This means ‘orderly decor’ or ‘good behavior, modest’.

1 Peter 3:3-5 agrees with this pointing us away from the practices of the prostitutes of their day - fancy braided hair with gold, pearls, etc. and wearing of costly array. The apostles are *not* saying look bad and boring. They *are* saying don’t look like you must, at all costs, use your body (flesh) to draw attention to yourself as a prostitute does. Good taste and ‘classiness’ compliment our Lord and ourselves - showing good judgment and awareness of appropriate, timely dress.

We don’t wear a 3-piece suit to McDonalds or a tee shirt to a 4 star restaurant. We don’t wear tee shirts and tights to Sunday worship, or prom dresses to Bible Study. It is ignorance of the Bible to say that God does not care about our outward appearance.

*\*\*Old Testament and New Testament worshipers did not  
go to the Temple in their work clothes.*

During the 70’s and 80’s a false teaching and cultural tradition came into being – “God doesn’t care about how you dress; so come casual, dirty, worn out, whatever”. The spirit of rebellion of this generation was rejecting grandpa’s suit and tie with disregard of the Scriptures. In Isaiah 11:1 we see that “the fear of the Lord” is one of the 7 Spirits of God. This fear is “reverent awe”, a concern to honor and not take for granted the Great One. Fear of God causes us to recognize God’s holiness, which mandates a proper response. If an important guest is coming to your house do you not clean-up and dress-up? If the most important One is coming, would you not do the same? Failing to honor God on the inside and the outside has destroyed many a revival. Many blessings have ended because of failing to properly honor God. Jesus’ telling of a father (a king) giving a wedding feast for his son in Matt. 22:11-14: “*But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen*”. So you see God does care how we honor Him in our apparel. Of course if there are those who have no “good” apparel they are accepted. I have noticed that once the poor begin to get blessed they no longer come before the Lord to worship in their old clothes. We should be concerned about people, but our hearts should be motivated to please God. The priests, singers, musicians, etc. all wore prescribed apparel that God mandated for worship. We over-do or under-do according to our judgment and presumptions, which may be influenced by our need to be seen and get attention. This is not God’s best!

We should not have an “on stage” mentality or an “I don’t care” mentality - God is watching, the unsaved are watching... 1Cor. 10:31,32: “*Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God*”.

The flesh has a really hard time staying out of the way of worship. “Performance worship” is when the talent, attire, or personality of the worshiper takes the place and the focus off of

*ministering to the Lord.*

**\*\* *A disciple of Christ enters into worship to minister to  
(serve, wait on, meet the need) of the Lord.***

Yes, God Almighty wants, needs and gets pleasure from being praised. We cannot meet God's financial need or intellectual need, but by praising Him we do meet His need to be loved, adored, respected - praise belongs to Him.

Jesus said if we don't praise Him, "*the stones would immediately cry out*" (Luke 19:40). Every glimpse of Heaven shows that praise to God is a natural condition in Paradise. So "*Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*" (Matt. 6:10). Man is made in God's image and desires praise. Our flesh, if not recreated in God's image, will become puffed up, conceited, power hungry, destroying self and others. God is to be praised, for He doesn't have this problem. No matter how much we praise Him, He is still God and it doesn't cause Him to sin, but it's not so with humans.

The talent we have from God is used to minister to Him and to others. Glory and honor taken unto ourselves is robbing from God, especially when our goal was to place ourselves at center stage. The flesh says, "You're the man, you can preach Heaven down". "You'll get those sisters a shoutin'". "They can't sing, our choir will tear them up and send them home." "When they see this dress and I spin around they'll eat their hearts out." "When I hit the big note at the end of the song, they'll give me a standing ovation." None of this has any place in the church of God, or the heart of a worshiper. *Christian entertainment has a place, and it is not worship.* God is not impressed with clever stage tricks, but longs for sincere love in praise, honesty and a longing to touch His heart.

Praising God from a pure heart opens the way to the Throne of God. Healings, blessings and God's presence will manifest when praisers are in one accord. The flesh of someone seeking to get what is due God for themselves will cause the anointing to wane as God draws His presence away. As we teach, preach, play or sing, we must say to ourselves, "Look how God is using what He gave me... Glory to God!" When people are blessed and praising us, we need to respond with, "Yes, thank you, that was great - all Glory to God, isn't He wonderful - Thank God!"

A disciple of Jesus should answer in this manner until he means it in his heart, for it is the TRUTH! God will always anoint the effort of a sincere worshiper and He and others will be blessed.

**\*\* *You may give a great performance  
but without the anointing, no one gets blessed  
and glorying in the flesh shows you're a mess.***

**Drama Rama**

Pride causes people to take actions that put them at the center of attention. One technique I call “Drama Rama”. While working as an administrator in a secular setting, I had a secretary that was very sweet, but had a habit of multiplying all situations by a factor of ten. A phone call about a minor problem would become a problem of a magnitude so great that the Congress and United Nations and the Supreme Court would be needed to resolve it. She would take ten minutes to retell a two sentence conversation and would hold you spellbound with what she had for dinner last night.

A person bitten by the drama bug can cause little problems to be blown out of proportion. By misspeaking, the spirit of offense can usually find an open door when a person exaggerates. We must help people to see that we must tell the truth within a framework that God is in control. I often tell my staff, “there are no emergencies in the Kingdom of God”. Drama Rama is usually negative, deals in criticisms and casts dispersions on people’s character. The exaggeration about church or church matters makes it more difficult for the unsaved to desire to be a part of the Body. Enthusiasm is good but a calm center is best for the disciple of Christ.

*\*\*Tell it as it is, and see it as it could be.*

Finally, in spiritual matters, such as dreams, visions and prophetic words, Drama Rama must be avoided at all costs.

**Obedience**

Obedience that God honors is obedience that is an act of love from Faith. We obey God because we love and trust Him. Works are the same - we do good works and obey God because we love the brethren and God's creatures.

No one was more obedient than the Pharisees and the Scribes and they missed it completely. The Pharisees were obedient. They kept the Law, but were not obedient to the Spirit of the Law, Mercy, Love and Faith. Remember the Holy Spirit was not yet given, so they followed the *Law* obediently. They "knew" they were righteous and obedient. That's the error. That's the trap. Self assured, not trusting in God but in the letter of the Law. "I think I'm obedient" is better than "I know I'm obedient". You should remain teachable and open to the Holy Spirit. Be as obedient as you can and thank God, and give Him the credit as a merciful gracious God.

The Pharisees and the Scribes "knew" for sure that they were so obedient that they could crucify Christ because He didn't keep the Sabbath. Were they obedient to the Sabbath? You bet they were. They wouldn't work on the Sabbath. They wouldn't cook. They wouldn't pick up a mat. But they'll crucify Jesus for telling a guy to pick up a mat. He was disobedient because He did break the Sabbath. No "ifs"... He told that man to pick up his mat and go walk (John 5:8). The man was working. He was carrying a mat. He broke the Sabbath, not the spirit of the Sabbath, but a Sabbath 'Law'... "Do no work".

The purpose of the Sabbath was to rest in, trust in, rely on, believe on, glorify, and draw to our God. The limit of the Sabbath was on work to the flesh, body, business, but surely not limiting the work of mercy or Faith. For a cripple to carry his mat was work, but more importantly a **demonstration of victory and glory to God**. It did not separate him from God, but bound him closer to God, the testimony of his deliverance and a real 'Shabbat' - rest in the Lord - Who did the work! To not carry the mat would have broken the Sabbath - The Day for him to rest in the Lord by showing all God's goodness, and holiness. Keep the Sabbath Holy - what's more holy than God's holy power manifesting and then giving Him glory - WOW!!! Obedience to mercy, love and Faith is freeing, not binding. When we obey God we are free - nothing to worry about, all is well in the universe, let's have a party! Amen!

If we are obedient it is God who has given us the juice and the strength to stay obedient. Therefore, why should we boast if we are obedient? In our own strength, we have all failed many times. When we do right we are wrong to get puffed up. God is the Enabler and should get the credit. Our **obeying** is a *good work* and we can apply Eph. 2:10 to this 'good work', "*which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*" God rewards obedience, but He is good and kind because that is His nature. We should not see our obedience as the central cause of God's blessing.

The minute you put credit from God's blessing toward **your obedience**, your **flesh** can start to glory. Your flesh is going to light up like a Christmas tree and say, "I'm doing it. I'm obedient. God is blessing because I'm obedient." We say our God is gracious; our God is good. Psalm 145:8,9 "*The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy. The LORD is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works*".

Aren't we obedient because we know and love Jesus? We just want to be obedient because we feel His presence and we love Him. We are in the presence of the King, who is also our Brother. It just hurts us not to be obedient. What Scripture in the New Testament

says that we are saved by obedience? It's not in there, though it is an important key. "*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God*" (Eph. 2:8). The minute you forget it, you are in the flesh.

We are obedient because of the work the Holy Spirit does in us - He convicts, teaches, guides and corrects, therefore, our obedience is *His completed work in us* - our work is *yielding* to His work (our obedience). Our yielding is still His work, as He has given us His Spirit and a renewed mind with which we can yield our flesh. Praise God it's all Him anyway!

*\*\* Obedience is a by-product of relationship.*

*Love compels us to honor our Abba-Father with our whole being.*



**“The devil Made Me Do It!”**

Demonic activity can occur at any age in any one. The greatest of saints can come under attack or due to error act upon a lie from the evil one. We should not be overly concerned as the evil one in our midst will always be found out and defeated by the faithful. Too often saints confuse demonic activity with people acting out their “flesh”. The flesh with its sinful desires (Gal. Ch. 5) rises up without any help from satan. Often “The devil made me do it” or “I was under attack” are excuses for out-of-control behavior. In Galatians Chapter 5, we read that self-control is one of the fruits of the Spirit we have, but we must exercise it.

There are the people that, without demon influence, are mean, hard to get along with, out of balance and devilish while not devil influenced. Children may learn to be selfish or to throw tantrums to get their way. If they are not corrected, they become infantile adults. A demon sees this behavior and pushes it from selfish behavior into out of control self-destructive behavior, from tantrums to out of control rage. The will power of the person becomes greatly compromised at times and in specific areas, leading to demonic oppression or even possession – almost complete loss of self-control over one’s own will.

People, due to bad habits and wrong thinking, open the door for demons to enter. Consider for example, a woman that measures her importance by having a man. Her low self-esteem is wrong thinking and chasing men for validation is a bad habit. Consider she gets saved but doesn’t allow Jesus to be Lord over her personal life in this area. She allows a man that she’s chasing to move into her apartment due to her desperation. She has now opened the door for the possibility of demonic attack.

Usually the convicting power of the Holy Spirit will cause her to consider her situation but bad habits and wrong thinking lead to compromise and hypocrisy. She hides from the “light of the Truth” unaware that devils wait in the darkness. She begins to hear voices that tell her what she wants to hear, and after awhile begins acting upon them, which results in compulsive erratic behavior; demons have gained a foot hold. The sin must be dealt with (boyfriend thrown out) as well as the bad habits and wrong thinking, but only when she goes to Jesus can we help her.

This is one example of how sin can open the door for the demonic – this is the same with any saint or sinner. Remember demons are bullies and they attack the weak, the sick, the young or the old – anyone that is not protected or poses a threat to their kingdom. As Peter said in 1 Peter 5:8, “*your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour*”.

Modern psychology has helped demonic activity by putting us all in denial, saying, ‘they are ill, not demonically influenced or possessed’. I believed what I had been taught in graduate school. While working as a counselor on a chronic schizophrenic ward in Toledo, Ohio, my thinking was challenged one day when I saw a skinny 16 yr. old boy toss four grown, trained orderlies around the room. I realized that psychological babble and 1500 mg. of Thorazine couldn’t help this young boy get free of what was making him unbelievably strong.

Modern psychology has often put labels on behavior that is clearly demonic and has failed to truly help these people. Medication sedates the host’s body and may make it difficult for the demon to act out, but he’s still in their bending or dominating the host’s will. Without all the fancy diagnostic terminology, the Jews of Jesus’ day cut to the chase. If you’re out of your mind and working against your best interest there’s probably a demon somewhere

around - and you may need an exorcist, not Prozac or Valium. You may need true salvation, which includes deliverance. You need to put away sin and get the forgiveness of Jesus to get free. If it's not a question of sin, then it is a manifestation of the demon dominating the weak, and Jesus is still the answer.

The demonic is compulsive, erratic, confused, overly rigid and usually opposed to the things of God. Demonic possession is better described as demonic influence or demonically influenced will power. Note that even the demon possessed man of Gadarenes (Mark 5:6), had enough will power to go to Jesus. He had a legion of demons that could make him super strong and even self destructive, but they couldn't stop him from going to Jesus. In Acts 16, the slave girl had a fortune telling demon and still had enough will power to follow Paul for days, crying out till deliverance came. The Gaderene demoniac and the slave girl had some will power left but usually they were dominated in many other areas of life.

**devils in the Church**

Demon possessed people shows up in church when the host has a will to want to get set free, or his will has been dominated and the demon plans to infiltrate, disrupt and destroy, using the host who has yielded his/her will to that end. There are other circumstances and further study is of value for the true disciple. Good study sources are books on the subject of demons written by Lester Summerall, Kenneth Hagin and Derek Prince.

We must know it's God's will to have victory over the demonic. In these last days the battle lines will become less obscured. Those that are against the message of the Gospel are aggressive and in the open. As persecution increases we must know Satan is the source and that he uses people in and out of the church to do his work.

Look for critical whispering spirits that think they see what others are missing. As we read in 2 Cor. 11:13,14: *"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light"*. I call this prideful seed planting. As you walk in love with compassionate care for all the sheep, the demon becomes frustrated and angry and will manifest. The host will become overt and may exhibit a wide range of behaviors from shouting, self-mutilation, verbal attacks, uncontrollable weeping, to violence. Remember in all cases, *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places"* (Eph. 6:12).

Stand on 1 John 4:4, *"He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world"*. Your counter attack is to identify the will of the host and dominate the foul spirit using the Blood of the Lamb. A person in cooperation with the demon will resist you and flee in order to keep the demon. They will refuse prayer, counseling and avoid you at all costs. I once had a person who flat out told me, "I know what you want to do". I had invited him to go to my office so I could call on the Lord to rid him of the demon. "I'm not going in to the office or sanctuary with you. Maybe later, but now I'm keeping what I got, so I'm leaving", he said.

People are free moral agents. **Through choices they make and through sin they earn the state they are in.** This is not the case with children or the weak, and we must set them free. Satan is an oppressor and a bully with no sense of fair play. He takes advantage over unprotected children, the weak minded or sinful unsuspecting souls.

People that are hard to get along with may not be demon influenced. They may be just flesh influenced. Signs of a person under demonic influence:

- 1) they can not stay in the service when the power of God is moving
- 2) they move contrary to the flow of the Spirit  
(i.e., loud when everyone is quiet; troubled when all is at peace)
- 3) they draw attention to themselves at inappropriate times
- 4) they fight the Pastor and Elders, but with little cause
- 5) they have hate for the Jews and their position with God
- 6) they have an unbalanced spiritual self-image, very low self-esteem (God could never love me), or superiority complex ("they're all hypocrites, but me")
- 7) they are unbalanced Scripturally (i.e., everyone should be a prophet, the devil will get saved, women have no place in the church, etc.)
- 8) they have contradictory behavior that they refuse to deal with (they say, "I'm the only true holy one", yet they continue to fornicate, lie, and refuse to address these issues)

9) they have recurrent persistent strange illnesses

10) spiritual paranoia - (thinking, “someone, somewhere is in league with the devil casting spells against me, and I think it could be the Salvation Army”)

In these last days, ‘End-Time Discipleship’ must involve a knowledge of and dominance over the demonic. Pray for discernment and drive out the demon. If the host is not willing, then drive them both out (See 1 Cor. Chapter 5).

Scripture shows that most demons gained entrance through sin, unforgiveness, drug use, resentment, bitterness, anger, hate, rejection of the Truth, generational curses and idol worship. These sins and emotions should be destroyed to remove the demon’s stronghold. This can be done through repentance, prayer and other means; more on this later.

*\*\* When dealing with the demonic, the disciple should always confess:*

*1) God hath not given me a spirit of fear.*

*2) Faith works every time against every demon.*

*3) “He sent His Word and healed them.” (Psalm 107:20)*

The church is the place where demons come but cannot stay, **for there is power in the Blood of Jesus, Amen!**

**Spirit of Religion**

**Glimpse of the Church and the Five-Fold Ministry**

God has revealed to the church different truths at different times. Martin Luther rediscovered “Saved by Grace”, and the Protestants emerged and were rejected by the traditional Catholics. Presbyterians rediscovered the Eldership and were rejected by Lutherans. Baptists rediscovered water immersion and repentance, and Presbyterians with a spirit of religion rejected them. Baptists went after the Quakers and Holy Rollers, Shakers, Menonites, and Pentecostals that found a different expression in the Spirit.

Pentecostals found they didn’t have to tarry for weeks and months to get the Holy Ghost and moved on, shunned by all above. Evangelicals and Charismatics emerged and the Pentecostals moved away from them. The Word of Faith showed up and was labeled as too far out and narrow-minded. As God moves more prophets and apostles into the present picture, the Word of Faith people that will listen to a spirit of religion will come against this next move of God. They will hold to their interpretations of the Word that suit them and will brand and discriminate against whatever comes next. (For more study on this subject, read Lafayette Scales, “What’s the Church Coming To?” or Rick Joyner’s “The Final Battle”.)

*“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;”* (Eph. 4:11-13).

Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers... is this order arbitrary, I wondered? Then I noticed that this is how God raised up the church historically. That the five fold ministry is also an organism and guide to maintaining the whole body and bringing us to perfection.

The apostle plants a church, the prophet blesses it and calls the church and the people to hear from and seek God. The evangelist preaches to exhort and create new members. The pastor counsels and shepherds the exhorted flock. The teacher trains and equips those God has called and gives birth to new apostles that are “sent ones” that start the process all over again.

This is exactly what happened to Jesus’ ministry as He evolved: He came as a “sent one” (**Apostle**); He then proclaimed and foretold the Word of God (**Prophet**), i.e.: Jesus said to Nathaniel, “*when you were under the fig tree, I saw you*” (John 1:48), and “*Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men*” (Matt. 4:19); He preached to thousands and converted many as **Evangelist**; He chose a flock and shepherded them - first 12, then 70, as **Pastor**; then He sat the people down and taught them (**Teacher**) and held discipleship classes with the inner flock of disciples; He then equipped these disciples and birthed “apostles” and sent them out. The cycle began again.

This is also what should happen to each individual as we go through personal spiritual growth - we should manifest the traits of the fivefold ministry in our own lives at various times. Each church has within it the five-fold ministry to some degree and, if not, should call upon the body to provide whatever is missing. If a church has no evangelist among its membership, then an outside evangelist should be called upon from time to time to draw new sheep. If the Word is properly taught, God will raise up people for each category and many that will display multiple callings.

I believe that historically each move of God appeared to place the church back into the evolutionary process of the fivefold ministry. At different times, a spirit of religion caused the church (as a whole) to stagnate at a certain level. During the power of the Catholic Church (a pastoral phase) the Lord sent Martin Luther, a teacher, to shake the pastoral phase to move on. Teachers emerged - the Bible was printed, translated, distributed, and then apostles emerged. Azusa St. revival at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century gave birth to apostles, prophets, then evangelists. The Pentecostal Assemblies of God Churches were established, and a period of pastors was locked into place. This move stagnated, as had all other denominational churches in the pastoral phase.

God sent the “Word of Faith” movement as a teaching phase had emerged. Men like Kenneth Hagin, Charles Capps, Oral Roberts, Kenneth Copeland, Lester Sumner, etc., began to teach and do the work of the apostle. This has opened the door for us to move on to recognizing these men as apostles giving birth to new apostles and prophets. Praise God!!! A spirit of religion works against God’s evolutionary plan, for it tries to hold people in the phase and status-quo of the group in power.

Throughout all of this, each group with a spirit of religion blames the others as not knowing God, misinterpreting the Word, and guilty of working with satan. But actually it’s the accusers that are working with satan. Jesus told the disciples to leave those other guys alone. His disciples saw men that were not familiar to them using the Name of Jesus and they wanted to stop them. So you see the spirit of religion has worked to bring division and stop the various moves of God since Jesus’ day and before. *“But Jesus said to him, “Do not forbid him, for he who is not against us is on our side””* (Luke 9:50). Jesus later said, *“I have other sheep which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice, and there will be one flock and one Shepherd”* (John 10:16).

***Why can’t we be content in the fold we are in and leave the other flocks alone?***

Some cults use this passage to include themselves in the ministry of Jesus the Christ. This cannot be the case for even though the sheep may be different, the Shepherd is the same. Therefore, the Shepherd would not contradict Himself with teaching that cannot be reconciled.

Certain personalities lend themselves to certain demonic influences. People that need instant gratification and validation will be most prone to demons of gluttony, drugs and sex. Those that are fearful, uptight or controlling by nature fall prey to a spirit of religion.

***\*\* The motto of spirit of religion is***

***“We have got to do something about this or the worst will happen!”***

***Paul found out “God’s grace is sufficient...” (2Cor. 12:9)***

***and the worst happening is when we happen to make things happen!***

We would do well to be good fruit examiners. This may take years, yet the spirit of man or God’s Spirit may reveal in a moment by what spirit a person is operating through. Ask God for discernment.

***\*\* To assume that the only holy way is “my way” is the way to error.***

Had we been eyewitnesses to many of the Holy Spirit’s manifestations in the Old and New Testaments, we would have concluded “the devil made them do it”. Consider – David dancing wildly through the streets almost totally naked; Saul, the king, lying naked prophesying all day; Paul and his men falling off their horses; Cornelius’ friends and family praying and praising God in Tongues; Jesus telling the man at the pool to pick up his bed and carry it on the Sabbath. Be careful how you judge.

**The spirit of religion lies in wait to attack. Let us now unmask this worker of evil.**

*Discipleship Signs & Wonders*

**Spirit of Religion**

This is one of, if not the most dangerous spirit that satan uses against the church. A spirit of religion is behind every church split and pastor's heartache. Saints can stand against an open attack by satan, but when it comes from those in the flock that we call friends, it is often too painful to bear. When the 'righteous misguided' start shooting guided missiles at their fellow brethren, demons stand up and cheer. When satan cannot destroy from the outside, he will use good people on the inside to do it for him.

People set standards for themselves based on theology, morality and what they are willing to accept as lawful. This becomes religion - a way of worshiping and appearing spiritual. Traditions get established based on what people are comfortable with - and the limits are usually determined by what they are able to maintain within their sphere of influence, church and family. For example, the Pharisees found that they could keep up with the laws they added to God's Sabbath Laws. They then established as "good, righteous religion", a tradition that everyone good should do their Sabbath laws along with God's. When Jesus didn't hold to their religious tradition they 1) labeled Him, 2) thought negative thoughts against Him, 3) justified themselves, 4) went on the attack and planned how to get their way 5) practiced character assassination, 6) sought to destroy the organism, and fought to destroy the organization, 7) felt justified but missed God's best.

These seven steps are repeated over and over again in the church. They will allow satan to divide us and wound us through a spirit of offense - then they will shoot the wounded and destroy God's work, all the while feeling justified. This is the work of a spirit of religion. Paul's thorn in the flesh was a demon from satan that tormented him as he worked with and worried over the churches (see 2 Cor. 12). The demon would stir up the religious fold against Paul in every city and church.

Judiazers - a religious fold that got upset over the new Gentile converts caused the first church split. They had a problem because they thought that the Greek, Gentiles and converted Jews were not Jewish enough.

*\*\* A spirit of religion takes hold of people that major in the minors.*

They can always remember what someone said that was wrong and cannot remember what someone said that was right. They are focused on the mess and not what's blessed. They are the self-appointed guardians of the Faith and protectors of what's holy; seldom remembering that God's people are holy. They place more weight on being right than on the love of the brethren. Also, to their great detriment, they will gladly "touch the anointed". David said, "I will not stretch out my hand against my lord (king Saul), for he is the Lord's anointed" (1 Sam. 24:10). "Do not touch My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm" (1 Chr. 16:22), is still a warning for today.

King Saul killed the priests of God and pursued David for years. Notice that he was tormented by demons even as he warred against idol worshipers and other evil people, I.e. the Philistines. Saul's family was divided and he had no peace. People with religious spirits are open to mental illness more than physical, but usually end up with both and die early. The reason is given in Scripture, Mark 11:25, "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses".

Since they hold a list of grievances that persons have made against their traditions, they themselves are not forgiven. This causes people with religious spirits to not have a covering against the works of the devil. They cry out to God for relief, but He is waiting for them to give mercy for He desires mercy, not sacrifice, as we see in 1 Sam. 15:22: “Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice”, and Hosea 6:6: “For I desire mercy and not sacrifice”. Since they hold themselves as righteous:

- \*\*1) they redefine godliness and God
- 2) reinterpret the Word, or
- 3) blame someone else.\*\*

Since they are looking for violators of their laws, they spend little time in self-examination. Even when they do examine themselves - it's against the *laws that they have accepted as traditions*, which they have down to a science. Therefore, their self-judgment always ends in ‘not guilty’! They tend to always feel, ‘you’re talking to the other guy, not me’.

Let's examine their error step by step. 1) Redefine godliness and God. - They have met the standards set so they define godliness as, ‘if you do according to my traditions and do what I'd do, then you are godly. Vote like I vote, feel like I feel on gun control, divorce etc., and you are godly’. In the church it becomes ‘*preach like I preach, teach what I'd teach, move when I'd move, reward my traditions and punish anyone and anything that doesn't look like or act like ‘us’.*’

The Pharisees set a trap for Jesus on the issue of the Romans and used paying taxes as the problem. They set a trap on the issue of sin, using the woman caught in adultery. Eating with sinners, letting a sinner wash His feet, healing on the Sabbath, on and on, till they had a verdict. Their verdict was this Man (Jesus) is a hypocrite, blasphemer, liar, lawbreaker, etc. - a violator of tradition and an ungodly man. This was all to define godliness. They also had defined God - ‘God thinks and acts like us and we think and act like God...so we can speak for God. What other proof did we need?’

A person with a spirit of religion does not seek God for His Law or their proof. With blind confidence, they are assured by satan that they know how God feels about the issues and the ungodly. Paul said to the Athenians, “*I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with the inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD*” (Acts 17:22,23). These people had defined many gods but none of them were the real, true God.

The Pharisees were so sure they knew God, but Jesus called them children of the devil (John 8:44). Jesus purposely made the fatal error in dealing with the spirit of religion; direct confrontation with Truth. People with a spirit of religion respond violently to being confronted with Truth. Jesus didn't hold back in John Chapter 8, but directly confronted the Pharisees with the Truth: “*You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do*” (John 8:44).

Jesus also shared other truths, which caused a violent reaction in the Pharisees: a determination to kill the Nazarene. Jesus knew they would be satan's helpers in getting Him to the Cross, because He told them about themselves, drove the money changers out of the temple and exposed their hypocrisy.

**\*\* Disagreement turns to blind rage when the “religious”  
are faced with TRUTH.**

**\*\* When you hold up a mirror so that people can see Truth,**



*they hate you more than the image they see.*

Now let's look at the next one; 2) Reinterpret the Word - Once faced with a theology that doesn't fit the picture they have painted, the Word itself becomes subject to change. Scripture verses will be pulled out of their context and mixed with verses on different subjects. This will be done with a cleverness that at first seems accurate, and needs to be closely examined. Scripture will be stretched or shrunk to fit the need of the tradition. Examples: a) stretched - God wants that none perish = "everyone's gonna go to Heaven!" b) shrunk - We must be holy = only people of my "holiness Faith will be saved". The spirit of religion causes people to fixate upon their interpretation of the issues in the Bible. They establish 'sacred cow' concepts that must be worshiped as absolutely correct, even though they may not be clearly spelled out in the Bible.

*\*\*When you have redefined godliness and God,*

*It's hard to back up and accept criticism\*\**

Sometimes for certain situations, there are different views to be considered. The woman caught in adultery (John 8:3-11) needed to be judged in the light of "*all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God*" (Romans 3:23), or "do unto others as you would have them do unto you". Jesus felt it was unjust to judge her strictly on the letter of the law which demanded her death. We cannot "*rightly divide the Word of Truth*" (2 Tim 2:15), without considering the whole counsel of God on each issue.

And a look at the last; 3) Blame someone else. satan uses the spirit of religion to produce victims. The religious 'right' of Jesus' day spread the message that 'Jesus must die for He transgresses the law'; 'He's stirring up the people'. Yes, the people were stirred up because they were seeing the "Truth" in action and contradictions were exposed. The leaders had to blame someone; therefore, Jesus.

Many a pastor has been driven out of a church, not due to his message or his personal walk, but because of the Truth of the message and personal walk of the congregants which opposes the message. Troubled churches change pastors when the pastors aren't the problem, but someone needs to be blamed and it's the pastor's turn. The people with a religious spirit need to accept the blame, change or leave so the pastor can pastor. A religious spirit would rather stay and destroy, than acknowledge who is to blame – themselves and satan.

Pastors I have spoken to that have dealt with this spirit say, "Things were going along O.K. and then all of a sudden I was continually under the microscope. The pressure on my family was tremendous; fear, anger and then depression hounded me". If you are truly working for the Lord you must stay humble, stay sweet and fight against self-righteousness, which opens the door to the spirit of religion.

If this demonic influence gets loose in your church, home group, or class, remember Paul's words: "*But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me*" (2 Timothy 3:10,11).

**Warring Against the Spirit of Religion**

Pray, pray, pray and trust the Word. This spirit of religion demon thrives on urgency and out of control feelings. I have a pond on my land that has schools of fish in it. With only a small piece of bread, small leaves, sticks, and twigs, I can start a feeding frenzy. One or two fish will get something to eat, but the rest will attack and get fooled. This demon will throw out one or two little truths with a lot of garbage and frenzy begins. The ‘defenders of the Faith’ get worked up and - bang! - ‘demon joy!’ Remember - it’s only one or two that start the frenzy, not the whole school (or church). Avoid overreacting to criticism and giving attention to religious people that are trying to stir things up.

At the outset you must ask the question, “What does the Word say?” We believe and follow the Bible, so what’s the whole counsel of God? Let’s pray for wisdom, understanding and patience. Let’s point to love and mercy. Let’s speak in terms of *us, we, family, body* and avoid terms like ‘them’ ‘those people’ ‘that group’ and other labels. It is okay to point out error and warn of consequences, if you restate your love and support for them. Peter was sooo religious that he chose to straighten out the Lord about how He was not to talk about the cross and dying anymore! Jesus told Peter in Luke 22 (paraphrased), ‘satan’s got your number and he’ll put one on you, but I’ve prayed for you and when you get straightened out, take care of your brothers’. Jesus told the Pharisees ‘your fathers killed the prophets and you are about to make the same error, but if you would let Me I would cover you like a mother hen covers her chicks’ (Luke 11 - *paraphrased*). These are hard words of correction, but in each case Jesus shows His compassion. He also places Himself above the situation and basically says, ‘not *I*, but *you*, will get it together if *you* get the right perspective’ (truth).

Pray for those who are under an attack of a spirit of religion for they are truly in pain and in trouble. They will suffer greatly for having a critical spirit, and the fruit will stink. At first they feel puffed up and proud that they supposedly did the work of the Lord, but this fruit rots over time. They leave division and sickness in their wake, and the demon finally torments them with guilt. So we must turn to praying for them and asking God’s compassion to visit them. *Pride* is the spirit that drives a spirit of religion.

Because this attack is demonic, it emerges against the work, workers or moves of God. It can be cast out, like any other demon, but the host is not usually a repentant volunteer. They feel they are in the right, justified and holy. So we have a problem don’t we? Jesus stated it like this, “*If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore, your sin remains*” (John 9:41).

**\*\* Never let a *non-issue* become *the issue*.**

**\*\* *Winning an argument is not winning the Kingdom of God.***

A spirit of religion is contagious, so we must guard against returning feelings, judging and attack in kind. Don’t get trapped in a war of rebuttals and defending yourself. Keep repeating that “*No weapon formed against me shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against me in judgment I shall condemn*” (Is. 54:17). Judgment against you must be condemned in the spiritual realm first, for that is where it emanates from. Then after much prayer, choose carefully what, when and how you will respond - don’t let the demon-influenced person anger you or gain control. Frustrate them with silence and a loving attitude.

Pray and wait for the fruit to spoil and control the contagion. Keep the sick person quarantined and reassure others that there is no emergency fire here - God is still in control. Cause people to pray for the people involved and preach unity in Christ. When the righteous

rises in their wisdom, you must point to the wisdom of God. *“for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God”* (Rom 3:23), *“...till we all come to the unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;”* (Eph 4:13).

Paul had to deal with the church being divided over judging your brother over food and worship issues, and he concludes, *“Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another”* (Rom 14:19).

Finally, let us be like Christ. Jesus was soft on sinners, i.e.; the woman at the well, the woman caught in adultery, the criminal on the cross, but reserved His wrath for those that exploited, judged and demanded that people hold to their laws and traditions. It is very dangerous to think that you can speak and judge for the Lord. John 8:15 says, *“You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I am with the Father Who sent Me”*. Therefore, we must rely on Jesus to judge. By His Spirit He will tell us His determination.

*\*\* A spirit of religion is worse than  
whatever the spirit of religion is against. \*\**

Read in Acts 5:38, 39, Gamaliel still speaks to us a warning *“...let them alone, for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it - lest you even be found to fight against God”*. If a spirit of religion is in the pew, pastors do the above and pray them through, walk in love and give the devil no place - don't even call a meeting. Don't try to shout it down or preach it down from the pulpit. This only fuels the fire and announces to those that aren't aware of anything going on that there is “a problem”. Preach the Word and lift up Jesus Christ. If a spirit of religion is in the pulpit - follow the directions of Paul. Go one on one...then two...then governing internal body (the church)...then external church governing body if necessary...and only in LOVE. If it is a personal issue that doesn't affect church policy or sheep, then do the spiritual work and pray to victory. Hold on to the first command of Jesus - “LOVE”, and be ready to change addresses, rather than change the Truth.

If the spirit of religion is in you, then get prayed over and cleansed. Take the lower seat. Ask your pastor to allow you to clean toilets and wash people's feet, starting with his!

**When Faith comes, 'I know' has arrived**

This section deals with a deeper understanding of what "Faith" is. The definition of Faith is found in Hebrews 11:1, but we still get hope, believing, and Faith mixed up. Are they the same? How much Faith is enough Faith? When do we have Faith? These questions will be addressed in the following paragraphs.

For starters, let us think of hope and believing as prerequisites to Faith, a doorway to Faith. To help our discussion, remember **hope** is associated with **expectancy**, therefore, a process, a progression toward Faith. **Believing** is a process, a progression toward Faith and is **opposed** by **unbelief**. **Faith is in opposition to doubt** - Faith is the "**I know**", doubt is the "I don't know" and "I don't think so." When "**I know**" is present, there is no "I don't know" or any "I hope so." When "**I know**" is present, *believing for* has been **replaced**. Faith is **substance** and **evidence** of what's *hoped* and *believed*. Therefore - **I know**. Or as some say, "I know (Faith) I have what I was hoping and believing for. Let's explore this further so we can move as effective disciples toward true Faith.

***Transcript from Discipleship Class:***

*Pastor:* "In the Gospels there are eighteen or nineteen miracles that Jesus does, and in the majority of them He says, "As your Faith is, let it be done to you." There are more miracles that occurred in this way than by any other method. Most of them are initiated by the people that need the blessing and are driven by their Faith."

*Question from Student:* "What if you didn't have full Faith, but you had half Faith? As your Faith is, so it shall be done to you? Half healed, if you only have half the Faith?"

*Pastor Don:* "Is this what the Scriptures teach? Turn to the ninth chapter of Mark."

*Comment from Student:* "I just listened to a Kenneth Hagin, Jr., tape on Faith as a mustard seed. He said Faith isn't green stamps. You don't need more Faith to get more healed or to get healed of bigger things."

*Pastor Don:* "We'll answer that as well in this teaching. In the ninth chapter there is an answer to this question in verse 22, " *'And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.'* Jesus said to him, " *If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.'* Immediately the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, " *Lord, I believe; help my unbelief'* " .

"Now, we would have a desperate situation if, after he acknowledges that he believes but at the same time in verse 22 and 23 he says he was not in full Faith. He was in partial Faith. We know he had some Faith because he brought the boy to Jesus, so he had hope. And all Faith begins with hope. Hope is the desire for things to come. Jesus says, 'What do you mean, if I can? Of, course I can.' The parent calls upon Jesus' compassion and mercy and straight out pity. 'Take pity on us and help us.' And it says, "Help my unbelief." It doesn't say 'Give me more Faith.' He asks to kill the doubt.

*Comment from Student:* "My version says, " *I do have faith; help me have more faith'* " .

*Pastor Don:* "That's not a good translation. If mustard seed Faith can move a mountain, then the **very presence of Faith is enough**. *Believing* is not the same; it has varying degrees. You can have belief and unbelief at the same time. But you can't have Faith and not have Faith simultaneously. You cannot have substance and evidence and lack of both at the same time. You cannot *know* and *not know* at the same time; Faith is **I know** I have. Let's develop a better understanding of this with an example... Is Don Moore sitting here?"

Students: “Yes.”

Pastor Don: “Do you know that?”

Student: “I see it, I know it. I believe it because I see it.”

(Don ducks under a table and is hidden from sight.)

Pastor Don: “Now, let me ask you a question. Is this Don Moore speaking to you?”

Student: “Yes.”

Pastor Don: “But, do you see me?”

Student: “No.”

Pastor Don: “Do you know that it’s me?”

Student: “Yeah.”

Pastor Don: “How do you know?”

Student: “We know your voice. And we saw you get under the table.”

Pastor Don: “Who’s talking to you now?”

Student: “Don Moore.”

Pastor Don: “Now that isn’t Faith, that’s just plain knowing – there’s no hope, no expectancy, no believing for and no extension of the inner man into the spiritual realm.”

(Pastor Don gets up and goes out the door and peeks back in and says)

Pastor Don: “I will be back in five minutes. Will I be back in five minutes?”

Student: “Yes.”

Pastor Don: “How do you know?”

Student: “Because you said it, and class isn’t over yet!”

Pastor Don: “Notice now that if I did leave there would be an opportunity for Faith. After a minute or so of leaving, someone may say, “I don’t believe Pastor is coming back.” Some may say, “I hope he does and I’m believing he will.” Another may say, “Chill out, *I know* he will be back!” Let’s see this in the Word; turn to Heb. 11:1... This word is what?”

Student: “Hope.”

Pastor Don: “This word is what?”

Student: “Belief.”

Pastor Don: “This word is what?”

Student: “Faith.”

Pastor Don: “There is a big difference in what God is trying to say to us about these three key words that is a spiritual mystery. Read **Hebrews 11:1**, “*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for...*” Stop. He just said that Faith is the substance. Faith is the matter (material fact) of something we hope for. So hope is wish and expectancy, but it isn’t belief or Faith. “... *the evidence of things not seen.*” It is the evidence of something that is not seen. “*For by it the elders obtain a good testimony. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God...*” (vs. 2,3).

**\*\* Notice that Faith is,**

*but Faith also causes something to happen in the material realm.*

*Faith created the World.*

*Faith is substance of hope and the power of creation.*

““Through Faith, we know,’ isn’t that what it says? People get to Hebrews 11:1 and they stop. Read the first two verses again. “*Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it (Faith) the elders obtained a good testimony. By 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 are visible.*” In other words, what he’s saying is that Faith is

power and the substance, the matter that is made up, when we have hope. We move from hope to some place where we have Faith and then, once we're in Faith, we're also causing to come into existence.

“Believing is what we do when we *hope*. **Faith** is what we do when we **know**. Let me say it again. *Believing* is what we do when we *hope*. **Faith** is what we do when we **know**. Now, the benefit of believing and hoping is that we arrive at **Faith**. The benefit of Faith is *knowing* and causing to come into material reality. Believing is hoping; Faith is knowing. You either know or you don't know because the knowing is seeing. Faith is the factual representation of that which is not yet, to your physical eye, a fact, but you *know it* as a fact. You know that you know that you know, and ‘you know’ is better than and beyond belief.

“Believing is the road that leads to the knowing. When you get to the knowing, you have seen, whether or not with the physical reality, but the spiritual reality is as real to you. You can't get any more Faith, but there always is more believing. We believe and believe until that thing we hope for has substance. Once the thing that we hope for has substance, it thus then becomes knowing. Now, once it becomes knowing, it is not believing any more. When I came up from under the table, your believing stopped. You were not believing for it, you knew it.

*\*\* Blessed is he that comes from believing  
and gets to the knowing - before he gets to the seeing.*

*\*\* Anybody can have Faith once they see it,  
but seeing it and knowing is not Faith –  
**Faith is knowing before you see.**”*

*Question from a Student:* “Can't there be Faith ... you know something without really seeing it, but you got the Faith inside of you?”

*Pastor Don:* “Yeah, you got it. A few years ago I had a jail inmate that really got a-hold of this during Bible Study and God did a miracle for him. He was totally guilty of a felony and waived his right to a trial. He began to confess the Word of God over his situation. He began to sincerely repent and declare God's love over him and speak God's blessing over his case. He told anyone anywhere what he was believing and hoping for... and then Faith came. Romans 10:17 “*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*”

“While he was locked up and everybody was telling him that he's going to do a minimum of three to eight years or eight to twenty-five, and all the time he's locked up, he kept saying that he knows he wasn't going to do any jail time. “I know I'm going home for Christmas, I know”, he kept saying. For some ‘strange reason’, the judge gave him probation and released him before Christmas... FAITH.

“Where does that knowing come from? The knowing comes from hoping and believing. A Faith comes to the heart. You don't know it in your head, but you know it in your heart. If I can get people to stay at hope, believing and confessing long enough, they'll get to Faith and the knowing. Once they get to there, they've got the knowing and then it's just a matter of time before the seeing comes. Sometimes the seeing is instant. In the spiritual realm, it's instant because you have the knowing. It's in here and you say, “I see it. I have it, now!!!”

“And where the church has missed it - and I can't say it enough - the church thinks that believing *is* Faith and it's not. Believing is hoping - but believing *can become* Faith. Let's look at it in the Word. Jesus never once said, “As you believe, let it be done unto you.” He said, “As your Faith is, let it be done unto you.”

“Start at Mark 11:22 and read all the way through, slowly. “*So Jesus answered and said*

to them, *“Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. (When will it be yours? - When your believing manifests in your heart as “I know.”) And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses”*.

“Let’s break this down. Have Faith in God. It doesn’t mean believe in God. In another translation it says trust in God. What it means is **know**. Even if you don’t see God, have **Faith in God**, *know God is real and trust God as real*. Believing can change, but Faith doesn’t change, because it (Faith) knows.

“Believe you have received it and, in the process of time, it will be yours. That’s really what He’s saying here. Continue to believe something, and believe you have received it - that’s **Faith**. *Believe that it’s already yours*. And what He’s really saying is this: Hope and believe until it becomes Faith, which is a knowing. In knowing it, then, it is yours. Let’s look at what Jesus Himself actually did. Let’s look back to verse 12: *“Now on the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. And seeing from afar a fig tree in having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. In response Jesus said to it, “Let no one eat fruit from you ever again.” And His disciples heard it”*.

“And then, He goes on walking and He reaches Jerusalem and the temple. He entered the temple and threw out the money changers, and so on. Now go to verse 19, *“When evening had come, He went out of the city. Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, remembering, said to Him, ‘Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away’ ”*. Well, when did it wither in the physical?”

*Student*: “When He said it.”

*Pastor*: “No, not when He said it. It took all night for the process of withering to be complete in the physical, yet in the spiritual it was instantaneous. Jesus knew when He said it that it was a done deal, but that time would be needed in the physical to see the result. Sometimes you pray for healing and you still feel the symptoms. Still feeling the symptoms doesn’t mean you are not healed. It’s a process of time that has to occur. Had Jesus cursed the tree and stood there and waited and nothing happened for a few moments, and said, “Well, I guess it didn’t work.” - What then would the tree do? The tree would have said, “Hey, He ain’t in Faith. I don’t gotta die. Why should I die? That power that was causing me to shrivel up has stopped.”

“Look at this one. Go back to **Mark 9:17**, *“Then one of the crowd answered and said, ‘Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. And whenever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not’*. Now, we get a clear answer why they couldn’t. Jesus says right away, *“O faithless generation”* (v. 19). Then look at verse 29, *“This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting”*.

“Well what kind of prayer, Jesus? The prayer of Faith. And what does fasting do? Fasting loosens the bonds (Isaiah 58), destroys the yoke. It destroys the yoke of the demonic bullies that get placed around our necks in life. And what kind of prayer did He pray? The prayer of Faith. When He commanded that thing to come out, He knew it came out – no matter what He *saw*. Earlier the boy went into convulsions and here’s what the disciples did:

The disciples were hoping and believing and were not in Faith. The disciples gave the exact command Jesus gave, but when they saw the boy go into convulsions because the unclean spirits were coming out, they said, 'OOPS, it didn't work'. And then the evil spirit says, 'I was on my way out of here, but I don't have to leave now. They're not in Faith. They're not even in belief because their hope is gone, so I can stay; the power against me has stopped'.

"Romans chapter 4:17 and 18, *"(as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations.") in the presence of Him whom he believed - God, Who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations,"*. Now, don't tell me for one minute that Abraham didn't get challenged. Your believing will always get challenged. Your believing will get challenged because Faith is in the process of time becoming seeing. And in that process of time when you are between Faith and seeing, you're open to unbelieving.

"Verse 20 says, *"He did not waiver at the promise of God through unbelief"*. Why? Why did he stagger not? Where was he? He was in Faith. He was in the **knowing**; therefore he staggered not. If he were still in unbelief, he would have staggered. Here's what God says in His Word in Rom 12:3, He said that a portion, a measure of Faith is given to all of us. Turn to **Romans 10:17**, *"So then faith comes..."* The NIV reads, *"Consequently faith comes..."* What does consequently mean? Consequently; soon to follow; as a result of; a consequence: a result of, an outcome due to. If we hear the Word, then - BOOM - Faith will result!

"It doesn't say, 'Consequently Faith is given'. It says, "Consequently Faith comes". Some Bible translations and the comments in the notes are hurting people's Faith because they don't believe the whole message. Listen to the King James: *"So then, faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God"*. Read the second half of it. Faith comes by hearing the good news, the Good News about Christ.

"Consequently Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. Not a part of it, but all of it - the total message. So many reduce the Good News to a limited salvation of hope, not Faith, and that's not the total picture. Some denominations reduce the Good News to only *believing* and make **Faith (knowing)** impossible in reality. When you get there, to Faith, Heaven will not deny you.

"In my own life, I have believed God for many things. And I have learned in the process of believing, sometimes quickly and sometimes after long believing, there comes a moment of *knowing*. There is, in the process of Faith, a moment of knowing. There is a situation in the mind and in the heart that becomes so blatantly clear spiritually as well as intellectually. It happens in your whole being that you transpire from believing for it to saying, 'It's mine. I know it. I know it and I'm willing to bet everything on it. I just know it'.

"That's what I said, when I was sick. My mind was saying "blah, blah, doubt" and everybody was saying that I was going to die, and I even knew that in that situation people die. But, "I wasn't going anywhere because I know I'm healed," I said. I stayed up late at night reading and reading, reading the **Word**. Faith comes by reading the Word."

*Student:* "But Faith also comes by hearing what you, yourself, say to yourself."

*Pastor:* "Only if you're saying the Word of God. Remember, doubt also comes. Unbelief comes by what you say when you are not saying the Word of God. What did the man with the oppressed boy say? *"Help thou my unbelief,"* meaning I am believing, but I am also doubting. Basically what he was saying was, "Lord, help me to believe". And Jesus says, "No problem. I'll help you."

"I've had some healings that were instantaneous and I've had others that I had to really



work for. I had to get in there and just work. I would take the Bible and I would look up healing verses. I would memorize healing verses. I've stayed up nights when I've needed a healing real bad and prayed, "*By His stripes I'm healed. By His stripes I am healed. By His stripes I am healed.*" And I mean all night, "*By His stripes I am healed*". Walking around, "*By His stripes I am healed*". It wasn't until noon the next day that there was a bolt of lightning and I said, "Yes, *by His stripes I am healed*". And I just knew it. And the manifestation was always gone right after **knowing**. Almost for sure right then.

"Other times I've been healed just standing on believing. I'm under the table; you can't see me. But you believe it's me. What did you do? You went over everything you knew. You went through, "He was just here. I know his voice. I know what he sounds like. I heard him. I saw him go under the table."

"In any situation where your Faith is weak or you have unbelief, go over and over what you do know. Go over the Word of God concerning what you do know, over what you do accept, over what you have seen and the Faith, the "knowing" will come. When I had lung disease, I had to go over and over in my mind that I'd had diabetes at the age of 24 and I didn't have it now. And where did it go? God took it from me. I had to remind myself that, if God can take diabetes from me, He could definitely take the lung disease."

*At this point Sister J with a disability spoke up:* "Can I say something? Pastor Don you've had a healing. Mrs. Joy's had a healing and probably a lot of others. As far as I know I haven't had a healing."

*Pastor Don:* "But you have, I said. Have you ever cut your hand?"

*Student, Sister J:* "Everybody does that."

*Pastor Don:* "That's true, yet all healing is the same process, sometimes fast, sometimes slow, but God's in all healing. Because healing is His will. That's why healing is a natural part of what the body does – heal."

*Student, Sister J:* "If I had a healing I would believe and I would have Faith."

*Pastor Don:* "Hold it, if you had a healing you wouldn't need Faith."

*Student, Sister J:* "I would at least have Faith for the future. I would have Faith for my future illnesses and my children's sicknesses."

*Pastor Don:* "That's not necessarily true. You don't start with your own healing if you don't have Faith. You have to start with, "Consequently, Faith comes by hearing." By hearing what? The Word of God and the testimony of God. During Jesus' time the people saw many miracles and still didn't develop Faith. "*He who has ears to hear, let him hear!*" (Matt. 11:15). We must hear with our ears and then with our hearts.

"Consider those healed in the Bible. They heard that this Man is Messiah, the Healer. Then we hear them develop belief, then Faith, and then they receive. The woman with the issue of blood, the lepers, blind Bartamaeus, etc., all heard the Good News about the Nazarene - believed and then given the opportunity, released their Faith and received. We must do the same, "**Hear** and be healed".

"You have to say to yourself, 'I'm going to hear all testimonies till I believe and till I have Faith. I am going to believe Don's healing.' Go talk to people and say, 'I want to know about your healing from deafness and disease'."

*Student, Sister J:* "Won't that make me envious?"

*Pastor Don:* "Yeah, you've got to be envious, so hungry and so desiring to hear that you will pull yourself up by your Faith bootstraps into confession and constant feeding on the Word of Faith - till victory comes. Bury yourself in books and tapes of successful Faith. Do this until

you have more Faith than excuses and unbelief.”

*Comment from another Student:* “Sometimes, I think God rewards our obedience as well. One example I heard about was a man’s son, who is now 17. When he was about 9, the child was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy and they checked his enzyme count, which is the CPK count. The normal CPK count is 180 - 200. Well, his was 800 and they told him he had a degenerative muscle disease and they wanted to admit him to the muscular dystrophy clinic.

“Well, the father went crazy. The father went to the library and got all these books. Then he thought, “I have to bring my child up for prayer.” He brought him up for prayer and the elders of the church laid hands on him, but the father had no Faith. He didn’t give it much thought, but he was obedient and he brought him forward. Later, when they rechecked the child he was perfectly normal and he was healed. That was just the father’s obedience in bringing him forward. God still honored that, even though he didn’t meet all the other Faith criteria.”

*Pastor Don:* “I bet the elders Faith joined the Faith of the 9 year old and bang! - God showed up. You can hear the father saying, “Help my unbelief.”

*Student, Sister J:* “Years ago, I remember going over to a church a couple of nights and had this other Pastor anoint me with oil and had him pray for my healing. A couple of people at his church were praying for my healing. Nothing happened, so now I don’t go up in prayer lines anymore because it doesn’t help.”

*Pastor Don:* “Yeah, because your unbelief has risen. What do you think about?”

*Student, Sister J:* “I think, ‘Why does God heal all these other people and not me?’ I say it to myself over and over again.”

*Pastor Don:* “So, you’re thinking that God heals all these other people and He doesn’t heal you?”

*Student, Sister J:* “Yes, and this is my other thought. He’ll heal me in Heaven. I know that I’ll be healed in Heaven, but that doesn’t help now. It still makes me feel like the low man on the totem pole. God doesn’t really hold me in high esteem (I think), because He’s not doing something for me that’s supernatural, and I’ve been dealing with this since I was three years old.”

*Pastor Don:* “You have to reverse your thinking and start believing again that God can and will heal you. Listen to your confession: “Why does God heal all these other people and not me?” You are saying over and over your doubt and unbelief. Healing in Heaven is a reality but you’re pushing your healing afar off rather than bringing it nearer.”

*Student, Sister J:* “I believe He can, but I wonder about believing He will. This has really bugged me for a long time.”

*Pastor Don:* “It is not God that holds you in low esteem”

*Student, Sister J:* “I’ll buy that,”

*Pastor Don:* “I really feel that what’s in the way is a lie from the pit of hell, that you don’t count, that you are worthless, that you don’t deserve to be healed. That God can, but for some reason he doesn’t ‘will to’. That is satan’s most effective work and method. As long as he can keep you and others from being healed, he can keep you from being the mighty warrior for God that God wants you to be.”

*Student, Sister J:* “I understand that, but how do I get out of this trap? Do I read the Bible and mutter what you just said, ‘By His stripes I am healed’, or is there more?”

*Pastor Don:* “Here’s what you do:

“First a disciple of Christ must get rid of wrong thinking; you need a demolition crew and

a new construction company. Now, notice what you say, “I know I’ll be healed in Heaven.” “God doesn’t hold me in high esteem.” “Nothing supernatural for me.” To begin we must examine what you hope for and believe. Hope for healing now is weak, but not non-existent. Believe is postponed or misplaced. Faith in God is clouded by circumstances and bad experiences. First of all, 1) God does esteem you; He *died* for you and bore the lash and great disgrace for you, 2) He saved you and that’s very, very supernatural, 3) God is no respecter of person and wants to do equally for all His children.”

Occasionally, God will do a sovereign act, but He is bound by His Word to act in response when Faith is present. Therefore, in the past you were in hope, want, or beginning to believe for, but *not yet in Faith* for your healing.

This is a concept I’ve observed in the Body of Christ - we have forgotten that God and His Word are absolute. Because we see “good people” suffer, struggle and not get healed we assume God and His Will are relative - random acts and not just Faith. We hear people say ‘God can heal but it’s not His Will to heal all the time’. This statement makes God’s healing relative to some hidden formulas we can’t know and God’s choices totally random. Getting healed is like getting hit with lightning - if you’re standing in the right field at the right time “Bang” you’re it; if not, then God will be with you in suffering and it’s His Will that you suffer on. Sounds cruel...and it is!

The people that believe the “not His Will to heal all the time” are caught in wrong thinking. They reason: I see “good people” pray earnestly without result - so the theory stands: “God’s not willing.” The error is - God’s healing power never was or will be moved by man’s works, willpower or righteousness. Mark 11:23-25 says, “*Believe what you say and it shall be yours.*” James 5:15 “*The prayer of faith will save the sick...*” It is the prayer of Faith - knowing it’s done and speaking Faith that makes it yours – “*our good works are as filthy rags before a pure and righteous God*”. Salvation (deliverance, healing, sanctification, etc.) and grace (free gift) of God (Eph. 2:5-10); “*not by works so no man can boast*”. If we think we’re a “good Christian”, therefore we should be healed, that is wrong thinking and we will not be justified by God, for our pride is in our way. Compared to Jesus we’re not “good” at all, (Matt. 19:17). Only the Father is good.

So often we look at people and say, “They should be healed, after all they love the Lord and have served Him for 30 years”. Why should you be commended for just doing your job? We are required to love and serve the Lord always. There is not one Biblical healing that was based on someone’s love of the Lord, but is and was always the Lord’s Love (compassion and mercy) that brought Him to heal. Love that doesn’t result in trust and Faith will not move God to act. Unbelief is unbelief, doubt is not believing, and “*without Faith it is impossible to please God*”. (Heb 11:6). Numbers 13 (spies went out and came back). Selah.

A report of unbelief, of doubt, is “evil” in God’s eyes. The Pharisees wanted Jesus to do a sign and then they would believe. Well, He said no sign would be given but His resurrection. We’ve been given a big sign and it reads, “Start moving from doubt and excuse making to working on and getting to Faith!”

Heb 13:8 tells us: “*Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever*”. There is not one Scripture to even begin to imply that God is not willing to enforce His covenant of healing. No one was turned away with Jesus ever saying, “I’m not willing, but I’ll be with you in sickness”. Mark 6:5,6 says, “*Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. And He marveled because of their unbelief.*”

We are all tempted to feel so righteous and sure of our level of supposed kindness to others

- “Brother, I know you’re hurting and I see your tears and I heard how you prayed, surely if God heals He would have moved for us. Brother, be comforted in the peace of knowing God hears and answers prayer and some times He says ‘No.’” Well, to me that’s not kind, but mean - it says, “suffer through and give up believing for your miracle”.

Even a crumb of the Master’s table was enough for the Syro-Phoenician woman’s demon possessed daughter, and the woman with an issue of blood pushed “*through the crowd and kept saying*”, “I know I’ll be healed”. Blind Bartamaeus cried out all the louder, “*Son of David, have mercy on me*”. Yet well meaning Pastors and Bible-believing Christians say, “God doesn’t do these things anymore and it’s beyond our understanding”, etc., etc. All well-meaning, but “evil” in its core and end result.

Bad things happen to good people - true - but Faith people don’t give up believing a good God. Job turned things around by declaring “*Yet though He slay me, I will trust Him.*” Hezekiah turned to the wall and got 15 more years of health. Paul (see 2 Cor. 12:7-10) had a tormenting demon that followed him and stirred up enemies wherever he went, but God’s grace was... and still is ... sufficient for Paul and for us. God delivered him out of all of it (2 Tim 3:11).

I have cried, prayed and suffered, but when healing doesn’t come I have learned to look for the reason in me, not in God. God is absolute, not relative. He is not moved by excuses or our placing pity and compassion over the laws of Faith to cover failures - obedience to the Word, trust and Faith gets results. A study of the great Faith healers shows this. Smith Wigglesworth suffered with gallstones; Kathryn Kuhlman suffered heart trouble. They would often have Faith that God would move for His people, but frequently struggled with some problem for themselves. I have experienced this myself.

I struggled once with a wart. After many weeks I had to accept that I did not have the Faith - went to a doctor and had to have it removed. Yet when it reappeared a year later, my head was in a different place of determination and I was able to get my Faith up, God moved, and that wart fell off and has not returned. The failure is not God and He has not changed His Word - He came to destroy the works of the devil.

*\*\* It’s hard to tell someone they are not at Faith when they think they are, or that it’s not about how good you are; but we must tell them.*

The ultimate good is that they’re going to need help and work to keep hearing the Word till healing comes.

*\*\* Yes, God is with us in suffering, but He’d rather be with us in Victory.*

Yes, we’ll all be healed in Heaven, but we don’t have to get sick to die down here.

A lot of sickness in America is reaping and sowing. Too often we are afraid of telling people the truth – the way you live is unhealthy and until you stop, God will not start to heal you. Americans are too fat and don’t exercise. We are lazy in Faith and lazy in health. We pray with people that abuse their bodies and won’t tell them God does not heal them, because they would instantly destroy the miracle.

I heard a preacher say, “How come I’m way over-weight and not once has anyone ever prophesied that I better lose weight?” God knows the heart and the head of a man - if the flesh is still in control, it means we are going to ‘go and sin some more’. It is not His desire to deny a healing if Faith is present, even if failure is imminent, because Faith is His promise to us and it will not be denied. The borderline “help thou my unbelief” signifies that healing may be delayed, so we need to get serious and grow in self-control and ensure long-term success.

I am amazed at how Jesus, if Faith is present, will heal the backsliders and sinners so quickly. God looks on the heart and knows when Faith is there, and that is why He moves. The sinner hears about grace and God's forgiveness, and he is repentant and open to receive. The seasoned saint feels he deserves a healing and will not hunger and thirst for it, for to whom much is given much is required. Remember the alabaster jar (Luke 7:37).

God sees into the heart of the person and knows much that we cannot see. Many people believe *IN* Jesus, but do not believe *ON* Jesus for the supernatural. Many believe Jesus is in the "super" but will not affect the natural except to save. God is limited by our doubts... "God *can* but He's not willing... God *used* to do that, but now He doesn't... God *could*, but that's too tall an order... God did it for *her*, but He won't for me." These are all unbelief, all doubt, all wrong, all sin. We need to repent of wrong, unfaithful thinking and find the truth, or we will have what we say to our own detriment. Remember these Scriptures:

*God is no respecter of persons* (Acts 10:34)

*He is the same yesterday, today and forevermore* (Heb 13:8)

*God calls those things which are not as though they are* (Rom 4:17)

*All things are possible with God* (Mark 10:27)

*All things are possible to them that believe* (Mark 9:23)

Remember Jesus rebukes -

*"Why did you doubt?"* (Matt. 14:31)

*He (Jesus) knew their thoughts... believe and do not doubt* (Luke 5:22)

To the disciple Jesus said, *"Oh unbelieving faithless generation..."* (Luke 9:41)

*"When I come will I find faith on the earth?"* (Luke 18:8)

*There were 5 virgins with no oil in their lamps* (Matt. 25:3)

*Having a form of godliness but denying its power* (2Tim 3:5)

I could go on and on, and the teachers of doubt and God's 'shortened will' cannot quote Scripture, but can only offer conjecture, human reasoning, and talk of failures they have experienced or seen. "We prayed, we believed and nothing happened, and we're 'good people', so God has another plan." Well, if He has shortened His hand why hasn't He told us? If God stopped after the Apostles, then why didn't they warn us instead of saying in James 5, "go to the elders, and the prayer of faith shall raise them up... they will recover".

Remember - "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God". "There is none righteous." "Our works are as filthy rags." "By grace, lest any one should boast." In the book of John, "What must we do to do the work of God... believe on the One He sent". "They brought the sick, the lame, the demon possessed, the diseased and He healed them all."

We are so arrogant that we will not even 'fess up to the fact that we are often *hoping*, often *believing* for (or toward) and often *not in Faith*. The masses wanted so badly to hear Jesus that they stayed 3 days with no food. We can't get people to listen 60 minutes to something unless it's entertaining and saying what they want to hear, or fits their tradition. May God forgive us for having accepted a doctrine of demons and the teachings of the world. Many will stand before the Lord and He'll say 'it was never My will for you to have suffered so, if you had stayed Faithful you would have seen My hand move.' Jesus will ask why we believed our thoughts more than His Words, especially after He did so much to preserve that Word for us to believe in Him.

Fear, doubt and unbelief are sin. Sin opens the door for satan to come in, and Faith closes the door after it drives satan out. Job was righteous but opened the door through fear ("that which I feared the worst has come upon me"). He kept the door open with pride (over 15

Chapters of self-righteous defense). God rebukes him - "Who do you think you are? Where were you when I ...". Job makes the heart adjustment and is delivered. Look at Job's statements of Faith, "*I know my Redeemer lives...*" "*Yet, though He slay me I will trust Him*". Job prayed for his 'friends' (bringers of wrong thinking), and forgave them and was totally healed and restored. "I will forgive and believe until by Faith - I know and I will see God's salvation. No excuses, no quitting, no blaming God, for He sees my heart, and when I am in Faith He will move. That is His will."

If you're a parent think on this: When would it be your will for your child to suffer with illness? I think never, but some people would say only for a little while, after a real stubborn disobedience, or rebellion. For example: You tell the boy to wear a jacket, put on a hat, don't go out with wet hair, for him to be smart and get some sleep, eat right or he'll get sick! Then, when the stubborn child gets sick, you smile and say, "See, I told you but you wouldn't listen". Then do we let them die? No. We do all we can to get them well as soon as possible. Maybe sometimes God is that way with us also.

The Bible is filled with examples of this from beginning to end - sowing and reaping. All sin is sowing, sowing leads to reaping, reaping should lead to repentance and repentance should lead to God and God leads us to Faith and Faith results in deliverance. satan's plan is to hold us at sin and make excuses for the sowing and reaping cycle. If he fails there, he seeks to hold us in repentance, feeling undeserved while stagnating and suffering. Once the believer goes to God with no excuses, on His terms, with trust and Faith, God helps us. Our Faith grows till we accept that at Calvary the price was paid and at the tomb victory was given.

Bad things happen to good people, but that's no reason to give up and stay down. Too often we forget that satan is a bully and an oppressor. God has a promised hedge of protection around us. We remove this protection by committing sin. Yet, whether or not we are hedged in and protected or, due to sin temporarily unprotected, we will still come under attack. In either case we'll not ultimately lose. The Faithful and the faithless all come under attack: "satan seeks whom he may devour". Even our Lord Jesus was tempted, tested, tried and attacked. satan will come after our health, finances, marriages, children, etc., etc., etc. Faith says, "I know I am delivered". And as Job said, "*I know my Redeemer lives*".

Mark 11:25 is so important and usually over looked, especially by the "good people". We must forgive others to clear the field of debris (trash), and reestablish the hedge of protection. We are hurt and have hurt others, but hardness of heart makes us blind and reluctant to confess our sin of unforgiveness. We justify and recount the hurts, excuse our actions and think we've fooled God... "He'll still heal me cause I need and deserve it". Sorry, not so. Go get forgiven and go give forgiveness. That's a law, not an option. Mark 11:25, "*...and when you stand praying...*" Don't allow any excuse, any amount of years, any reason to block the power of God. Find out the problem that's keeping you from completing the absolute directive that Jesus has arranged by the Father.

God's Love and Compassion = His Forgiveness

Our Love and Compassion = our forgiveness, which is required (Mark 11:25)

A clear field for Faith

Our hope sets stage for belief. Belief, with hope, generating the confession:

"Faith comes by hearing, therefore, I speak and confess the Faith I hope for  
(or at least listen to others) until Faith comes"

Belief and confession becomes substance as FAITH - knowing.

God's response to Faith - knowing is power and Faithfulness (His timing)

Our response is our Faithfulness, and we receive His Power and Faithfulness.

***Transcripts from a Discipleship Class:***

*Pastor:* "Today is my day and now I'm healed. Thank you, Lord Jesus, that now I'm healed. I thank you that now I'm healed. Even though you don't feel healed at the time. If your Faith feels weak it may wane but it does not die, so get your Faith fired up again! Faith comes by hearing (Rom 10:17).

Here's what happens: When our Faith appears to fail, satan convinces us and says, "See, you're not going to get it. You don't deserve it. It's not going to work. It's not yours. Just struggle on through". And that's a normal reaction. I've done that. I was instantly healed, but then I had to maintain and stand in Faith for another six months to fully recover - get strong, put on some weight, etc. Now I know that there are a lot of other people that probably had the same experience I had, but they didn't stand.

Do you understand what I am saying? They just didn't stand. When doubt came up, they just said, "Well, I'm still spittin' up blood. I don't have it yet because it's still here". I can't tell you the day that I was completely delivered. I don't know when it happened. The day that I raised my hands and said, "I'm healed". That's the day as far as I'm concerned. It was done right then. I don't remember when I became symptom free. I just know that from that moment on, my body... vooom - I began healing. Within thirty days I went to the doctor and he was amazed.

*Student:* "I have two rebuttals on that, first of all, were you more versed in the Word?"

*Pastor:* "No!! I was backslidden."

*Student:* "Why did God do that for you that fast and why did He do that for a member of our church whose child was instantly healed of a hearing loss?"

*Pastor:* "That fast?? I was sick for over two years. Fast?? I went from 185 pounds to 133 pounds. I was dying. They sent me home from the hospital to die. The doctor said, "Young man, get your house in order"."

*Student:* "Maybe you had more knowledge?"

*Pastor:* "Knowledge doesn't move God, Faith does. That young child had no knowledge. He was just five years old. You have enough knowledge, but satan has played the "I have no Faith", and the "God's not willing" program, and it stops you from going to believing again with determination. satan has played against your insecurities. That's all. he's a liar, but he's a good liar. he has convinced you that you don't deserve your healing. And that's a hard place to get up from, but you're going to get up from it. You're gonna get up from..."

*Student:* "I believe it more and more every time I hear this, it just sinks in further and further. And then I don't hear it for a while and then I suddenly say, "Well, maybe, maybe not".

*Pastor:* "Well, let me tell you again, it's got nothing to do with deserving. All of us come from different paths at different times, but it's not a matter of deserving. If it were a matter of deserving, then the apostle Paul would never have preached. If it were a matter of deserving, king David would never have stayed on the throne. He didn't deserve to stay on the throne. He committed murder and adultery.

"You have to get away from, "Lord, I'm a good person. I do good things. Why not me?" You gotta forget that. You gotta stop thinking, "Why did God pass me over?" God has not passed you over. The devil is working on that area, saying, 'you're not as good as so-and-so'. "I was a backslider and God healed me."

*Student:* "Joy (church musician) has all this talent and you have all that talent and I have

nothing.”

*Pastor:* “So, ‘God won’t heal me’ you say - but healing was never based on talent, money, power or looks, only Faith and timing. My father was a great pastor, a great preacher, but two other people, Willa Ma Ramsey and Hasty Luther, also had a great effect on me. But they struggled with sickness from time to time as we all do. They were my Sunday school teachers and they took care of me and taught me.

“Hasty would put her arm around me and hang with me at conventions. I’d go to the conventions and she’d say, “You’re smart enough to sit in the adult classes.” I was twelve, thirteen years old. And she’d take me to the adult classes with her at Sunday school conventions. I wouldn’t be who I am today without those two Sunday school teachers and my Mom and Dad’s influence. I felt the Lord telling me, ‘Don’t despise small beginnings. You have no idea what seeds you’ve planted. You’ve no idea what lives you’ve touched’. Yet, that is not the standard as to who gets healed; that would be works. I’ll make this bold statement. I know that the Lord wants you healed so that you can do more, not so you could do less. God wants to reward Faith and Faithfulness. If God only rewards talent and power, then we move from grace to works, and turn from the purpose of the cross.”

*Student:* “I was thinking just today when I was listening to Benny Hinn, my comment was, ‘Boy, the Lord is sure going to get some witnessing from me when I get healed’. It just came to me. He’s gonna’ get some witnessing because I’ve been years and years over this.

“I was three years old when I became hearing disabled and now I’m almost fifty. It’s almost 47 years. This is quite a long time. Actually, I didn’t want to hear. I didn’t know I didn’t hear until I was ten or twelve. It wasn’t until I was ten or twelve that I knew I was missing anything. I thought, ‘what’s wrong with me? Everybody is doing everything and everybody is going everywhere and I’m sittin’ behind. What’s wrong?’ I came from a broken home. My whole life was in a fog anyway.”

*Pastor:* “You know, God is a God who is no respecter of persons. If He took David, a lowly shepherd boy and made him king over Israel ...If He will took Pharisee who was killing Christians and made him the chief writer of the New Testament, it’s just the reality. There’s no reason why He will not do more with you than you can imagine. Just continue to be Faithful – keep building up your Faith. And the only limit is what we would put on it. If you won’t limit God, God will do more with you.”

*Student:* “Well, you know, I guess I’m limiting God unbeknownst to me. I don’t know how I’m tying His hands. You know what I mean? I don’t know what I’m doing that’s not giving God full ...but I think God’s above all that and God should be able to see that and God should be able to enlighten me.”

*Pastor:* “God is waiting on you. My greatest excitement this past two years was when I said, “Who’s going to go to Teachers Training Session?” I knew you’d go. I knew you’d go. And I knew you would become a better teacher than you were. And I knew you’d grow quicker than all the other teachers who think they are something.”

*Student:* “I love teaching. I love to read His teachings. There are a few things I have questions about. Like God doesn’t honor fear. He won’t bless you if you are afraid. That scares me because I’m always afraid. Afraid of the dark, people, anything you can imagine, I’m afraid of.”

*Pastor:* “Well, perfect love casts out fear. If God’s perfect love is there, fear is cast out. That’s all that He’s saying that God can’t honor fear. By that He means that you cannot use fear as a bargaining chip or a position to motivate God any more than you can use anger, or



mistrust, or any of the negative emotions. You can't use them to motivate God. Like somebody might say, "Lord, if you don't heal me, I'll go kill somebody". You're using terror and murderous ideas as a threat to God. So you say, "Well, I'm in fear, God, but there are enough Scriptures that say that God will be with you in fear, that God will drive out fear, that God wants you not to have fear, that God isn't present in fear". So, when we recognize that, He'll cast out fear. A great way to deal with fear is to study and then teach on fear." Fear is as doubt and unbelief. These three cancel out Faith, so fear must be dealt with in order for Faith to operate.

**Whose Faith Do We Need?**

The person to whom we are hoping to minister must in part, participate in a Faith healing. It's best if they initiate action, with a desire from their heart to see God move in a miraculous way to help them. When Jesus goes to the pool of Bethesda, the Scripture tells us that there were many there, with many various types of diseases. If we could take a Scriptural journey, we could see Jesus walking around, and even in some cases probably climbing over disabled people who were waiting about the pool for the stirring of the water (John Ch. 5).

The scenario goes thusly: Jesus looks upon a man who was some thirty years disabled and says "*Do you want to be made well?*" (v.6). In other words He asked him, "Do you desire still, after all these years, to be healed of God?" I assure you that if the man said, "Well, I'm sitting here, nothing's happening, nothing's gonna' happen, I just came here to get a tan..." Jesus would have walked over this man and continued looking for someone who had hope and to whom the possible spark of Faith would ignite when He spoke the Word "*Rise, take up your bed and walk!*" (v.8).

Think of the examples where Jesus healed children. In each one of these cases, *the Faith of the parents, the presence of the parents, and the attitude of the parents, is paramount*. We can in no way, and at no time, take a child that is below the age of accountability, or even at the age of accountability; separate them from the parent, and expect that God will recognize our spiritual authority over the child and heal the child, just on our Faith. *This is in error*, as Jesus never moved without dealing with the parents.

***We must recognize that God has placed the parent over the child as a spiritual authority.*** Hopefully the parents have a positive Faith concerning the healing of their child. The Holy Spirit recognizes parental Faith, since the child is under the spiritual authority of the parent. Children are usually positively predisposed to healing and having Faith.

Think of these examples:

Mark 5:22,23 and 35-42: The healing of Jairus' daughter - What did Jesus say? As After He drove out the doubters and the unbelievers who mourned her death, He pulled the mother and the father aside and told them to keep the switch of Faith turned on, meaning "don't despair, keep hoping". Only after addressing them in this manner did He minister to them.

Mark 9:14-27: How about the boy with the evil spirit in him? Jesus addresses the father's Faith. "*How long has this been happening to him?*" (v.21). Then He addresses the situation more directly. After ascertaining the fact that the child was oppressed of this demon while below the age of accountability, Jesus knew this was an oppressive demon. The Faith of the father is most important at this time. He then addresses the father, "*If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes*" (v.23). The father answers those famous words, "*Lord, I believe, help my unbelief!*" (v.24).

I have seen enthusiastic believers surrounding a small innocent child, praying loudly in Tongues, putting their hands all over the child, while the poor child cowers in fear under the grip and the noise, not understanding at all what is going on. While the parents stand off, out of the way, looking on in wonderment as if to say, "What in the world is going on here?" The Bible speaks of "proper" or "decent" and "in order" - and *this is not that*.

What is the message here? The message is of course, we want to minister, we have compassion, but we must step outside of our personality and address the famous "WWJD?" -

What Would Jesus Do? Jesus would minister by the Holy Spirit, according to the guidelines of the Holy Spirit, which are *Faith, participation, compassion and spiritual authority*.

So often I hear Christians say to me, "I heard so-and-so is sick; I'm going to get over there and pray for them" or, "I am going to go over there and pray for them so they can get healed". I think to myself this is definitely their personality speaking, for we are all called to go to minister to people according to their need. Unless we have a *direct unction (leading) from the Holy Spirit*, we need to recognize that we cannot impose our will or the will of God upon anyone.

*\*\* Always be ready to pray, hope and pray, believe God and pray,  
but don't force other people to pray!*

Many sick people have become faithless and shipwrecked by overzealous – out of time, uninvited, self appointed prayer people. Sometimes just holding a hand, giving a glass of water or word of encouragement is all the ministry that is needed.

There is not one example of Jesus leaving Bethany and going to Jericho because He heard there were sick people there. The only time we see Him do this is when He has been requested to, or when the Holy Spirit is moving to demonstrate, or give a sign to convict sinners.

*\*\* Sent ones are sent.*

Some examples to look at: Even in the case of a man being totally, totally possessed, Jesus got out of the boat and the demoniac of the Gadarenes came to Him (Mark 5:1-13). Blind Bartimaeus was sitting by the roadside, and at the top of his lungs called out, "*Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!*" (Mark 10:47). The leper came to Jesus and said; "*If you are willing...*" think about this... "*If You are willing, You can make me clean*" (Mark 1:40).

There are too many examples. I would have to go through each of them, and that is not necessary, because if you are reading this or listening to it, you are already a student of the Word and you know that what I speak of is true. Pushy, prideful personalities try to push people to Faith and try to push the Holy Spirit to move. The fruit is damaged by this aggressiveness.

*\*\* Jesus is a gentle Shepherd.*

*He leads and sheep follow - cattle and cars are driven!*

*If you drive sheep you will step in a lot of sheep dung.*

So follow the Holy Spirit and lead the sheep. Sheep call out and we must go rescue them, showing them the way back home.

Yes we are called to minister. As we sit by the bedside of the person, we can ask them if they want to be prayed for, or we can wait for the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit says to command, we can command, if not, we are commanding without power, and making a mockery of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Name. For His Name is to be used for our joy, *but only according to the true guidelines of discipleship*. Jesus commands us, "*Love one another*" (John 13:24). Then - "*abide in Him*", then - "*ask what you will and He will do it for you*" (John Chapters 13 and 14).

The key is to abide – to be in close union with the Lord. We cannot ask outside of the will of the Lord if we are abiding in Him. When we ask then, it is in accordance with His will and we yield to accept His time.

So often I see people have a desire and a hope for someone to receive a healing, but upon pulling back and watching carefully, what I really see is that they have a desire to be able to

brag about what God did through them. It looks and sounds like this: “Hey you, come here so I can show you what God will do through me, and ain’t I wonderful?”

Jesus’ greatest, most miraculously reported healings occur in a one-to-one or a one-to-two or three people, in privacy. He pulls them aside, not making a show of the Holy Spirit, nor making a show of Himself. He pulls Himself aside that He may hear from the Holy Spirit what the methods and techniques are that are to be used. Is this a time for spittle? Is this the time for the rubbing of mud and clay? Is this a time of just the touching? Is this a time for the use of water? Or is it time for just a command? My goodness, can’t we see that Jesus ministers *only* under the unction of the Holy Spirit? No method that we can manufacture, no timing, enthusiasm, or approach that emanates from our personality will get the job done. *The mind and personality of the human is an enemy to the disciple*, unless we are under the control of, and yielded to, the Holy Spirit.

**Personality Factors: Biblical Techniques for Healing and Prayer For Disciples**

When we take a look at the Gospels, if we are trying to ascertain the personality of Jesus Christ, we actually find very little information. We have descriptions of what Jesus Christ is not and we have His conversations and His actions. We don't have cute little anecdotes in the Scriptures about what made Him laugh, what didn't make Him laugh, how He treated people when he wasn't ministering to them, what He was like when He was in His father's carpentry shop, did He have a bad temper, no temper and so forth. Those type of personality descriptions are missing.

Therefore, I think it would be important for us to notice that Jesus did not minister from His personality. He didn't disciple people, nor did He pray with them or minister healing to them from His personality. Jesus' personal traits did not determine how or to whom He would minister. His likes, dislikes and prejudices, etc., did not dictate His style. This is very different from how things usually work.

I grew up always the leader in my class, captain of the team, played linebacker, was a star running back, I was always the elected official in charge in high school as well as in college. Therefore, I grew up a take-charge kind of guy. My personality is one of confidence and directness, and I always had a desire to fix that which was broken. I always felt that if I were in charge it would get fixed more efficiently and be done more correctly.

My birth name coincides with this as it denotes leadership and 'captainship', and therefore, it matched my personality and I pursued it. So upon graduating from college, I was immediately placed in a leadership role in counseling and therapeutic works, and continued to be an administrator and an executive director of whatever I was involved in. And then of course, in the music world was usually the band leader, in the business world as a contractor; I was "the man" - the CEO-in-charge. So if I were to become a minister, a disciple of Jesus Christ, and minister to people from *my* personality, I would have made the type of mistakes that many people make.

The Lord showed me early on in ministry that a take-charge kind of guy couldn't take charge and be effective in discipling people, nor in ministry. The reason simply is because the Holy Spirit **must** be in charge. The Holy Spirit must be directing and leading in order for supernatural power to be manifest for the Glory of the Kingdom of God. After all, you are not going to save the person, you are not going to heal the person, you are not going to be able to minister to their spirit, unless it's through and by the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, your personality must get put on a shelf and you must minister under the unction and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Let's say you are the "football coach personality" and you love confrontation and you also love gossip. We have a mixture for disaster teaching or ministering to a gentle spirit, a gentle soul who is questioning and tender. The personality of the football player coach who loves to gossip will just hurt and run over this person, turning them off to the Gospel. The coach type is not open to being asked questions but just wants students to walk in blind obedience, and then on top of that, he is going to talk about them on the phone with their mutual friends, totally exposing them and destroying their quiet, gentle nature and privacy needs.

A reverse scenario is the same. What if you have a person who is a gentle, suggestive leader, and they are trying to disciple someone who is more easily led by authoritarianism, by someone who will give them an order and they obediently follow it out. Let's say a guy just coming out of the army wants to get saved and he feels that the Gospel is not concrete, not

structured and has no backbone. What do we do then, with our personality, if we are meek, quiet, suggestive, but not a directive type personality?

When we look at Jesus Christ we see Him in one instance strong, bold, not taking a back step to anyone. A determined man running like a railroad train through the temple area, cleansing it and driving out the moneychangers. And then, right on the flip-side of that, maybe even the same day, He is the Gentle Shepherd, with children upon His lap, having a nice quiet time and gently rebuking the disciples and saying, "Let the little children come unto me". What a contrast here.

Churches look the way that they do because so many people minister and disciple only through their personalities, and therefore, they draw to themselves only one type of Christian, one type of disciple. So you have a church that is all bold, all loud, all aggressive, all assertive; and you have the contrast, all quiet, all meek, all humble and no back-bone. Therefore we can see that to minister from the personality is not the best way to disciple, definitely not the best way to minister or to pray for people. Since our personality, emotions and typical behaviors have 'blind-sides', we have to rely on the Holy Spirit, Who can see into the heart of the potential disciple, and can guide us to meet that person's need.

We must understand there is a clear distinction between *preaching 'at' or 'to' someone*, and discipling them.

*\*\* Discipling is a walk; it is shoulder-to-shoulder, hand-to-hand.*

*Walk along with the disciple to bring them to maturity.*

*\*\* It is babysitting in a sense, but it is definitely not cattle driving.*

We see Jesus as a gentle, leading Shepherd, pointing out the error of Martha and pointing out the wisdom of Mary. But then we see Him with the Pharisees and Scribes, for example Nicodemus, being extremely direct, almost caustic in His discussion with him, as He leads Nicodemus to the Truth of the Gospel.

*\*\* You can see that personality can be a poison,  
and the Holy Spirit is the Healing Salve.*

We must pause, seek the Lord, and wait for the leading of the Holy Spirit to be effective in ministering to others.

The saint that is enthusiastic, direct and aggressive is a danger to the cause of Christ, unless Christ is in charge. He is, in essence, a soldier that is out of control; that is not listening to orders, not following directions, not waiting, and not in step with his Commander. In the military, a soldier left at attention will remain at attention until the next order is given. It is the same when we minister - either in healing, prayer, or just day-to-day walking with a disciple. Our mouth should be on pause until the Holy Spirit fills it with the correct words. The majority of our time should be, especially at the outset of discipling - listening. We should be ascertaining and locating the disciple, identifying the ministry need and listening and waiting on the Spirit.

We can see Jesus apply these principles in ministering healing, bringing disciples, teaching and so forth, especially in the book of Luke, where the largest numbers of healings are recorded. Jesus does not once *drag* people to be healed, or pull them aside and tell them "you need to get healed, right now, by Me". But yet and still, I see this in the Body. People with aggressive personalities standing in front of potential disciples, yelling and screaming at them to open up their mouths and speak in Tongues, people pulling people aside or snatching their children aside, in order to have them receive their healing.

We see in the book of Acts, Paul and Peter, even though they are seeking disciples, in no

case are they forcing disciples to do or say anything. They are responding as the Holy Spirit leads. When Peter goes to Cornelius' house, it is under the unction of the Holy Spirit, and at the request of Cornelius. The Apostle Paul does not say to the young disciples, "you guys need to get filled with the Holy Spirit and get right with God". He just asked the question, "*Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?*" (Acts 19:2).

Surely we cannot say that the personality of Peter is a laid back, wait and see what happens kind of guy. Nor is the Apostle Paul, who in his writing says, "*What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?*" (1 Cor. 4:21). Therefore, we can see neither of these men is ministering through their personalities, but under the unction and the leading of the Holy Spirit, and I repeat, at the request of the person to be ministered to.

I remember one night at Bible study there was a young couple, young believers in the Lord. They had a daughter who possibly had severe allergies to wasp and bee stings. This particular night we had been teaching on healing and that the Power of God is always present to heal when the Word of God is being preached and taught. The level of Faith was quite high in the meeting.

The little girl was stung on the arm by a wasp. She came up screaming and crying to the mother as we all looked and saw that her arm had already swollen at a rapid rate, covering an area of three by three inches, and was changing colors. The mother and the father took a position of panic, of course, knowing that allergic reactions can be life threatening.

Knowing that the Power of God was available to heal, I waited on the Holy Spirit. As fear and panic sought to grip the room, I quietly prayed and waited to see if Faith would come alive. After a few minutes of panic and getting the car keys and getting ready to run out, the mother looked up at me and said, "Wait a minute, we could pray, couldn't we?" I looked and smiled at her with a gentle reassurance.

I silenced the rest of the room, and I sent for the father. I had the father and the mother hold their little daughter, and I instructed them to believe their God, and to lay their hands upon the wound, and to command that this poison be of non-effect, and that the swelling go down. The mother's spirit exploded into prayer, with conviction and power. I also encouraged the rest of the believers to believe along with us and to go into a prayer mode, and those that could to pray in the Holy Spirit. I told everyone to believe, or if doubting to move to neutral, and just praise God.

We need to realize that an atmosphere of Faith creates Faith, and an atmosphere of doubt creates doubt. We'd see many more miracles in the USA if we could get rid of the "show me" "TV Show" and "Spectator Sport" attitudes. Remember Mark 6:5, Jesus could do no mighty work in His own home town due to unbelief. Let people know they have a part to play in the presence of God. What a joy to minister where satan has not planted weeds of doubt, intellectualism and fear.

As the room was filled with spiritual Tongues of the saints building themselves up, and as the mother's Faith and the father's Faith rose, the little girl became very, very calm. As I watched her eyes search about the room, she fixed her eyes upon her mother and then looked upon her father, and she realized they were serious and truly believed that no harm was going to come to her. And amazingly, the daughter closed her eyes and came in agreement with the Faith of the parents. The swelling and pain were gone in a few minutes, and the girl ran off to play, healed.

The room was then filled with praise and joy, and I tell you, these two people are now

prayer warriors who will confront the devil wherever he rears his ugly head. I also note that the Holy Spirit gave me proper guidance at the time needed. I could have taken the little girl into my arms, I could have assumed the take-charge-kind'a-guy personality, stomped off with the child into an outer room, and gone and sought the Lord in prayer, and commanded satan and jumped up and down and I would have been in great error. The Holy Spirit was leading to demonstrate to the whole group, and especially to the parents, *their* authority and to build *their* Faith.

We have to be concerned also about who gets the credit. In a situation like that if I had stormed off and prayed alone and the child was healed, then I would have a room full of people that would have possibly been impressed with me, not necessarily believing God. They would, then, in some cases and in some situations, think that somehow the power to heal was vested in me, and the path to healing is to "take charge". Actually, the power to heal flows *through* me as the Holy Spirit wills, and will flow through any believer that believes. How wonderfully God teaches and uses us all in the supernatural. God must be the one to "take charge". Say Amen!

Is this not what discipling is about? Discipling is proper teaching of how to use Faith as an action word. By this I mean that Jesus met each person requesting ministry or prayer at his or her level of Faith. His level of Faith, of course, was high and always on. But where is their Faith? What are we teaching? How are we ministering? The Holy Spirit has said that wherever two or more are in agreement, there the Lord is in our midst. And He is in our midst of course to perform His will for our benefit, using our Faith. Jesus taught the 12 and sent them out, then the 72 and then sent *them out*. Show them how, let them do it and send them out. The sent ones must not go in their own personalities, fears and strength. We walk by Faith, not sight, feelings or personal methodology.

Churches have personalities just as people do. This is a failing of denominations. Denominationalization becomes locked into traditions. "We do it this way," or "my way or the highway." Faith is hindered by tradition - personal or institutional. When we look at the definition of the word 'personality' we can see why it must be "put under" as part of the flesh. "The complex of characteristics that distinguishes an individual... The totality of an individual's behavioral and emotional characteristics" (Webster's 9th College Dictionary).

As a part of the Body of Christ we all are allowed to be ourselves and to be different.

*\*\* Yet when we are discipling there is no excuse or allowance for saying,  
"Well, that's just the way I am... that's me".*

The Scripture that comes to mind is, "*you are not your own, you were bought with a price*" (1 Cor. 6:20). Sometime past we had a Bible group that was made up mostly of women that were new Christians. A Vietnam Vet began attending this class. His personality was military, forceful, controlling and 'take charge'. New Christians often struggle with problems and questions. The Veteran was not sensitive to the baby Christians. He had a need to be heard and he expressed himself in harsh terms and tones. Because of his personality, his approach to discipleship was "my way or the highway," "put up or shut up" and "no sissies, no missies". The gentle ladies I was discipling were getting real turned off. To his credit, when I discussed this with him he did voluntarily withdraw. Now years later these same women could go toe to toe with him, but then his personality was a major problem.



**Leading Disciples in Prayer**

Talking to God is a necessity for a follower of Christ. Prayer is a form of communicating, having fellowship with our Creator – Father. God made man the custodian of the earth until He comes: satan was able to usurp our position in Genesis Chapter 3 for a while. Through his agents, he keeps man from recognizing and using our God-given authority over our planet and its inhabitants. Man alone is not powerful enough to control the usurper, but the custodian (man) can call upon the Owner (God) for help in re-establishing the original order – man as god of this world, and not satan the usurper. To do this we must pray – call on God to enter our realm of activity in our behalf.

2 Corinthian 4:3,4 points this out: *“But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.”* Once our minds and eyes are open, we then talk to God in prayer, and elicit His help in establishing *“Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven”* (Matthew 6:10).

Somehow, God wants us to give Him permission to act in our behalf on the earth. This seems necessary until the time of man is completed and satan’s contract is fully revoked. Our rightful relationship is with God as our Father. Our desire is to have communication with God, but due to sin we must relearn how to live in this relationship, just like a son who has been away from home a long time. We have to sit down and get reacquainted. So let’s discuss a few key things about this mode of communication called prayer.

God knows before we ask (Matthew 6:8) but He still desires that we verbalize our requests. Therefore, Paul tells us in Philippians 4:6: *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God”*. This is a great guide to prayer. The Living Bible says, “Tell God your need, and thank Him.”

There are many other types of prayer with other uses – Prayer of Dedication and Consecration, Prayer of Faith, Prayer of Binding and Loosing, Prayer of Praise and Adoration, Prayer of Intercession, Prayer of Repentance, etc. In all cases, we are calling the supernatural God to affect the natural realm of man. There is also the Prayer of Conversation – simply speaking to Daddy – Abba. This is not to ask for anything, but just being with Him and sharing thoughts and feelings.

People have a way of turning prayer into religion with rules, regulations and traditions. A study of Matthew 6 shows that planned and controlled prayer and repetitious prayer **does not** move God. Humility, Faith and sincerity **do** move God. We tend to think that what worked for us as a prayer technique will work for others, but that’s not necessarily so. Many mature believers throw out bold statements and tell young disciples to pray this or that way which usually means pray “my way”.

God is listening for humility, Faith and sincerity. A mature believer may say, for example, “always fast, then pray,” “never ask more than once,” “keep on asking and asking,” “on your face,” “on your knees,” “cover your head,” “play music,” “get up at dawn,” “say, Father God, Father God, a lot,” “get loud,” “get bold,” “get quiet,” “more Faith,” “repent first,” etc., etc. All these may work but may have nothing to do with success, except they helped someone once to pray.

Mature believers often fall into the pitfall of judging the prayers and prayer life of others. At a prayer meeting, they hang on every word, listening for unbelief or doubt. The less

experienced believer is doing the best he/she can with the Faith they have and then “bang”, the more mature will add, “Brother, I just have to say something here...” and then they dismantle the novice’s prayer, correct them and re-pray the prayer for them. This correction is not worth the potential damage, especially in a group or church meeting.

*\*\* When praying one on one, a correction offered as a suggestion has a better chance of being received.*

Unless the prayer is of the devil, it is better left alone. Later, when teaching is being ministered, we can teach how to be more Scriptural, but if we’re correcting technique or tradition, we should hold our peace. We pray together to get agreement and in agreement more power is released. *“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them”* (Matt. 18:20). Correction negates agreement and tells the novice his prayer was not acceptable. Is that truly the case with God? No, the novice may have more humility, Faith and sincerity for his prayer than you have for your correction. Better to teach later and lead by example when you pray.

Another error is telling God how to answer prayer. Many people tell God when, how, and who should act out the miracle - “Dear Lord, Uncle Bill has a tumor and when we pray tonight, have it fall off in front of the night nurse so she’ll get saved.” This is the stuff movies are made of, in which we star to the glory of our flesh. Remember, Philippians 4:6, make your request known and a “thank you God” is enough - “Father, heal Uncle Bill and save the nurse. Thank you Lord, it’s done. Amen.”

When we listen to people preach or pray we should be a support looking to agree, not making critical analysis. The more mature should make mental note of unbelief when it is expressed, but wait for a teaching opportunity. Correcting people publicly when they’ve prayed usually sends the wrong message and makes one look like a self-appointed spiritual police officer. Worst of all, the novice abandons the prayer that he had Faith for, which made sense to him.

Someone may not pray, preach or sing the words you feel should be used, but they may be acceptable to God. Over time, help novices to understand why you do what you do and the biblical basis for it. In the meantime, let these Scriptures guide you: Romans 14:1, Living Bible: *“even though his faith is weak, don’t criticize him for having different ideas from yours about what is right or wrong.”* Romans 14:13, New International Version: *“Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother’s way.”* The disciple will see how you pray; as you teach, encourage and avoid criticism. In time they may say, “Teach us to pray”. Study Matthew, Chapter 6.

**Patience in Prayer**

Finally, we need to look at the two aspects of waiting on the Lord. The first is waiting on the Lord quietly, in prayer. The second is waiting on the Lord quietly in patience. The Word admonishes the Spirit filled believer to speak mysteries to God through prayer in Tongues, and we are encouraged to pray to the Father even though He knows what we need before we ask. Little is said about what to do to hear from God, so we have a picture of us speaking to God, but of Him ever-silent as He sits in a lofty place, far away. This picture is grossly wrong, for the Holy Spirit, which is God, comes to dwell inside us, as does the Spirit of Christ. We invite Jesus to come and live inside us and somehow forget that He did accept our invitation. I have learned that we must take the time during prayer to listen for God's response to bubble up on our inside. Our listening must continue after prayer time is over, for God will answer, but He is not required to answer at the moment we ask, because He is eternal and outside of time. There are spiritual factors that determine the timing of when God will answer us. Therefore, we must find the time to quietly wait. This waiting must be with expectant hope and Faith that our loving Father will answer. It is difficult to discern the answer in the noise of life, with so much going on, so we must draw away to private places whenever we can. Many people miss God because they wait for the answer to come from other sources outside of themselves. This work happens in the way discussed above - prophecy, Word of Knowledge, etc.; but in quietness we must learn to appreciate the wonderful power of the still small voice and the Rhema word spoken in our heart. This voice and the Rhema word register upon the mind with quiet clarity and must be focused upon by the carnal mind and repeated in our thoughts, in order to be recognized from God.

Finally, God speaks to us as the thought we are not thinking at the time, or the revelation that shows up unexpectedly. Patience is learning to have quietness on the inside as we go through life. Paul calls it the peace of God that passes understanding. David calls it waiting on the Lord as in Psalm 27: we are waiting on the Lord with active patience. Active patience means we are looking everywhere for God's answer but we are not disturbed or panicked. We have the quiet assurity that God has answered, and in a moment or two we will find the answer. We are waiting but active with expectant hope, and are confidently at peace - turning over every rock with Faith that the blessing is under one of these rocks!

We constantly remind ourselves to be at peace and joy, as God knows our situation and is working it out for the best. These are two forms of quietness: prayer and patience, which make the difference between walking in the flesh and walking by the Spirit.

*I come to the garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses,  
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear  
The Son of God discloses.  
And He walks with me, and He talks with me,  
And He tells me I am His own;  
And the joy we share as we **tarry** there,  
None other has ever known.*

*Written by C. Austin Miles*

## **Power Ministry**

**Ministering by the Holy Spirit - Names & Games**

Notice that throughout Scripture the power of God does not manifest by any one technique exclusively. Jesus opens blind eyes by spit, clay and command. In each case the Holy Spirit gave the technique, the Healer was obedient and power showed up - free of charge for ultimate good. The disciple must know the Father, know the Spirit, and know the Savior.

Most people want the ultimate good but need to be shown the whole package. **God** is all that we need. **He** is the Power. We can go direct in Spirit and in Truth by sincere prayer. When we tell people this, as they embrace the Father, they see His Love and power and will forsake their power - which is a counterfeit and a trap. The quick path of witchcraft, occult and the new age does offer quick results. It also offers a never-ending maze of dances, twisted logic, false goals and new names.

Our Gospel message is so simple: *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart... and He shall direct your paths”* (Proverbs 3:5,6). Man will never be God, fix the world or return as anyone else after death. There are no past lives and no other gods. One God, one Way to God - Jesus. Jesus has clearly told us that one must accept the whole package in order to use His Power. Let’s look at these passages, *“teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...”* (Matt 28:20) - *“And these signs will follow those who believe:...”* (Mark 16:17). *“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you”* (John 15:16). We must qualify in order to use or be used by the Power of God.

satan’s power is a counterfeit and he will use anyone, moral or immoral, just as long as they will listen to his voice and not be led by the “Word”. satan appeals to pride and pride causes one to put himself above the “Word” and its limits. For example: a Christian that practices astrology (Biblically forbidden as sorcery and reading of omens) will be rewarded by satan with supernatural readings. He will also misinterpret Scripture or be encouraged by satan to set the “Word” aside. Unfortunately, I have seen many people, fearful of losing satan’s counterfeit power, follow his suggestions, use his names, withdraw from church and the Truth to hold on to a little power and mystery, then pass up a chance for real peace and ultimate power. *“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood...”* (Eph. 6:12). Therefore we must use prayer, Faith and the Truth to overcome in areas of demonic transference, mantras, names and the works of the devil.

We must encourage people that have been taken in by smoke and mirrors to hang around and ask questions. Remember, they are in search of God, but pride, pains or intellect have gotten them sidetracked. They are in confusion and conflict and must be led to see the hypocrisy. Almost all faiths teach Jesus was a “great master, a high teacher, etc., etc.”, and they use the Bible and Bible terms all the time. They should be shown what the Great Master said and what the Bible really does say, forcing them to realize that there is a conflict between what they may have experienced, were previously taught or believe, and **The Truth**. They may then realize that they must search further. All the gurus have are parlor tricks, compared to the might of Jesus.

Most names of Hindu gods are seldom explored for their full meaning. Many Hindu gods have dual natures - Jekyll vs. Hyde personalities, so encourage people to find out what they have really been given. Jesus gives us names that will be written on white stones (these are personal invitations, like guest cards), and these names give us entrance into the final heavenly gate to be with Him and the Father, eternally. Until then everything Jesus has done

for us is in the Word. Jesus has revealed to us God's plan and our role and purpose in Him. Who you are is more important than what you're called. It is sad that in the 90's people chose to name their children meaningless names by combining sounds. They took African, Arabic, and English sounds and invented names. I pray these children find meaning in their lives, even though their names have no known value or direction. Pray that God, by His Holy Spirit, will give them knowledge of their godly names.

**Setting the Captives Free**

When in a meeting where emotions are high and many manifestations of God's power are shown (deliverances, healings, signs and wonders), know that demonic spirits, if present, are looking for opportunity to manifest and occupy. Deliverance meetings set people free, but displaced spirits look for somewhere else to go - "watch and pray", and protect. If a demon of depression is cast out in a meeting, you can be sure that before leaving he scans the room for someone that has a problem with depression.

In the Book of Acts, Chapter 19, we are told that the sons of Sceva were beaten by a demon- possessed man when they tried to use the Name of Jesus improperly. The Scevas were not authorized by the Holy Spirit to use Jesus' Name and the Holy Spirit was *not* present to protect them. Many Christians do not respect the laws of transference, laying on of hands and anointing, and get into trouble. Personal sin cannot be present when we are going to deal with demons - sins must be confessed and forgiven or the demon can accuse and counter attack. Pride must not be the motive - "showing off" has no place in warfare.

The unction (powerful leading) of the Holy Spirit must be present, as the Holy Spirit is the power to "protect us" and overpower the demonic. The demonic can overpower the natural, but not the Holy Spirit and the Name of Jesus.

I remember once being told by a demon that the host (person) had invited the demon in and that the demon had his permission to stay. When the host's will changed, out came the demon.

Another demon threatened me, "I'll tear you up!" He snarled, "Who do you think you are?" I replied, "I'm nobody, but the Lord I serve is Jesus and you will do nothing to me!" The demon then made the host leave the room. The Holy Spirit urged me to follow him. I cornered him in another room and asked if the host wanted freedom. He responded, "Yes!" I then told the demon he could not speak and that he had to come out - and immediately he did. This young man had been very violent and super strong, but now was a tender, graceful, loving teenager.

I did **not** touch him until after the demon was cast out. Notice in the Scripture that Jesus **did not lay hands on any demon possessed person**, yet I am appalled to see Christians "playing Bible" and touching anyone and everyone. This "religious tradition" is in error, and many people are opening themselves to attack. I saw a man who wanted to be noticed and praised as a prayer warrior so he, unaware, laid hands on and repeatedly prayed over a demon-possessed woman. They were laughing and "playing prayer". My warnings were not heeded and the man picked up a spirit of depression that took about 6 months to get free of.

We have two contrasting examples: In the first situation, I was under the unction and protection of the Holy Spirit and, though the young man's demon had subdued many hospital orderlies, he feared and obeyed the Name of Jesus and that power. The other is an example of error upon error. We must fear God and respect the things of the supernatural. Touch can lead to transference and then warfare. Without a strong anointing, this is dangerous and improper.

Finally, no one can stand for Jesus against satan without their sins confessed and curbing of the sins of their flesh. The accuser of the brethren, satan (Rev. 12), can gain legal right to attack and disable. The heart and the eye must be pure and focused on Jesus.

We must recognize that most of Jesus' great miracles were done in private or small groups with just a few people. That is because the unbelief of the group can hold back the blessing

and limit Faith.

There is a place for public displays of power but only as the unction leads. There is no normal way that patterns how the Holy Spirit will move. Sometimes command, sometimes pray, sometimes oil, sometimes spit, clay, laugh, touch, slap, etc. We are the vessel, not the master, and must observe the laws and the leading.

We must notice that Jesus sent out the 12 and the 70 and in some cases they got in over their heads. Go to the Pastor or other elders and ask who to pray with and when. It is the elder's job to know, and God has covered them with special anointing in their pasture (church). The Christian walk can be fun, but it is not a game. Never minister to people at a different church without the head Elder's approval. The Spirit placed them there and will not override their authority, but satan will. Seek to come into agreement with the prayer leaders (elders, pastors, worship leaders, etc.) - Why are they here? What is the prayer need? What do they want from God? etc. (More on this later). God has laws of transference; know them and respect them.



**Spiritual Activity**

You have to know when you are not trained or anointed for spiritual activity. You do what you can do from your position and then say to yourself, “Wait a minute, I’d better get an Elder or Pastor in here”. Make sure you have the right elder or pastor that has experience and anointing for what is needed. It makes no sense to ask a pastor to pray for healing if he believes ‘the gifts ended with John, Peter and James’. We have to know when we are in a situation that requires us to say, “Before we pray, let’s get someone else over here. Let’s get a couple of people over here so we’ll be praying in agreement”. We need to be careful, especially when we have a situation with new people or people we don’t know.

The Scriptures tell us, “*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour*” (1 Peter 5:8). “*Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves*” (Matthew 7:15). ...so... “*Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people’s sins; keep yourself pure*” (1 Timothy 5:22).

Consider this possible scenario:

Someone with evil intent will come to you to ask you for prayer. You will lay hands on them and there will be a transfer of a spirit you are not prepared to deal with. Next thing you know, the next morning - you’ll wake up and you won’t know what happened, but you will feel awful, depressed, oppressed or weak in body.

One evening at a meeting there were some 20 people present, but among them was a demonic presence. I told a few of them, “There is a strong negative spirit here, but I need you to be in agreement with me. We’re going to pray,” and I said to be on the lookout to find the source. I prayed over the people and one by one searched and found the host for the evil spirit, and what I picked up was so negative and so intense that I knew I’d need a cleansing before the night was over. This person had a spirit on him that truly hated me and wanted to do me great harm. I felt a pressure run up my arms and hit my heart area. A thought spoke out that was not mine – ‘you’re having a heart attack, you’re going to die’. This demon was very strong, but not as strong as the Blood of Jesus!!! I knew he had been sent to destroy this Bible Study group, which had many new believers. I asked the demon possessed man as well as two other prayer warriors to stay after the meeting was over. While the prayer warriors prayed a distance away, I confronted the individual and spoke to his demon. He refused to renounce the demon or repent. Therefore, both host and demon both were forced out of the ministry as I used the authority to bind and loose. After he left I didn’t feel quite right, so I had the others pray for me. The saints covered me with the protection of the Blood of Jesus, cleansing me after I dealt with the demon and this person. You need to be careful, but know your rights in spiritual activity.

*Cleansing* should be done whenever we come in contact with negative anointings and demons. This is a matter of reaffirming Faith and dispelling fear. Have someone that was not involved in the battle (against the evil force) who is prayed up and solid in the Word assist you in cleansing.

Here are some suggested steps toward cleansing:

- 1) Enter into agreement with you concerning the work that was done.
- 2) Anoint you in the precious Name and declare the Blood of our Saviour.  
(Rubbing with oil or washing with water).
- 3) Dismiss any spirits that may be seeking to linger or counter attack.

4) Pray a prayer of Faith calling it done.

5) Share communion, reaffirming the Body and Blood of Jesus.

Yes, when necessary you can cleanse yourself. Let us be diligent and wise to the devices of the evil ones. They will attack when we are weakened, overconfident, distracted, or **after a great victory**. Stay prayed up, cleansed and on the offensive.

Some “on the offensive” Scriptures from the Epistles:

1 Cor. 4:20

1 Cor. 13:8

2 Cor. 1:20,21

2 Cor. 2:14

2 Cor. 9:8&10

2 Cor. 10:4,5

2 Cor. 12:9

Galatians 4:7

Ephesians 1:11

Ephesians 3:7

Ephesians 3:18-20

Ephesians 6:16

Phill. 2:13

Phill. 3:12,14

Phill. 4:13,19

Col. 1:13

1 Thess. 5:24

Heb. 4:16

Heb. 7:25

Heb. 13:6

James 4:7

James 5:16

1 Peter 2:9

1 Peter 2:24

2 Peter 1:3,4

1 John 2:12-14

1 John 4:4

1 John 5:4,5

Jude v. 9

Rev. 12:11

Rev. 17:14

**Angels of Enlightenment 2 Cor. 11:14**

satan himself masquerades - as an angel of light. Since the Garden of Eden the tactics of the evil one have not changed. satan's method is to appeal to the mind and pride of man, thereby making the person feel special and enlightened. There is a special pride that develops and is seen in people that "hear voices from the spirit world". It is interesting that people that are hearing from the spirit realm all believe it is God, all the time. Even obviously demon possessed people as well as many "saints" are sure they are hearing from Heaven exclusively. This of course is impossible, but shows the effectiveness of satan and his work - he masquerades and people fall under his influence. Once we are attuned to spiritual things, we are sensitive to all spirits, good and bad, and we must discern who is who.

Foolishly, people assume that since satan and his demon workers are evil they only speak evil. Notice in Luke 4, the temptation of Christ - satan quotes Scripture and says wonderful reassuring things; 'jump down from here and God's angels will save you.' Many "saints" would have been fooled - pride would rise up and say, "That's Scriptural truth all right, I do carry that kind of weight and importance with God, I have that kind of Faith, that must be God, after all I only hear from God, so I'm jumping to the Glory of God!" -- BANG -- "Uh-Oh!!!" Sorry, you just listened to and cooperated with the wrong voice at the wrong time. I have learned that the more excited you are about something you think is God, the less likely it is to be God. If we are attuned to the supernatural then we are attuned to all the 'supernatural'. If we believe we cannot be fooled and do not police everything, then we will be fooled.

satan often uses a technique I call "bombardment" - he will have his demons clog the airwaves with fairly consistent chatter and messages. The person feels called away to listen to the voice or leading, especially when God is getting ready to speak through or by another. This can pull a person out of church, prayer meetings, Bible Studies, worship or even their own mess, to be alone with the bombardment voice. In other words, when God is moving and ready to speak, the person will be led away from God by demonic whispers or visions. Only a satan worshiper would listen to satan if he announced that: "the next voice you hear will be from hell..." The person feels enlightened and special... "No one else hears from God as much as I do!" "I'm prophetically gifted by God." Actually, they are being misled by the demonic.

People receive something "good" that's "accurate" and conclude they hear from God exclusively and start a life long relationship with a masterful "bombardment demon". Whenever the person gets close to being set free, the bombardment begins and the demon holds onto his property by maintaining their attention. The person's pride is *thrilled* to have heard so much and they feel so blessed and special, but have missed God. The demonic calls them away telling them, "your gifts are not appreciated here, I have other work for you to do - come away."

The appeal of visions is the same, the error the same. Vision people enjoy the 'seeing' so much that they accept all visions as God-given. They see the end as justifying the means - refusing to question the techniques they employ to get into the voice or vision realm. The only prerequisite for visions or voices from Heaven is: to have a totally devoted heart to the Lord and His Word exclusively. Faith that God *does* and *will* speak is a must.

*\*\* If yoga, TM, drugs, astral projection,  
visualization and chanting were needed to reach God,*

*then Jesus and the prophets would have taught us so.*  
*In the Bible we are told to “meditate” on the Word of God.*

We see getting quiet before the Lord, but not ever emptying of the mind. We see praying, fasting and speaking in a prayer language (Tongues) to God, but never repetitive chanting. The above techniques are often works that open us to spirits that convince us that the fruit came from a good tree. The end does not justify the means in the things of the Holy Spirit. The only path is a righteous path that leads to the Lord. The way to God is to use His tools and techniques.

Many well-meaning practitioners are strong enough to stay O.K. for a time, but they lead others to use these techniques with disastrous results. And in time the leaders will also fall. The greatest danger is that spirits fixate people on the techniques, the visions and the voices, and not the Word and the Person of the Holy Spirit. These saints never grow beyond the thrill of visions and voices into a deep relationship with the Word and Person of Christ. **Dwelling in the Glory**, not a manifestation, is the goal. *satan* is a sly ol' fox, but foxes get out-foxed. Eventually ungodly techniques bear bad fruit.

I remember a lady that told me that the “spirit” was speaking to her all the time, about so many different things. I thought that's not Scriptural - she is either not differentiating between God and her own spirit or she still has some open wavelengths to the demonic from her days in the occult. One day at the *unction* or ‘leading’ of the Spirit, I felt compelled to go see her and silence these voices. When I arrived at her home she was coming out the door as if in anticipation of my arrival. I got right to the point and said, “You love Jesus, don't you? You only want to hear from Him don't you? Let's agree to bind any voice except His by the Holy Spirit and your inner witness of your spirit.” She wasn't too sure, but yielded her pride to her desire to be a true disciple. Later we laughed at how quiet things were and she didn't need to call me two times a day to tell me what God had to say.

The Voice of the Spirit is described in Elijah's encounter as “a still small voice”. The Holy Spirit is gentle and speaks when He wants (not always at our command); after all, He is God. Demons are noisy, constantly interrupting and often are out of agreement with Scripture. Demonically influenced scripture is slightly twisted and just a little bent, but leads to big error. For example, “God is Love, right? God loves every one, right? So God will forgive *satan* and he won't go to hell, so I can do what ever I want because of God's love, right?” No! Wrong! And no amount of demon chatter can make it right! *satan* always appeals to flesh and pride. The Holy Spirit leads us to the Truth and requires that we search out His message as it is confirmed in our spirits and the whole Word.

A neat little saying that has helped me is this - the first thought is often a God thought, thoughts from my flesh and the devil often follow after. Another technique is “ultimate conclusion”...taking a thought all the way to its conclusion in the extreme. For example, God gave Paul grace to stay celibate, therefore all truly devoted saints should stay single. Well, the ultimate conclusion would be “the end of the human race”; no sex = no children. From this idea, one can see that this is a misuse of Scripture. This is what happened to the Shaker sect. Their view of sex was so strict that they failed to reproduce, showing that good people can get stuck on an ungodly idea. We must discern the outcome of what we hear and test its fruit before fully accepting it as a “God idea”.

Jesus has given us His Word in 66 Books and the Father has said, “listen to Him”, meaning Jesus Christ (See Deut. 18:15, Matt. 17:5, and Mark 9:7). Jesus speaks in His Word to our spirits. Our spirit tells our minds and emotions what our Lord has said. The Voice of God

speaks when we need direction not spelled out in the Word or when we have “missed it”. Prophecy is for exhortation, edification and comfort (1 Cor. 14:3). God’s correction seldom needs to be audible unless we are stubborn, disobedient and/or stiff-necked.

The Holy Spirit expects us to grow up, and He gives us more and more responsibility to trust what He has taught us and placed in “our spirits”. If we are tempted to sin, the Holy Spirit need not speak afresh to us. He relies on the fruit from our spirit (Gal. 5:21) to manifest, as we are the branches and in the Vine (John 15). We should have grown to develop a “*good conscience*” (Heb 13:18 and Rom. 9:1) from “*being led by the Spirit*” (Rom 8:14), and having heard His Voice and knowing His Word. We sheep are so familiar that we hear Him speak in our hearts without Him uttering anything “afresh”.

Because I have known my wife for over 30 years, I know in many instances what she would say, even what she would think. I could order dinner for her off a menu and not be far off in choosing what would suit her. If we know Jesus we know the Father, if we know the Father we know the Spirit, if we know the Spirit we can: 1) flow with Him, 2) anticipate where He’s going, 3) please Him by being responsive and cooperative, 4) trust our conscience to line up with the Word, Will and Spirit of God, and 5) identify the lying ‘masquerader’.

The flesh displays *warning signs* that demons *can lead you*. Here are some things to watch for:

- First, do you always have a “word” or something to say?
- Are you seen and heard from nearly every Sunday though no one else has called upon you?
- Are you loud and flamboyant?
- Do you hate being wrong, or being corrected?
- Are you actually “hearing” voices?
- Are these voices daily or hourly?
- Do you test the spirits by your spirit?
  - (There is safety in counsel, and the spirit and the Word agree - find it in the Bible)
  - Do you feel unappreciated and unrecognized for your level of spirituality or for your spiritual gifts?
- Do you feel compelled to call people to share what you’ve heard, and always tell it?
- Do you get a rush from the call or from publicly telling it at church?
- Have you often “had” to warn someone of something evil or terrible?
- Do you hang out fleeces? (“If God does x, y or z I know what my answer is.”)
- Do you accept confirmation that comes by strange circumstances?
  - (i.e. “The mailman said Wisconsin when I’m thinking of going to Wisconsin ...so it must be God!”)
- Do you feel you know more than the Pastor, Elders and anyone locally, etc.?
- Have you never been able to stay longer than a year or two at any one church?
- Is there always something wrong with “them”?
- Has the “spirit” told you you’re destined for great things but though you’ve tried, nothing much has changed in years?
- Do you have mysterious illnesses that have little or no scientific proof?

These are a few pitfall warnings that ego, pride, ignorance and the devil have had room to move in your life.

Do you have mega-flesh problems in these areas? - bad temper, anger outbursts, gluttony (eating beyond full), deep depression, anxiety attacks, unreasonable fears and ideas of suicide, worry, insomnia; these are just a few of the ways a born again believer can be hearing from an

evil spirit. Over time a believer can be confused into responding at a suggestion from a demonic voice he thinks is his own, or thinks is from God. I have seen believers lose their temper saying, "God told me to go straighten so & so out!" Their temper outburst crushes the other person and they are driven to backslide, to the joy of the demon that prompted the confrontation.

Remember Peter's great confession "*You are the Christ*" was followed by "*Get behind me satan*" (Mark 8:27-33) and "*satan has asked to sift you like wheat*" (Luke 22:31). Peter's blessing of revelation was followed by a demonic attack that Peter fell for hook, line and sinker. We are not told Peter heard a spirit voice, but Jesus told us the plot and plan was satan's, and I am sure satan was leading Peter to rebuke Jesus in opposition to the Scripture that prophesied the suffering Messiah. Also, Peter's pride was fueled by satan to cause Peter to boast before the Lord ("*Though I should die with thee, yet I will not deny thee*" - Matthew 26:35), and then Peter was severely tested, and failed, three times as the cock crowed.

A voice of enlightenment is a top tool of the evil one. "satan always puts his poison on a good piece of meat," says Brother Kenneth Hagin. Consider a few more good pieces of meat: "We all are Christ." "If we all work together we can save the world." "Man holds the answer to all his problems." "The Jews have been replaced by the Gentiles." "It's purely politics and a class struggle." "There is no sin or guilt." "Everyone is a good person." "Eat this you'll be like God" (Garden of Eden, serpent to Eve). When Jesus was tempted by satan, Jesus said over and over again, "Thus says the Lord..." and, "*It is written...*" In 2 Tim. 2:15, we are told to: "*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*" Silence the evil voice so the Word can heal the heart.

Jesus is the Light of the World - any light shining anywhere else by voice or vision ain't the Lord! Don't be fooled by looks, power or prestige.

*\*\*If it feels good do it... NOT! ... wait 'til you hear from Heaven!*

How To

Study how Jesus dealt with demons in the Word: never in fear or doubt. Jesus does not debate or allow the demon to control the setting or conversation. Large audiences are avoided when possible. Demons love to put on a show and they thrive on unbelief. Mark 9:29: *“This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting.”* Isaiah 58 tells us that fasting breaks the yoke of the oppressor. When we deny ourselves and have strong self-control we are better able to trust in God, and stand freer of sin. Demons can claim rights of dominance and refuse the will of someone that is unclean (in a sinful state or situation).

This would be like an exorcist attempting to drive out a demon, and the demon speaks up and says, “you can’t drive me out, you’re under the influence of a lust demon, and I know who you’re sleeping with”. I heard of an incident where in front of the whole congregation, the demon began to give the names of who the Pastor was sleeping with.

Knowing Christ is to be like Christ. Therefore, it takes clean hands to cast out the unclean. Before engaging a demon, repent of all sins - fast when possible and be prayed up. 1Cor 14 speaks of edifying (building up) ourselves by praying in Tongues. This exercise is invaluable in preparing to do spiritual warfare. Let us use electrical wire for our example: Electric cords come in different thickness - the thicker the wire, the more current (voltage). The wire can transport to provide electricity (power). In this example, the less sin but more fasting and praying means the thicker the wire, therefore greater capacity to transport the power of God.

Wire that is the thickness of hair could not carry the power needed to light a 750-watt bulb - the wire would get hot and burn out! Wire the thickness of a pencil could easily handle the load necessary to light a 750-watt bulb. We must be thick enough in righteousness and Faith to boldly handle the charge - Holy Spirit power. The Holy Spirit will send a charge sufficient to drive out the demon. Holy Spirit power will be ministered through us by our Faith, anointing and righteousness (right standing with God).

We have discussed Faith and righteousness, but a few words about anointing would be important at this point. The word “Christ” actually means, “The Anointed One”. Christ then transfers to us the right to use His anointing. The Greek word carries in it a sense of “employment” or “assignment”. From the Holy Spirit to Christ in us, the anointing flows and places us in an office, or assignment, to serve the will of God.

If someone says they are “anointed”, we should ask, “to what and for what purpose?” As believers we are recipients of the “Anointed One and His Anointing”. But there are also very specific anointings that operate at specific times. Some people, due to experience, Faith, and endowment, have more of one anointing than others. Dealing with demons is a special anointing, though all believers have been given authority over devils.

The sons of Sceva (Acts 19), did not have Faith or anointing, and were beat-up by the demon. The Apostles could not drive out the demon in the boy (Mark 9). They had Faith and anointing, but not enough. When they saw the boy get thrown into convulsions, I believe fear reduced their Faith to doubt. Jesus points out, *“This kind can come out by nothing but prayer (the prayer of Faith - believing what you say according to Mark 11:23-25) and fasting”* (denying self so your anointing is strong enough to destroy the yoke of an oppressor).

While Jesus was with the disciples, we see Jesus going away to fast and pray, but not the disciples. We learn why in Matthew 9:15: *“And Jesus said to them, “Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast”* “. Therefore, Jesus was

fasted up, but the disciples were not. Jesus was in Faith, believing that when He spoke the demon **must** flee. Also, His anointing was too strong for the demon to resist or counter-attack. There are two reasons for this: 1) Jesus had no personal sin or weakness, and 2) He had unfaltering, non-wavering Faith.

Since Jesus had no personal sin, the demons stronghold had to come down. When the disciples spoke, I believe the stronghold came down; but when they saw the demon manifesting they doubted and the demon was able to remain - but not so with Jesus. We must pray for forgiveness of sin, stay in Faith and practice fasting to accomplish God's will - deliverance.

People are always looking for a simple methodology for removing the demonic - as if anyone could do it, if they followed 'Steps 1, 2, 3', etc. Not so. There is no formula that can be clearly described, except - **follow the Holy Spirit**. He alone is the formula, the method and the power. We are the wire, not the electricity. We cannot discern nor act without the leading of the Holy Spirit. Paul went some days before commanding the spirit of divination to leave the slave girl (Acts 16). Jesus had to ask the father, "*How long has this been happening to him?*" (Mark 9:21).

Remember, Jesus operated only as the Spirit led Him. Jesus left His deity in Heaven and became a man like us (See Phil 2 and Col 2). When the Spirit is in operation, we know (Word of Knowledge, Prophecy, Word of Wisdom, etc., etc.) what to say and what to do. As we yield and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, power is released through us to accomplish God's will - (Acts 10:38), which is to destroy the oppression of the devil.

*\*\* Everyone possessed or oppressed by the devil needs healing.*

*\*\* All healing is deliverance, whether physical, spiritual or mental.*

People are not all alike and neither are demonic presences. Some must be silenced immediately, others have valuable information, but they will twist the truth and lie. The Holy Spirit allows them to speak for a time. Demons are liars; they may tell a "truth", but only to gain control to tell a bigger lie. That remembered can assist us in identifying the nature, name and plan of the devil. Some masquerade as spiritual, and even mimic speaking in Tongues or offer praises that are discomfiting but sound appropriate. There are similarities, but the Holy Spirit often varies in how He wants us to operate. Notice Jesus allows the demon of the Gadarenes to speak, but in the temple area He immediately silences the demon and commands him to come out! Demons come out but can get back in (see Matt 12), making the host much worse if he fails to stay filled (by continuous spiritual growth and prayer). Staying filled with the Holy Spirit prevents demonic re-entry.

*\*\* Demons will tell you a truth until they 'get you'*

*then they will tell you the lie, that sounds like a truth.*

I'm convinced that people that do not follow or hear the Holy Spirit when He speaks will have little success driving out demons, like the sons of Sceva. We must not fear and must know that we have this authority in Christ by the Holy Spirit's power. Chasing demons can be and often is, a game of the flesh played out by thrill seekers. Demons are glad to oblige. They love a show and getting attention. I have found the most success and quickest results in private.

*\*\* Church is a hospital for sinners, not a hotel for saints.*

Once free the person needs the Word to stay free. If people can be kept in a **Word-'rich'** environment, a demon will not stay. "*He sent His Word and healed them*" (Psalm 107:20) will always work. Though it may not be dramatic and takes longer; it has a more permanent



effect.

**\*\* The devil can't make me do it 'cause I don't have to listen to it or follow through with it. Praise God.**

Final note; holy water, holy relics, incantations, special prayers and touching the demon possessed can all be dead ends and dangerous. Remember, be yielded and led of the Spirit, He is God and we are not. Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forevermore (Heb 13), but His methods are not always the same - if they were then any self-appointed fool could play God.

There is no set "how to" but there are basics to be followed:

- 1) Be prayed up, fasted up, and have your sins forgiven.
- 2) Learn to hear from the Holy Spirit (still, small voice inside of us - inward witness).
- 3) Pray in Tongues regularly – this practice is for self (spirit) edification (building up).  
Read 1 Cor. 14 until you become committed to getting into the spirit realm regularly – so God can use you in warfare.
- 4) Practice being sensitive to the spiritual realm – demons can be felt, smelled, tasted, seen and touched – God will show you.
- 5) Listen to people closely; most hosts know if they have a demon.
- 6) Help people identify how the demon got in (i.e., generational curse, personal sin – hate, unforgiveness, lust, anger, abandonment, abuse, resentment, etc.)
- 7) Begin opening doors – move people to forgiveness; remove No 6 (above) through prayer, confession, and repentance.
- 8) Get them saved and or rededicated to Christ.
- 9) (Repent, renounce, rebuke) Remove the demon – say it and mean it and know by Faith its got to go.
- 10) Watch for manifestation as the demon leaves. The host may shake, tremble, cry out, shudder, go limp, cry, laugh, run, jump, or even pass out. The manifestation may be dramatic or almost imperceptible. You may only "feel" it leave in your spirit. These manifestations are confirmation information; don't be alarmed or fearful – stand firm, the victory is won.
- 11) Close the doors – seal the person through prayer, discipleship and the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Cover them in the Blood of Jesus - declare the truth over them concerning the cross and the resurrection, and have communion.

All of the above may be needed or only a command in Faith. It may take a series of meetings, one command, or 15 minutes or more. Loud screaming and carrying on is good in movies, but is not really necessary – demons fear your Faith, not your face. Never go to war until you've been trained. God will send the people to you when you are ready. Don't go on ghost and demon hunts - Jesus didn't!

**\*\* *The Holy Spirit will lead,  
after all, **He is the One** that is really  
driving out the demon anyway!!!***

**Appointment, Blessing and Transference**

To serve in spiritual activities is an honor for chosen vessels, not only clergy but vessels chosen by God. We are all ‘priests and kings’, saints, but all have different gifts and anointings, with different appointments. Spiritual service is not a “free-for-all”, neither is laying on of hands, which is threefold: appointment, blessing, and transference (impartation of healing).

The laying on of hands is for appointing and a method of anointing into an office: i.e., the appointment of Paul and Barnabas into Apostleship (Acts 13), the Apostles appointing the first Deacons (Acts 6:6). By the laying on of hands their new status is established and supernatural power is imparted.

Blessing is activated by laying on of hands, as the greater lays hands on the lesser: i.e., Israel blesses Ephraim, Manasseh and Joseph (Genesis 48:13-20). Father to children, owner to heirs, prophet to students, etc.

Paul demonstrated transference (impartation) through the laying on of hands; he imparts to the disciples the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:6). Jesus demonstrated transference of healing power when He touched the Leper and he was healed (Luke 5:13), and when Jesus took Jairus’ daughter by the hand (Luke 8:54,55).

Demons are alien entities that are disembodied spirits, and they take many forms - large, small, monkey-like, spider-like, etc. There is great variety. Though usually invisible, they are sometimes seen when the Holy Spirit causes our spirit eyes to become open. This seems to be for short glimpses to expose their presence. We can “feel” (discern) that they are present or are touching us, though we cannot always see them. While in a Bible Study class I became aware of a demonic presence. The woman near me began to feel a pain in her stomach. She needed this Bible lesson very, very much, but the pain was making her want to leave. I knew this demon must be dealt with. I had her recline and asked everyone to begin to quietly pray. I began to move closer to her, engaging the assault through prayer. She screamed in pain, tears flowing, questioning if she should leave. I stood over her, hands extended but not touching her and commanded that she be loosed. The pain left her, but as I sat down I felt a negative discomfoting sensation in my arms. As I continued to pray that discomfort left. A very discerning sister described what she had seen in the spirit realm. “This small, monkey-like creature was digging into her stomach and then tried to attach to your arms, but a light engulfed you and the creature fled away.” After my discomfort left, I laid hands on the lady and peace came upon her. We resumed the lesson and by the end of Bible Study she was open to becoming Born Again. Praise God! Be careful *who* and *what* you touch!

The Body of Christ would do well to note that there are no examples of Jesus driving out demons by laying on of hands; this He did only by command. I have learned that demons can and do transfer themselves and illnesses through laying on of hands. Unclean people will come up in the prayer line with a demon whose goal is to transfer, cause disruption, and contaminate as much and as often as possible.

1 Tim. 5:22 tells us “*Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands...*” This has a four-fold meaning - You should not quickly lay hands on others or let others lay hands on you. The first meaning is: do not appoint a novice (beginner) to a spiritual office. The church may have a need, but people must be tested and trained. If you rush to put them into office before the Lord has called them and covered them, satan will attack them and you as well.

*\*\* There is no haste in Kingdom work, only God's schedule.*

Never let need be your only motivation – remember, it's God's church, let Him run it.

The second meaning is: if you know you are not ready for appointment, then refuse it or postpone it. The Lord equips those He calls into spiritual service and they know when they are ready. Don't be presumptuous about your talents or potential. God may not use your talent, but may only want to develop your servanthood.

When the Lord called me to teach, I was a very successful performing and recording musician. 'Surely, God wanted me to sing and play in His service,' I thought. God did not want this talent used as yet. I was instructed to sit the people down and teach them. So for years I served Him in that way. Now I see the reason. People are very single minded and get locked into one image of others. God's people needed teaching not entertainment. Were I to use musical talent, the people would have focused on that and not received what God had anointed and appointed, - teaching.

Most people think, "You can only do one thing well at a time". This thinking may cause them to miss the great goodness of God. The great warrior king David was also a great singer-songwriter. Paul the great tent maker was also a great teacher and writer. Hands and oil were laid on David for kingship and on Paul for evangelism. Talent is not what God's looking for, though He will use it to benefit the whole Body. Therefore, do not be hasty to allow people to lay hands upon you to anoint your talent, rather than at the proper time, anointing your appointment.

A third meaning for this Scripture is: Do not be hasty to lay hands on others. The laws of transference should not be overridden due to enthusiasm or the heat of the moment. We should be doing what the Holy Spirit wants done as He leads. So, think and pray before you touch anyone for a spiritual purpose. Be sure you are being led by the Spirit.

And lastly, this Scripture refers to: Do not be hasty in letting others lay hands on you for spiritual purposes. Laying on of hands is a point of contact – at which something by Faith should happen. Do you have the right person at the right time? Has your spirit and your Pastor certified this person to touch you? Do you want what they have or are you strong enough to handle it if it's evil? Beware of who is laying hands on you.

**Obedience, Blessing & Faith - Laying on of Hands**

In our day people want to be significant and to be seen doing spiritual things. Be led of the Holy Spirit or instructed by the Elders before engaging in holy practice. Also, never get in a prayer line under false pretences. If the minister in charge has instructed this prayer line is for people with back problems and you have no back problem, but just want “a touch”, *don't go up*. Curiosity is not a valid reason and you are telling a lie, which is disobedience, which is sin. Therefore, you have opened the door for satan.

At one meeting I attended, a famous Christian called for those suffering with the spirit of fear to come up. To my surprise about one quarter of the audience went up, but 20 minutes later well over half of the audience was up there. After an hour, almost all the audience was up there. Did the spirit of fear find some new homes due to disobedience? It seemed obvious that the crowd became affected by the emotion of the moment and people just wanted to be touched by this personality. We must stand against these kinds of error in the area of laying on of hands.

We must not use people for our own self-gratification, edification or spiritual service. We must not elevate ourselves before training and anointing.

An area often overlooked is “blessing”. We should lay hands on to impart a blessing. Sometimes in Scripture this blessing is accompanied by anointing with oil. Samuel anoints David to become king after Saul. James Chapter 5: *“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord”*. A blessing is spoken as hands are laid upon the person or oil is applied. I tell parents to do this often, even nightly as they pray (bless) their children. Saved people should bless their unsaved loved ones if they'll allow it.

*\*\* Mix some Faith with the laying on of hands and miracles will happen.*

Finally, healing can be ministered through the laying on of hands. During Jesus' time the Jews believed that by touching Jesus' prayer shawl they would be healed. The Scripture Malachi 4:2 in the NIV reads: *“But for you who revere My name, the Sun of righteousness will rise with healing in His wings.”* To some this meant His wings were His prayer shawl. The Jews pulled the shawl over their heads and covered their faces when they prayed. This is what Jesus meant when He said “go into your prayer closet” - the space inside the prayer shawl. The Jews reasoned the shawl was a holy symbol of the Malachi prophecy. Healing power would be released upon contact with the cloth. The reason they were healed was not just because of the shawl, but upon contact they would release their Faith and claim their healing. This release of Faith is what is happening with the laying on of hands. When Jesus touched people they believed something was going to happen. We must give people instructions to this effect - “the healing anointing is in my hands, and when I touch you, release your Faith and receive your healing”. The power of God is transferred, because if we believe power will be released - it will! If they believe “here comes power and I'm going to receive it”, then they will!

This then, is the action of Faith through the activity of laying on of hands. Mark 5:30: *“And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, “Who touched my clothes?””* The woman with the issue of blood released her Faith when she touched Jesus, and He felt it. This shows that spiritual power is tangible, therefore transferable and transmittable through hands, cloth, clay, or by the word spoken.

I stood in the center of a prayer circle and then fell under the power of God. As I lay there

I could hear voices as they moved to minister to someone else. After a while I could feel someone stroking my palms; “did someone touch me?” I opened my eyes to find no one near me except the presence of the Lord. Since that experience I noticed a great increase in power through my hands, more discernment and authority. What a great gift and awesome responsibility to use our hands to be His hands. Mark 16:18: “...*they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover*”.

Finally, 2 Tim. 6, “*Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands*”. Go find someone anointed and get the gift, then fan it into flame for our Lord.

Ministering Healing

Our desire to see people healed must yield to the desire of the Holy Spirit to heal. Let me repeat that again, we may have a strong desire to see someone healed, but what does the Holy Spirit want? Well, you could get religious on me and say the Holy Spirit wants everyone healed. That is true, but it doesn't mean that the Holy Spirit wants that specific person healed when you want them healed, or how you think it should be carried out. Sometimes the Holy Spirit withholds healing because the wrong spirit will get the credit. Sometimes people are pushed by others to come for healing and are doubters or even haters of God. The Holy Spirit wants to heal, but there are laws and circumstances that affect timing and eternity. God looks on the heart and searches the deep hidden things. We read in Scripture: *"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts"* (1 Cor. 4:5).

That's why in the ministry of prayer, healing is voluntary. The reason we have prayer lines is simply this; to accommodate those that want healing in an orderly fashion. Does the person have a desire in his heart to be healed and did he get on the prayer line with expectancy? - Does he have budding Faith, the beginning of expectancy that God is going to move on his behalf? Jesus said, *"come unto Me"*.

Do they do this voluntarily? Or do we drive them or pull them out beyond where their Faith is ready to go? Many Christians do not realize that when you bring a loved one to church and then drag them to the altar, you are making it sooo difficult for the power of God to do what the power of God wants to do. They are coming forward, not out of a desire, nor out of a believing Faith that they will receive from God. They feel they are being embarrassed or dragged, as it were, to the dentist. That's right... I said the dentist. It is true we know that the dentist can stop the pain. But everyone has some apprehension because they feel that he will exert pain upon them in order to bring about the relief from the pain they are suffering. I really dislike this idea of coercing people. The healing power of God is definitely not ministering pain. Yet people that are afraid or embarrassed and not eager volunteers don't usually receive the power of God.

Yes, if repentance or confession is needed, the Holy Spirit will attend to the heart until the needed response comes. I have seen so many crying aloud while in repentance or hurts from sorrow, but later comment how wonderful it was to have the Holy Spirit do emotional surgery upon them. When He repairs our broken bodies or our hearts, pain is relieved.

When people are pressured to come forward, their apprehension is higher than their Faith. Embarrassment is a block to the flow of expectancy. Many people don't want to be healed or are not convinced they should be or can be. Therefore, healing is viewed as a detriment and not a great gift and blessing. Take a moment to ask if they want prayer and what do they expect will happen. Social Security disability removes many people's ability to receive their healing: "If I get healed I'll lose my check and have to work." Or, "The pain will be gone but so will the attention I get from being sick."

Prior to administering saving and healing power, Jesus often locates the person's desire and their level of Faith. He will encourage them to raise their Faith but if they choose to go away, He allows it. The rich young ruler went away sad (for he trusted in his wealth - Mark 10). Some went home to bury their dead, see to their businesses, or as in Jesus' home town, "Now He could do no mighty work there... He marveled because of their unbelief" (Mark 6:5&6. John 6:66 tells us clearly that many turned away and never followed Him again. This

is truly the spirit of antichrist; to know the truth and still reject Christ is blaspheming the Holy Spirit - 666.

Jairus was told, *"Your daughter is now dead."* Jesus told him to keep what Faith he had alive (Mark 5). The same was told to the father of the demon-possessed boy: *"If I can..."* Jesus responded and the man was located. *"Help thou my unbelief"* (Mark 9). *"Lord if You are willing, You can make me clean,"* said the leper (Matt. 8). *"What do you want Me to do for you?"* Jesus asked the blind man (Mark 10). *"Do you want to be made well?"* Jesus asked the cripple by the pool (John 5).

*\*\* I have learned not everyone in the prayer line wants to get healed  
and for reasons beyond my understanding,  
not everyone will be healed  
unless they line up with the Word of God.*

God wants to heal them all even more than they or I do, but we must trust His *timing* and knowledge.

The question is, what should be done? Time should be taken to examine and locate the needs of the people we minister to and to ask ourselves what type of personal approach would be most effective with this person who desires God to move. Are they gentle, quiet and soft-spoken? Are they needing a push forward or is it a shove forward, etc.

We need to further ask ourselves, what would work? What would be effective in this case? "Lord, Jesus, how should I minister in Your behalf to the person?" When it comes to prayer, we should never initiate the prayer, we should always, always ask, "Do you want me to pray with you?" "What do you want me to pray about?" "Where are you believing?" "What is your feeling about this?" As you are asking you are also asking the Holy Spirit for His guidance.

We need to ascertain these things in order to help build their Faith and identify where their Faith is.

*\*\* Remember, we are in the game for success,  
not for duress or stress, but for success.*

We want to see God move. We want to see God heal. Therefore, we have to follow the Holy Spirit and do it like Jesus would do. We have to be prepared to minister to the need of the individual in question.

Our personality may be one that, in a loud setting with lots of ruckus going on and a lot of loud praise, we are emotionally stirred and desire to minister in that way. But what about the person? Maybe this scares him to death. Maybe he is a person who needs a quiet room. Maybe anointing with oil is doing 'hocus-pocus' for him. Maybe he doesn't see the Bible basis for what we are doing as we go to minister to him. We may need to open the Word to him so he can open up to the power of God. As in all things with the Holy Spirit - He can over ride all the above considerations, overpower and overlook all our errors and still do a great miracle. Remember though, that He will never violate His own Word. *"For You have magnified Your word above all Your name"* (Psalm 138:2).

*"Without faith it is impossible to please God"* (Hebrews 11:6). You must minister in Faith, believing and people must receive in Faith, believing. When in doubt, do what Jesus did - locate the person's level of Faith and act in Faith.

I have found it helpful to talk to people for a short moment and ask a few questions, such as, "Why are you here?" "What do you want the Lord to do?" "What do you expect me to do?"

“What’s going to happen when we pray, when I lay my hands upon you?” “What just happened?” “Is it done?” “Move around, do something you couldn’t do before. What’s your confession now?” “Who are you going to tell?” “Do you want to give a testimony?”

These are examples of how to locate people’s Faith, understanding and attitude. While this is going on, you’re seeking to hear from the Boss (the Holy Spirit) to know what to say and do. When the healing anointing is present, you sense the anointing and become aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

At times like this, you are “in the Spirit”. Time and physical senses are heightened or suspended. You speak and move at the unction of the Holy Spirit, and behavior may be bizarre or appear as strange. You sense a boldness and an awareness of heightened Faith and power. At these times Faith is at a higher level than normal everyday Faith.

When ministering to the sick, we have a responsibility to believe for them. Out compassion, we should want to see all healed with nothing doubting. We must strive to put the weight on our own shoulders and believe for each one that we pray for. Jesus did many miracles with His Faith and the Faith of the Holy Spirit, while the people were wishing and hoping.

Love is the goal; Faith is one demonstration of our love level. Let us strive to have Faith that will heal all who come.



**Word of Wisdom - Word of Knowledge**

*\*\*for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit,  
to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit.\*\**

1 Cor. 12:8

God gives you a Word, give the Word and shut your mouth. If it's one sentence God gave you, end it there. Let the Holy Spirit have room to move. If the Holy Spirit gives you more or tells you more about the person and you are free to tell it, then tell it. But, if the Holy Spirit only gives you a one-liner, give the one-liner. Let the person search his heart and gain revelation from that word. If you editorialize, your carnal mind will begin to develop a scenario of what you think the Spirit is saying, and, if you miss it at all, you've damaged the testimony of the Holy Spirit.

Here's what happens: You speak the Word of the Holy Spirit and it goes boom into the heart of the hearer. Then you editorialize about the Word, adding your guesses, explanations, conclusions and he thinks, "That first Word was a lucky guess. I thought that was God, but I guess it wasn't". It's a temptation to say more because, as you are with them praying, you pick up more information, you get excited to be a part of the supernatural and your natural gets involved. You feel the Holy Spirit move and you proceed. The hearer is under the power of God, they're deciphering the one liner and you interrupt with your stuff. A Word from God should be enough; we just bless them without trying to figure out the 'what, when, how and why for'. If God has spoken, then do we need your mini-sermon? A visiting evangelist took nearly two hours to minister and "prophecy" over eight people. Each person got a word and a fifteen-minute sermon. I call into question whose need was being met – the people or the evangelist. Did God speak or is the evangelist talking until he hits upon something? I was motivated to ask a sister why she fell down during his mini-sermon to her. She said, "his word from the Lord went on and on until it was more him than the Lord. So I fell down just to get him to stop cause I was getting tired". To go beyond what God has said can be dangerous. It shows immaturity, disobedience, and can lead to the Spirit drying up the wellspring of spiritual giftings.

Wait for the Holy Spirit to tell you in which direction to minister as opposed to going over to a person with assumption. You know that there is some problem in their home and you are going to assume you know what the problem is and you say, "Your husband has been harsh with you?", or you think you heard them say something about someone took their car away and you go, "Your husband took your car away?" Do not start guessing at their expense. If it's not from the Holy Spirit, leave things alone - cover them in love and prayers of blessings. There are things that are better dealt with as counseling issues.

1 Peter 3:15 says, "*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear*". Your testimony is your best strength, along with the basic Gospel; anything more requires the Holy Spirit. Again, *If you just have a one liner, just give the one liner*. Then you can say to them, "Do you want me to pray with you about this?" or "What does that mean to you?"

Look at the 8th chapter of John. Watch how Jesus covers this lady, a woman caught in adultery. They bring her out to be stoned to death. They were using this as a trap in order to find a basis for accusing Jesus. Verse 6: "*But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground...*" Jesus' punch line is just amazing: "*Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no*

more” (v.11). Wow! No sermon, no devaluation, no three-minute prophecy, just the one-liner... amazing.

Maybe we could give the Holy Spirit a chance. Instead of saying, “Pastor, this is my mother and she is dying of colon cancer” we could just say, “Pastor, this is my mother and I really wanted you to meet her”. Allowing for the Holy Spirit to, through the Word of Knowledge or the Word of Wisdom, be able to minister. Consider the effect of the Pastor then saying, “The Holy Spirit has shown me that you need prayer to remove a disease condition and you will be healed”. This would also raise and increase the level of Faith of all present.

A lady from out of town, who is very close to me, brought a lady to Bible Study. And she told me absolutely nothing about the lady. She didn’t tell me her Faith or religion, her situation, her health, absolutely nothing. But as we prayed together at the end of the night, the Holy Spirit ministered to me that she had an unresolved relationship with her daughter. As I shared this with her, tears filled her eyes and she told me of the unforgiveness in her heart and in the heart of her daughter, and of the pain of this relationship. I pointed out to her that it is time now for this bond to be healed.

*\*\* When God reveals sickness, He is prepared to heal.*

*When God reveals a problem, He is prepared to solve it.*

A week later a phone call came and the lady was on the phone just praising God, filled with the joy that a reunion had been accomplished. The relationship with her daughter had been healed and it had brought a special healing touch to the rest of the children, some 4 or 5 brothers and sisters. As a result they were united as a family. This lady, two or three weeks later went to be with the Lord. She had no signs of suffering or pain, but very quietly slipped off into the arms of Jesus, with her family healed.

Some loud-mouthed egomaniac Christian could have told me about her problem, what she needs to do, and what she ought to do, and what she’s been through and not been through, and so-forth-and-so-on, and killed a great opportunity for the Holy Spirit to very gently minister the Word through a miraculous sign and wonder. The Word of Knowledge gave her Faith and motivation to believe everything was going to be all right - “so go forth and get that situation healed”, and she did - Praise God!

An eleven-year-old boy stood in the prayer line. There was a man standing behind him. When I asked if the man was his father, the boy said yes. The eleven-year-old boy said that even though this prayer line was for a different cause, he wanted to receive Jesus as his Lord and Savior. So as I bent down to get eye-to-eye contact with him, I asked him what that meant to him. After he explained and gave an eleven-year-old description of the Gospel, I accepted his testimony. But as I held his hands and prayed with him the Holy Spirit ministered this Word to him: “When the lights go out and he is alone, that he should talk to Jesus, and that Jesus would come and be with him in the darkness. That there was no cause for fear, and that he could call on the Name of Jesus in the night and he could know that Jesus would be with him forevermore”.

I then moved on down the prayer line. At the end of the evening the boy, his mother and sister came to me. The father had reported to the family the words that had been spoken through me. Once again, I knew nothing of the boy, his situation or his history. The mother and the family with tears in their eyes told me that a year ago, this boy had barely escaped with his life as the house had caught on fire. Since that time he had been deathly afraid of sleeping in the dark, or being in a dark room, and that the Word that I ministered to him, had

brought about the healing and the release from fear that the boy had carried this whole year. With great joy we all prayed a prayer of thanks. We thanked God that supernaturally, by the Holy Spirit the problem had been resolved, the demon of fear had been driven out and the boy had been set free. Many months later I saw them again and they confirmed that things were still peachy.

Our lives are so much better when God heals us and has a free hand to move by the supernatural. It may not be in our personality to wait, to pause, but this is so necessary; that we step outside of our personality, our ego, and minister according to the leading of the Holy Spirit. As I see it, and I believe the Word teaches it, when we minister in our strength we become like the seven sons of Sceva; ranting and raving in the face of the devil, but without power. Because God has not certified the circumstances and that particular moment in time. **We must learn that the Holy Spirit leads, and that we must follow.** Jesus paused, waited, and then ministered according to the Holy Spirit. How could we do any less? And Amen goes right there!

How can one operate in the Word of Knowledge? First, it is a gift given to an individual to bless the Body. 1 Cor. 12 tells us the Spirit gives as He wills. Yet, if God is giving out gifts, you are free to make a gift request. Ask God to use you in this way; make yourself available. This gift requires that the vessel be a person of prayer and quiet boldness. Are you strong enough to be wrong? As you learn to distinguish His voice from your voice you may make mistakes; can you handle that? Develop your Faith for the supernatural.

The Word of Knowledge doesn't always make good sense. If your makeup is that things must always add up right  $2+2=4$  etc., then this gift may not be for you. The Word of Knowledge flashes so quickly into your spirit from the Spirit and your mind, that you would think, "that was one of my ideas". There is a little test you can use - just ask yourself, "Was that what I was thinking or looking for?"

If you are willing to believe God does strange, supernatural things, and you're willing to question what you're thinking, then maybe if you ask God, He will give you a Word of Knowledge. Then comes the big test; quiet boldness, a drive or conviction that rises up out of the quiet place in your heart and must be spoken. If you'll speak out, knowing if it's wrong it's you and if it's right - to God be the Glory - then the Word of Knowledge may come to reside in you.

Very often people that flow in this gift are not aware that what they are saying is the powerful revealing Word of God. The Word just "pops out" or "flows out", some would say. The speaker is hearing it for the first time as well as the listener. In that moment one may not even be aware that what he's saying is supernatural. There is a sense of wonderment for all concerned. After a few moments, there is the moment of contact. This is when the Word of Knowledge registers upon the spirit and the soul of the listener. Then the glory manifests - a stare of amazement, a holy laugh, yet most often a bowed head and tears of joy. It doesn't matter if the word is joyful or condemning; the tears are tears of joy, for the person knows this is a God moment.

We were visiting a church and a man stood and said a very unflattering word of correction for someone. The church was frozen in silence. No one would dare volunteer to such a revealing ego destroyer. "You've asked God to use you but not until you do something about your character." He had also described a birthmark in a very private place. Silence can be felt and can also stop time. In this feeling there was no time, but there were tears...mine. As if in a slow motion silent film, I was standing, rejoicing that my character needed correction

and that he had disclosed my birthmark. What tearful joy: the Lord had answered my prayer by a Word of Knowledge - a glorious moment of contact. It didn't matter that it was a criticism. All that mattered was it was from God.

**The Word of Knowledge** gives information that reveals something. **The Word of Wisdom** gives us understanding about knowledge, and tells us what to do about something. God will use the Word of Knowledge to lead to Him so one can receive the Word of Wisdom. Both must be revealed and tested. Knowledge is usually tested immediately and wisdom is tested over time.

*\*\*Wisdom has an element of Faith that whispers...*

*“This is the Truth that will emerge...wait for it...walk toward it.”*

**Word of Knowledge in Evangelism**

In John 4:16, Jesus speaks a *prophetic Word of knowledge*. He's moving under the *unction* of the Holy Spirit and says, "Go, call your husband, and come here". The woman answered, "I have no husband" (v.17). Jesus, operating under the Word of Knowledge, said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly" (vs. 17,18). Romans 1:16 says, "the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God" (Romans 1:16). Jesus is using the *power* here, which is the 'Word of Knowledge'. He's bringing forth a revelation through the Word of Knowledge that stops the Samaritan woman right in her tracks. Now He's got her attention. *The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet"* (v.19).

When we are witnessing to someone we want to disciple, we need to be careful not to extend beyond what God has said or told us to reveal. We know people and we know certain facts, and if we get that information by our carnal mind, we should just state that. Now, if a gift of the Spirit is moving and we know something prophetically and have permission to share it, then we should be quick to speak that and that alone. **Jesus did not go beyond what the Spirit gave Him.** He said, "Go, call your husband, and come here." She responds, "I have no husband". And Jesus says, "You have well said, 'I have no husband...'"

What Jesus did was *gently* expose her morally. Then, she changes the subject to get off the hook. She says, "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship" – v. 20. He allows her to change the subject; He gives her *grace*. But, notice the context of it and where He goes with it. Look at verses 21-24: "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and Truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Now look at the woman's response in verse 25, "I know that Messiah is coming. When He comes, He will tell us all things." To which Jesus replies, "I who speak to you am He". Where's the condemnation? Where's the message about sin and adultery and living in sin? Did He read her the Ten Commandments? She was not overexposed or condemned, and later she brought the whole town to the Lord. This was an effective use of the Word of Knowledge to expose the heart of a person without destroying them. She was not pushed or prodded; she voluntarily began to multiply. She was preaching and witnessing before she threw her present lover out, but I guarantee you she got right with God ASAP. Most of us would not even allow this type of woman to give a testimony until she moved out and **could prove it**. Jesus had a harlot for a press agent, WOW - AMEN!

Our Lord saved hard words of sin and condemnation for those that acted righteous, judged others, or practiced hypocrisy. We should think about the sweet approach. People know when they are not living right. Try this sometime - "I know you're not pleased with the way you're living (or acting) right now, so how can I help you fix things, my brother?" Expectation, exposure and condemnation are all areas of concern when establishing a convert as a disciple.

*\*\* Try to hear Jesus whispering*

*“do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”*

If you're obnoxious then ask someone else what to do.

**Murdering the Word Given**

Many well meaning Christians need to read this section over and over again until all pride is gone. Let's set the murder scene:

The Power of God is moving and everyone is caught up in the presence of God. We so want to be a part that we "feel led" to join in the ministry flow. We get near the Evangelist or the Pastor as they move "powerfully" down the prayer line and listen to the "Word" that is given; "I believe the Lord is saying, 'Your struggle with fear is over'". The Pastor moves on down the line to the next person.

"Aha," thinks the murderer, "it's my turn to minister". The other person is crying because the "Word" was right on the money, and Faith and hope are being born in their heart. The murderer, with a look of compassion, places a hand upon their shoulder and says; 1) "I know how hard it can be to shake fear - and *some people never do get free*, but you hang in there, *some day, hallelujah, you'll make it!*" or 2) "That ol' devil is a *powerful sly one - just when you think you're finally over fear, he'll come back around - he's still chasing me!*" or 3) "You know, *from the look on your face*, I can tell *it ain't over*, but *maybe next time it'll work!*" or 4) "You need to repent and stop sinning. Let me tell you my story; there I was 20 years ago lost deeply in sin just like you...!"

These are four examples of how a murderer can strike. All the above phrases point to doubt, sin and death. I have even seen murderers follow this negativity with "so, let's pray together. Lord, we are so weak and don't know what's going to happen here..."etc., etc. Consider this final example - healing line - after the person is prayed over, the murderer approaches and says, "You don't look healed to me". These murderers need to be praising God, worshipping, learning and giving Holy Ghost support, not trying to be important.

*\*\* Evangelists and Pastors don't really need a clean-up crew,  
that's the Holy Spirit's job.*

When the Holy Spirit touches people they may dance, shake, laugh, meditate, fall out, or just pray. This is a holy time with the Lord. How dare you think you have something important to add to the Spirit's work.

If a Word from God started these activities, then let God finish what He's started. After it's over, then sharing and counseling may be in order. A Word from God does cause a response - discern and cooperate with the Spirit of the Word, but avoid stopping the Word, hastily judging the manifestation, adding to the Word, or interrupting the person's time with the Word. Don't be a usurper. It is the same as Saul offering the sacrifice that Samuel was to give. It is the same as the spies who gave an evil report, and the congregation who threatened to stone Caleb after he gave a powerful, positive report (Numbers 14:10). We can kill the work of God overtly or by subtle hints and suggestions. Pride is the motivation when after prayer you feel compelled to re-pray over people. I'm very alarmed when people lay hands on and pray over people that are slain in the Spirit, resting in the Spirit, drunk in the Spirit, or quietly praying. They don't need anyone to come kill their moment with their Lord. Your anointing is nothing compared to the touch of the Lord.

The Word of Knowledge must be planted and then watered by the spirit of the receiver. This time is holy and private. People touched by the Spirit need time to cultivate and ingest what God is doing. If your word is needed and from God, remember, "*the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets*" (1 Cor. 14:32). This means you can hold your peace so it can be presented later when it will not cause confusion. *Don't be a Word murderer!*

**Word of Prophecy - Let 2 or 3 Speak**

Notice two passages of Scripture in 1 Corinthians 14, verses 24 and 26: “*But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all.*” “*How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification*”. And 1 Cor. 14:29: “*Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge.*” There is an important distinction that many disciples do not understand. Many churches have a church tradition of allowing and encouraging people to speak forth in the assembly. These people are “prophesying” - speaking forth the Word of God, but this needs to be distinguished from speaking for God.

The prophet speaks for God as God gives the message. Notice in 1 Cor. 14:26 Paul says, “*...each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation...*”; he does not say “each of you has a ‘thus saith the Lord’”. This tradition of speaking for God unchecked has led to great excesses of the “flesh” and self-promotion. Many pastors and assemblies have seen their anointing diminish and vanish as discernment was replaced by error and disorder. Every time someone says “thus says the Lord...”, we need to know that our souls and words are being judged by the Spirit. “The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom” (Psalm 111:10).

On the other hand, tradition bound churches must not quench the spirits of men or over-encourage people.

Too often we think of loud noise and unbridled enthusiasm as disorder. This can actually be “the order” of the Holy Spirit to turn loose bound-up spirits, and actually subdue carnality by a liberating, spiritual cleansing.

*\*\*We must judge the fruit, not the manifestation.*

*\*\*Examine the heart, not the suit. The Word, not the messenger.*

“Let 2 or 3 speak” coupled with “hold your peace and speak in turn” make for a condition of order. Once at church I saw two men prophesying simultaneously, each drowning out the other. Neither man yielded to the other and no one got blessed. God wasn’t in that disorder, but a lot of flesh was. There should be a leader that’s following the Spirit of God directing the flow of the prophecies. Someone needs to identify who speaks when, curb abuses, and change gears as the Spirit leads. We must be polite and wait until recognized; therein is order. Everyone can prophesy – speak forth the Word of God, but not everyone can be a prophet and foretell the future. The latter is a very special role of a chosen few, but all of us can preach and report how good God is!

I have seen the Holy Spirit move silently upon the assembly wishing to touch the saints by quietly caressing our hearts and no words or “thus saith the Lord” are necessary. What a disruption and disorder it is at these times to have a carnal saint burst forth with “And the Lord would say...”, when the Lord clearly wouldn’t “say” a thing to disrupt the caress or the serenity. The group misses such a blessing as the carnal saint draws attention to his need or is used by Satan to alter the atmosphere. These misled souls usually speak to their need, such as: “The Lord would say, ‘you are abused, hurt and lonely and I will come to heal you...’” etc. That’s the cry of *their* heart, their own need as they are being ministered to by the Holy Spirit or by their spirit, but not necessarily for the assembled body at that moment. Counseling and/or deliverance may be needed to help people over inner past hurts, but this cry of their heart is not a word from God but from their hope in the Lord.



Everyone can prophesy - speak the Word of God; talk about God's goodness, and preach the Word. Yet, only a special few speak words of prophesy as a direct spokesman for God.

*\*\* To prophesy (preach) is forth-telling the Word.*

*A prophecy is to foretell... to "tell before" it happens -  
it brings the future into the present.*

*The first (to prophesy) is an action for all  
and the second (a prophet) is an office for a few.*

Real problems emerge as too many people speak out for God and:

- 1.) Different ones try to direct the flow of the Spirit toward the type of service they prefer,
- 2.) Use this time to attack personal enemies or complete arguments,
- 3.) Attempt to point out sins of others and bring condemnation, and
- 4.) Project their vision or plans.

Disciples must be properly trained, for God desires that all prophesy, but all are not prophets. Therefore, if we are taught to fear speaking for God and respect His order, we will be more pleasing to our Father and more blessed. By realizing that God speaks by the prophets we will be giving God His special place and His message will stand out. Let us turn our hearts and our people toward praying to God, not reporting on others or speaking for God.

Paul says let 2 or 3 speak. This is because God is not long winded; He's pretty 'to-the-point'. Sixty-six books in 6000 years - that's one book every 90.9 years, and He keeps quoting those same books. In a church service, if more than 3 prophesy then 2 or 3 are from God, and the rest are people blessing from the flesh - that's O.K. - but not God's *best*. The real prophets seldom speak for they fear God and have put the flesh under and do not need to be seen. Remember if you wish to speak for God you must live for God and pray for the anointing to prophesy. If God anoints you then you'll not be a busybody or an annoyance. Also, God will give you a greater degree of accuracy and discernment.

*\*\* If your 'word' is not to edify, exhort or comfort,  
you better hold on to it till God burns it into your life  
before you start giving it to someone else.*

*If you are having a hard time with this teaching,  
then it's self-examination time.*

A true prophet is welcomed to speak by the Pastor and the assembly. Hearts perk up to hear when a true prophet is about to speak. If no one wants to hear you prophesy, then you are probably not hearing from God. God will draw people to a true prophet even if people expect a word of correction. This office is very demanding and requires the highest level of obedience.

A true prophet's life is at stake if he speaks in error for God. In the Old Testament, if a prophet spoke in error he was to be stoned to death. Nowadays people speak for God with little regard for possible consequences. Somehow, they think that God isn't listening to them 'quote' Him. If we will be held to account for idle words (Matt 12:36) then, of course, we will be judged for telling people "God said this will happen... and that will come to pass..."

It is interesting that most error is spoken when people's emotions are stirred up. The prophet must be a prayer person, comfortable with waiting and listening for God. A prophet also understands the importance of music and worship. In quiet, during music and worship, is

when God may speak, for: “*He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him*” (Hebrews 11:6). The prophet must know how he best readies himself to hear God speak. The wrong song or form of worship can make hearing very difficult. In 2 Kings 3:15 the prophet said, “*Bring me a minstrel*”, when he was asked to hear from God. Jesus withdrew from the crowd to refill and refresh Himself and, I’m sure, hear the Father.

The Scripture says to desire *to* prophecy, not desire to *be* prophets. To speak the Word of God is a safe place, yet to speak **for God** is a position not acquired by wishing and hoping. This is a calling with stringent requirements. Let’s respect God’s wisdom and calling. We stand at a time where more and more prophets will be coming forth to herald the returning King. After a host of junior prophets will come the 144,000 and the last two prophets, the witnesses. Mixed in this progression are a host of satanic pretenders. The Word has told us to test the spirits (John 4:1). Therefore, do things in an orderly fashion (Holy Spirit order).

*\*\* When He speaks – speak, when He is silent - be quiet.*

*When He invites praise, give praise with all your heart.*

Leading People in Tongues

It is unfortunate that this discussion is necessary today. Errors concerning Tongues have been sooo great that people need help. The early Christians were not negatively biased, so they flowed into Tongues due to a move of the Spirit. First, people must see that:

*\*\* Tongues with interpretation is a spiritual gift.*

*Spiritual gifts are supernatural -*

*whereas a prayer language is initially natural -*

*but accomplishes something supernatural.*

God is Spirit and does the supernatural; therefore, we also must learn the spirit things by getting out of the natural.

We must understand that in Acts, Chapter 2, when the people are speaking, it is *then* that the Spirit gives utterance. Unfortunately many people have the wrong idea. They somehow think that the Holy Spirit will overpower them and force them to speak by speaking through them. Yet, in Acts 2:4, we see that the Word says, “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance”. We see that the Holy Spirit assists with the words and adds spiritual communications, but that the person is doing the speaking. Most people read that passage as, “the Spirit takes the people over and **He** (the Holy Spirit) is speaking”. Once people see that *they speak* and the Holy Spirit *comes alongside and helps them*, then only *yielded-ness* is needed.

Now, once all questions have been answered and biases addressed, they will know:

\* *I do the speaking* and the Holy Spirit will help me once **I** begin.

\* *I build up **my** spirit supernaturally* by speaking in Tongues.

\* *I speak to **God***, not to myself or to man.

\* It seems silly and makes no sense,

but speaking to a God I can't see makes no sense either –

but **both Tongues and speaking to an invisible God are in the Bible.**

\* I will supernaturally *get a blessing* and *open up the door* to the **deeper things of God**

\* I will have a **greater sense of God** within myself.

Now, if that's not enough reasons, remember Paul the apostle, and all the other apostles did it (spoke in Tongues), and what power they had! So we must need it as well. If they won't speak in Tongues, it's most probably a “yielded-ness” or “pride” problem; they cannot yield the flesh to do what their mind rejects. They are worried about losing control, sounding or looking foolish. Remember a prayer language is for all - for everyone. Tongues with interpretation in the assembly is a type of prophecy and is a spiritual gift, like Discerning of Spirits, Words of Wisdom, Words of Knowledge and Working of Miracles. It is only for some, at special times (see 1 Cor. 12:5-11).

Tell them they must ‘prime the pump’ and begin to praise God, and then, with the laying on of hands, anointing with oil or prayer, establish a point of contact. A point of contact is an action that is taken as a starting moment. This is like a gun or bell going off to signal the beginning of a race. “When I touch you”, “as we pray”, “when I say Amen!”, etc. This acting upon their Faith will be met by action of the Holy Spirit. Instruct them that the Holy Spirit will show up - and they, by Faith, will receive this language, speak nonsense words and God will show up! Many times the Holy Spirit is already moving, and they are experiencing the baptism whenever they activate their Faith by believing that they receive the promise of

the Father. The Holy Spirit will come to touch anyone that is seeking and hungry. Some may be so overwhelmed that they can only cry, moan, or sit stunned in silence. So don't push, badger or judge anything if the Holy Spirit is present – trust that He will do His job.

In the beginning it helps to have other saints also praying in Tongues. This atmosphere tells the candidate, “See, God is here and everyone has it, just join in and get self out of the way”. When leading someone to enter into the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with evidence of Tongues, we can quietly pray in Tongues while encouraging them (the believer) to begin to speak. This priming of the pump, getting a jump start, lending spiritual support does help.

Remember, it is *supernatural*. You need Faith to know that “be filled” means we have the Holy Spirit doing the filling, and we have a prayer language as a sign and a tool. Be gentle and let God meet the person when they are ready. Before getting involved in possible arguments, read through the Bible examples in Acts and Jude.

\* Acts 1:4-8, note verses 13-15, 120 or more men and women present (not just the twelve).

\* Acts 2:1-21 and 38,39, which shows the gift of the Holy Spirit, is for those afar off, namely us.

\* Acts 6:3, seek men full of the Holy Spirit - a condition to be desired and maintained, yielding great power for laymen.

\* Acts 7:48-51, we are not to resist the Holy Spirit even if our family fathers, theologians, spiritual traditions may have.

\* Acts 8:15-19, Simon had to see a physical manifestation in order to know that people received the Holy Spirit. Simon had to hear and see something very different from the ordinary mode of praise. Tongues and other manifestations occurred at the laying on of hands and prayer to receive the Holy Spirit.

\* Acts 9:17-18, Saul, who becomes Paul, received the *infilling* of the Holy Spirit and then *arose* to be water baptized. (Note - he ‘arose’ in order to go get water baptized.) How do we know Paul spoke in Tongues? 1 Corinthians 14:18 tells us, “*I thank God I speak with tongues more than all of you*”.

\* Acts 10:44-48, Cornelius, his relatives and friends (note – they are not apostles, nor are they Jews) pray, and the Holy Spirit shows up; they also spoke with Tongues in the presence of other Jewish brethren that also spoke with Tongues since the Day of Pentecost. This event is about 10 years *after* Pentecost.

\* Acts 11:15-18, The Baptism of the Holy Spirit, infilling and evidence with Tongues is for all who believe on the Lord Jesus, “*Who was I that I could withstand God*”, said Peter. Peter felt that to say who could and who couldn't speak in Tongues as evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit was to play God. God has granted this to all, along with repentance of sin to receive eternal life.

\* Acts 19:3-6, belief and water baptism opens the door to receiving the Holy Spirit. In this passage, these “disciples” were water baptized, yet Paul says they are entitled to more under the New Covenant. If only the whole church would open its eyes and hearts and be yielded, as these disciples were, to receive and not debate. Here they receive through the laying on of hands.

\* 1 Corinthians 2:10-14, spiritual things make no sense to man's mind.

\* 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, there are gifts, ministries, activities and manifestations of all three as the Holy Spirit wills for our profit, individually and collectively.

\* 1 Corinthians 14:2-4, Tongues in prayer and praise is for the individual, not the group. We are speaking mysteries to God. Supernaturally, we get edified (built up spiritually).

- \* 1 Corinthians 14:14, my spirit prays, intellect does not benefit.  
     verse 15, I do it anyway, I even sing in Tongues.  
     verse 18, Paul talked and sang in Tongues all the time.  
     verse 39, desire to edify (build up) everyone but don't stop anyone (yourself included)  
         from using Tongues properly.

\* Jude 1:19-20, *“These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, “praying in the Holy Spirit””*.

That done, only three questions remain: 1) Are you ready to receive? 2) Will you open your mouth and begin to speak as the Holy Spirit will come upon you and give you more to say to Him? 3) What's the point of contact? A command, anointing with oil or water, laying on of hands? If they won't receive now, it is usually a problem of yielded-ness, fear or pride. The problem cannot be with the Lord or His Word.

A child of God that cannot accept this gift can be expected to have difficulty hearing from the Holy Spirit and discerning His voice. They will usually walk according to their intellect and emotions, probably will not work supernatural miracles or cast out demons. They can live a good moral Christian life to a point, but will not cross over into living in supernatural power. They will run into problems in the area of obeying God when He doesn't make logical sense, or when God speaks by or through another spiritual gift (Tongues with interpretation, prophecy, etc.). Identifying other Spirit-filled believers and knowing who to trust presents a difficulty for them. Knowing a move of God verses a move of flesh is also a problem. Chasing God can become a frustrating, puzzling quest. It takes the supernatural to catch the supernatural. A prayer language helps us to escape the carnal mind in search of God.

These are all manifestations of the trap that churches and individuals who reject what they cannot understand fall into. The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him (1 Cor 2:14). Let us lead people to be able to enter into this realm. 'Bopo ney sham caqu ado' - cannot hurt anyone, but blessed Peter and Paul and us all.

Simon the sorcerer was willing to pay money to be able to do what we just discussed. How much more should we treasure this supernatural blessing? So, let's build ourselves up now as we prepare to go to the next study. 'Kay pa amo ney tee a shay... praise Elohim, Adoni, Ho Ta bui be a sha' - Wow, we're even reading Tongues!

Tongues in Error

At a meeting a woman approached me. Taking my hand she began to prophecy. After she finished she told me to wait and began to speak 3 or 4 sentences in tongues ending with "That's what the Lord says." I waited for interpretation and realized she had just reversed the order and was done. I said, "Thank you sister" and left, and so did her prophecy, as it did not witness to my spirit and was not in line with the Word. Tongue first and then interpretation. Her content was of little importance anyway - she said, "You are a preacher of the Gospel," etc. Well.... duh!

Some years ago my cousin, Pastor Steve Parson, was ministering on this subject and told the following story: A lady came up in the prayer line and told him, "Listen to me, I can speak in Tongues." She then began to speak, but her Tongues sounded and "felt" irritating to his spirit. This was the Spirit of God giving him discernment that she had the wrong spirit and was counterfeiting this wonderful sign. He had to minister to her to get her set free. Without discernment this wrong spirit could have entered the fellowship undetected. Brother Steve further cautioned about praying for people to be filled with the Spirit before there is a surety that they are born again.

Jesus promises in Luke 11:13 that the Father will give the Holy Spirit to those that ask; this refers to His children. Someone not covered under the Blood is open to demon transference, oppression or possession. Praying for them to receive "the spirit" when they are not ready to receive the **Holy Spirit** could open them to counterfeit spirits.

As the years have passed I have experienced many things that stretch the mind of man in this area. The Body of Christ has many false ideas about what demons can and cannot do.

*\*\* Rules set up in the mind of natural man  
do not necessarily control the supernatural.*

Many that "confess" Christ are oppressed, possessed, confused, abused, driven and in cooperation with demons from time to time. No Tongue or any other sign can confirm what's in the heart of man, only the Holy Spirit knows for sure; "therefore, hear Him". Ignore how people look, sound and feel - what does the Spirit say? A counterfeit is just that... a counterfeit, a phony, a look-alike! The Spirit knows the real from the fake. Trust the Spirit to let you know. He will show you the demon behind their eyes or on their shoulder. The Holy Spirit will amplify the demonic voice, smell or touch.

Believers, to impress other saints and sinners, often use Tongues as a display. Somehow, people have forgotten that the gift (miracle Tongues) of 1 Cor. 12 is given by the Spirit for the churches' benefit, and needs to be interpreted except when used as a prayer language (1 Cor 14:2-5). A loud chorus of Tongue prayers or praying in Tongues aloud in church, can confuse and frighten non-believers and saints unlearned in this area (1 Cor. 14:23).

Before entering into the fullness of the gifts of the Spirit, my wife and I visited a church one Sunday. We had not received any training or understanding about Tongues and a prayer language, but were looking for a deeper relationship with God. The pastor and members stood as the pastor said, "Let us pray". Bang! - as if a gun went off, they all exploded into loud Tongues, and for ten minutes we stood... confused... and alone. There was no interpretation or known Word from God. They got blessed and we got our coats. Now, as I look back, I see the error of that day. We could have, with a few short Scriptures (1 Cor: 14:2-5, 23), profited from the experience. Or, had we seen a demonstration of power, we could have been won over. No one ministered to us, explained or acknowledged our presence

- or our absence. Therefore, teaching is needed so all can feel comfortable and be blessed.

A prayer language is for all saints and is an *evidence* of the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Signs, wonders, power, and a holy life are also evidences of the infilling of the Holy Spirit. We should pray in Tongues quietly edifying ourselves in the assembly, at work, in the car or anywhere that loud Tongues would cause confusion. In the absence of unbelievers or unlearned people, prayer in Tongues may be loud or quiet as we feel led.

*\*\* If Tongues drown out the preacher or prophet*

*then the flesh has dominated the spirit, and this is a no-no.*

When others are praying with their understanding, we should also pray with our understanding. We can very quietly pray in Tongues as we listen intently. If we pray in Tongues aloud while they pray in a known language, we can be disturbing and miss the point of agreement, joining our Faith to their Faith. Mature saints should have no problem here, as sensitivity is called for. I was praying with a group of six people; we were praying about specific issues, yet one saint was praying in Tongues so loud that it was difficult to hear and therefore difficult to come into agreement. She was building herself up at the expense of the group.

Love is the goal; sensitivity to others is one demonstration of our love level.

**Prayer Vultures and Other Loudmouths (Tongues too!)**

I have seen and heard disciples of Christ do some strange things. At one meeting I was asked to pray for an individual. I closed my eyes and sought the Lord. Almost immediately I sensed the Lord telling me to “watch” and pray. So I opened my eyes to see 10-15 people surrounding this individual with as many as could placing their hands upon her. Before I could utter a sound the room exploded with Tongues, praise, gestures, prophecy, warnings and blessings. I don’t remember if I ever prayed or not, but I remember the look of confusion and fear on the woman’s face as she stood in the middle, and her quick exit afterward.

**The prayer vultures had devoured another victim.** They were pumped up, self and group edified, but there was no ministry. There was no agreement. What was the goal? What did the Spirit say or want to do? Notice in the Word that praise, emotional outbursts and loud prayers of thanks occur when victory has been declared or is being sought. The phrase, “The people saw the miracles and gave praise to God” appears often in Scripture. *This event was not that.* This was a display of flesh and error. It can be distracting and improper to pray aloud in Tongues while someone is praying for you or with you in their understanding (a common language, not a spiritual Tongue).

*\*\* I find it difficult for us to agree if your loud Tongues  
drowns out or competes with my English.*

We pray in Tongues to edify ourselves, we pray with understanding to edify others and ourselves. Tongues in the assembly needs to be interpreted (Acts Ch. 14) for this very reason. The interpretation in English puts everyone on the same page, in the same flow, listening to the same Spirit. When there are unsaved, unlearned people or visitors present, we should avoid loud, corporate assembly Tongues. As we read in 1 Cor. 14:23: “*Therefore if the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those who are uninformed or unbelievers, will they not say that you are out of your mind?*” When someone is ministering to someone, we can pray quietly in Tongues as a support of the minister or for the receiver to get the blessing or anointing that is being administered.

Quiet prayer in Tongues does add to a spiritual atmosphere. The more people in the Spirit the better it is. If God has a Word or message that He wants to give you for a situation, quiet Tongues silences the mind, and hopefully the flesh (if the flesh is yielded), and increases the Spirit’s flow. “*The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets*” (1 Cor. 14:32) means you can and must “test the spirits” and the “timing” for the delivery of the message. You can hold your peace (stay quiet) while another speaks or sings and wait your turn to speak. If someone cannot control themselves when asked to be quiet, you must then look for demonic activity as a possible cause.

You need to be self-edified (built up, strengthened) by prayer in Tongues. This is secondary to the need for the body to come together in **one accord**.

*\*\*When Paul says things must be done in good order,  
this is what he means: Holy Spirit order.*

There are ways to do this: Defer to the proper order established by the Spirit - one person speaking at one time. Recognize the leader of the meeting - pastor, elder, teacher, preacher, praise leader, etc. Who’s in charge under the Holy Spirit? Speak when called upon, speak only what you hear; don’t editorialize. Be humble and give God the Glory. Yield to correction and testing. Pray for further confirmation when needed.

Discern by the Spirit if the message is from Him and what are you to do with it. John



16:13 says the Spirit will “*guide you into all truth*” so very often the Spirit tells us things only to grow us, FYI (for your information - only), not always for the assembly or for anyone else.

Disciples that are immature, overzealous and desire recognition go public with anything they receive that seems spiritual. A strong need to be someone important can cause a person to speak ‘their flesh’ and ‘echo satan’s whispers.’ This all will be done with an air of concern and superficial humility. On the inside the heart is lifted up in pride. Bad information, ill-timed information or foolish imaginings are aired, often bringing disruption, tensions, old memories and pain as a result.

I have received warnings from the flesh of self-appointed “concerned” saints about sexual attacks and traps that did not exist, possible death or illnesses of loved ones, also plans of grandeur and achievement beyond what God has shown me. I am amazed at what self-appointed “seers” and prophets can hear, see and dare to share. The Holy Spirit and gifts are thrown into question if we believe and trust these people. The Holy Spirit is judged rude or viewed as false, attributed to witchcraft or pretend hocus-pocus by those listening to these misguided workers of iniquity.

A disciple needs to recognize the purpose of prophecy (read 1 Cor 14:1-5), “*edification and exhortation and comfort to men*”. Very, very seldom will God give a rebuke in prophecy, especially in public. Never will a rebuke or condemnation be from God that does not have a strong witness already inside the individual. Prophecy confirms what God has already placed in the spirit of man.

\*\*\* *“The spirit of a man is the lamp of the Lord,  
searching all the inner depths of his heart.”* (Proverbs. 20:27)

Therefore, before closing our eyes and rolling back the head, shedding tears and then accusing someone of sin - we need to only ask, “Has the Spirit been speaking to you about something private?” Also, due to our frailty, we should humbly offer, “I could be missing it, but I think the Spirit wants me to share with you...”

One morning while washing dishes, the Spirit made me aware that a fellow saint was involved in pornography. I went upstairs and prayed for guidance concerning this matter, asking the Lord to open the door if I was to do anything with this information. Shortly after that this man and his wife called for marriage counseling. I waited for God to open the door. After the session he and I were alone for a brief moment. He tried to ask me a question about “a sin” without revealing his problem. I told him God forgives and delivers from sin. Knowing that the door was now open, I told him God had shown me his problem as pornography and deliverance was at hand. With tears in his eyes he said his “sin” was only smoking and he was going to cut that down and stop soon. He refused to face the greater problem.

It was obvious that the Spirit had already spoken to his spirit, and he was under conviction. He refused the Spirit and soon his spending reached nearly \$1000.00 per month on 1-900 sex calls and could not be kept a secret. When I had confronted him, the Holy Spirit convicted him and he had an inward witness of sin, but his flesh had prevented him from receiving deliverance. He knew God had named his problem and the truth had been spoken in love, in order to save him. God’s way is the best way. We must be careful with what we share; never at the expense of anyone else, and only at the leading of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes the Holy Spirit shows us things just for our own information and not to be shared with anyone. Sometimes it’s information to help set the captive free.

No prayer or prophecy will be received unless the vessel (speaker) and the individual that

it's meant for are yielded and receptive. People must be prepared by the Holy Spirit to pray or to be prayed for. If you have a need to pray with someone and they don't want you to pray, then you need to ask the Spirit of God, "Is this my desire or Your urging, Lord?" When God wants to set people free (since God knows when they are ready), He draws them and you don't have to pull them. The final choice is up to them, as to whether or not they will receive what God wants to do. The Holy Spirit sets the table, we invite them to dine, then the choice is theirs.

Don't be a vulture or a loudmouth. Use Tongues properly – self-edification or with interpretation in the assembly. Tongues helps open the door to more of the spiritual gifts. It is a toll for edification and a gate to greater spiritual depth. Be loving and polite and desire to do as Jesus did: *"Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak"* (John 12:50).

**Go Behind Vultures**

This category of vultures is best described by an illustration. You invite guests for dinner and after the meal you wipe off the table and load the dishwasher. One of your guests rises and, to your surprise, begins to wipe off the table again, and to your utter amazement, fills the sink with water, takes the dishes out of the dishwasher, and proceeds to put them in the sink.

Let's do another illustration. A husband and wife are locked in a loving embrace, you go over, tap him on the shoulder and say "excuse me, let me show you how to hug her!" Both of these illustrations demonstrate how people can interrupt, disrupt, disrespect, and go behind someone to help where they're not needed. They may have something worthwhile to offer but they are out of order and on an ego trip. Often they seek attention and recognition as a powerful, saint – prayer warrior. Somehow they think that the job isn't done until they minister to the person. Women seem more guilty in this area than men. The reason may be "coached" sports, where men are trained not to butt in or speak up until asked. After the Holy Spirit or the presiding minister has attended to the people, the vulture will zone in on the prey – unsaved, visitor or disturbed believers, to have a private prayer or counseling session. They take the hands of the victim so they can't escape and pull them to a corner to be alone. With compassionate eyes they begin, "the Lord loves you so much and I have to tell you what God put on my heart to tell you..." The victim always asks later, "Who was that person and what were they trying to do?" When the Holy Spirit has ministered to someone they are doing all they can to dwell in or understand that moment. The vulture, though well intentioned, overloads and adds confusion. Even as a pastor I must be careful not to go behind the Holy Spirit and redo or undo His work. If someone is having an experience with God, they don't need us to go over and lay hands upon or pray or do anything. Hold what you think you have for another time or at least ask God and the minister what should be done.

*\*\*Self appointed apostles are sent ones – sent by self.*

The go-behind cleaner is flesh led and therefore must be taught and gently rebuked. They are easily offended and their need for importance will misinterpret correction. The vulture feels that what they have to offer is of paramount importance. "I hear from God and you are just holding me back", they'll say! The hard core will even use the prey publicly in their testimonies of how God used them. A vulture that's totally out of control will go behind the minister and lay hands on people again. The ultimate ego tripper will pick up those slain in the spirit and give them a word and attempt to re-slay them. This calls for a rebuke without any concern for their feelings, for this grieves the Holy Spirit. Ministry is not a show and people are not puppets to be manipulated; and an Amen goes right there.

After praying with someone, be aware that after you leave, the Holy Spirit continues His ministry. Also, before you arrive He has begun to minister. When the unction comes to make an altar call, it is because God wants you to give people the opportunity to act in Faith in response to what He is doing.

*\*\*Let us hold the image in our hearts*

*that we are not the surgeon, but the maintenance man.*

*At our best we create an atmosphere for the surgeon to work in.*

*Amen.*

**Respect the Power of God and the Laws Of Transference, East Meets Jehovah, Names**

Don't use names or words given you as spiritual mantras in languages you don't know, or call on spirits other than the Holy Spirit, the God Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Lord Jesus, Yeshua of Nazareth, the Messiah, the Christ! - and no others.

Accepting a personal name in another language may sound good but can be a transference of spirits. These names are flattering but the spiritual depth of the "real" meaning and spiritual connections are hidden in a familiar spirit or demonic power. God will often change a name by His Spirit at the calling or anointing of a disciple. This name change can be felt in the heart of a believer. Satan imitates and counterfeits this godly ordinance.

Choosing your own name is not as dangerous as having one assigned in a foreign tongue, but still is usually to no effect. A saved parent will usually have a supernatural leading before the child is born concerning a name. The Spirit clearly named all of our children through my wife's spirit. The names were Biblical and except for one were unknown to us, and all were given *in Hebrew*. As we have watched them grow we see the Spirit was right.

A name can be a supernatural impartation of what is, what is needed, or what is to come, which may be a spirit that's not desired. If your guru named you "Topongo chi" and told you it means "sweet joyful flower of life's eternal victory", and you've been living a defeated life accompanied with depression, guess what?!!! Better to go back to being plain ol' Margaret - which means pearl - and you become one. Also, go get prayed for to remove any spirit connections to "Topongo chi". Spirits and spirit guides know how to appeal to our egos and bind people to spirits that at first bless and then curse. Demons rob people of life but have great appeal. They ride the vehicles of transference, names, mantras, prayer and laying on of hands.

Eastern religions use names to this end effectively; ignorance traps the adventurous and romantic. People end up chanting to, or calling themselves by a name or mantra that is actually a prayer to a demon spirit.

A man I know gave his "beloved guru" permission to enter into him upon the guru's death. After the guru died the man felt this spirit enter him, and in subsequent years he has suffered from an unknown, debilitating disease. I'm sure the same evil spirit that had dominion over the guru transferred to this man and caused his illness.

When God gives us a new name and fills us with the Holy Spirit we become blessed. Rewards, benefits, peace and prosperity come upon us and overtake us (Deut. 28:2). India has followed Eastern Religion for centuries, and we can clearly see its people are under a curse of poverty and ignorance. That is why the gurus themselves come to the West to fatten themselves on Western wealth and then return in greater power to India. They tell us to disdain wealth as they grab it and the people do not prosper. These spiritual leaders have great success with people that have become resentful and hurt by "a Western religious spirit". It appears that high levels of guilt and rejection drive people to reject their upbringing and seek power and acceptance in Eastern Hindu-Buddhist New Age teachings. Jews and Catholics seem to be the greatest number of converts, possibly due to how guilt is sometimes inappropriately used in these faiths and predominate their cultures.

People that are drawn to Eastern gurus and religion love mystery. The destruction of absolutes tells them they now can be "god" and define their reality. Concepts of guilt, sin, Satan and accountability are also erased. When Father God has been improperly described as a mean, punishing Father, then we see the door open to the East and the New Age.

As disciples we must minister the simplicity of the Gospel: God is a loving Father whose role is both Father and Mother and He will never leave nor forsake us (Deut. 31:6,8; Josh 1:5; Heb. 3:5). He will only destroy those that hate Him; He will never destroy His children. All power for good and healings come from Him. The only method or technique is to follow the Holy Spirit. All other techniques are of man or Satan and will not bring lasting results for ultimate good. The Holy Spirit gives God's method and techniques supernaturally. They are both *natural* and *supernatural* (the physical is changed by a supernatural power), but always point to **Him** as the source, with *Faith* as the vehicle.

The disciple of God seeks God and then the rest is the Holy Spirit in action. Our desire to manipulate and control the forces and flow of 'energy' in the supernatural without God's direct guidance opens the door for familiar demon spirits to move. Man has sought to develop ways to get the Father's power without the Father. Jesus said, "*no man comes to the Father but by Me*" (John 14:6), and "*...he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber*" (John 10:1). "*Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enter by Me, he will be saved,*" (John 10:7-9). Self appointed guru's and New Age healers are everywhere.

*\*\* They have new names and techniques, but it's the same old story - seeking after other gods through sorcery.*

The New Age is not new. Eastern religions speak for themselves - their countries are the poorest, most ignorant, oppressive countries upon the earth. Their many gods have not been able to help them. Christians and Jews that follow godly principles will always prosper. 85% of Americans believe in God. We have seen the U.S. decline as we have turned away from God. The ancient idol worship of Molech, Baal and the Egyptian gods is not new. Since the Tower of Babel, man has sought to be God and turned to the lies of the devil. Astrology, numerology, fortune tellers, mediums, witches and wizards have always been the work of mysterious Babylon, the great deceiver's substitute for the true God.

If we take the deceiver's names, mantras and chants, and do not respect the laws of transference, we will become his victims.

***The Old End Times Enemy***

**End Times and the antichrist**

The end-times disciple must have an end-times plan of action based upon Jesus' teaching and our understanding of Bible prophecy. If Jesus' coming is hundreds of years away, then one needs to await Jesus' coming with no sense of urgency. Yet, if Jesus' coming is imminent, then we will, or should, have a sense of urgency. Based on my studies and the voice of prophecy that is now being spoken, I feel very, very strongly that Christ's coming is within my lifetime.

The events of the 60's and 70's were alarming, and books by visionaries like Hal Lindsey (Late Great Planet Earth) and others pointed out an ever increasing development, but they lacked urgency and were *too* subject to interpretation. Christianity was still removed from Judaism, and there were not enough Spirit-filled Jews that had embraced the New Covenant.

During the last 20 years, scholarly Messianic brothers have opened to us Gentiles the meanings and secrets of the Hebrew Texts, as the Ru ach Kadesh (The Holy Spirit) has opened to them the New Covenant.

The writers of the Old and New Covenant were Jewish, as was the Messiah. Therefore, we Gentiles must become more learned in our understanding of Jewish customs, Feast Days, sayings, and prophecies if we are ever to open-up the mysteries of the end times. There are numerous books, lectures, tapes, etc. that can help us. A few that have helped me are: Avi Ben Mordechai (Signs in the Heavens, Feast Days) and Charles Capps.

Let us deal with an overview of what God has now revealed to Jew and Gentile alike. Remember the admonition of the Jew by the Holy Spirit in Matt. 24:33: "*So you also when you see these things, know that it is near - at the door!*"

**Know the Enemy**

***Demonic possession*** is when a spiritual entity, a familiar spirit or a demon, gains significant control over a human being, whether by suggestion, stimulation, or mind control. We call a person ***possessed*** when they have lost control over their will. In this state a person has allowed or has been deprived of his or her will by a spiritual entity. God has given man free will; but sometimes, through sin, a demonic force may gain a legal right to attack and gain influence over a person. Satan and his demons are bullies; therefore, if they get a foothold in a person's life, they seek to dominate the individual's will to the point that they can make the person think, feel and do whatever they desire. It should be noted that, as Lester Summerall says in his book, 'Alien Entities', very few people are ever totally possessed of a demon and there is usually always some residual willpower that is left. The person, though they are "possessed", can from time to time exert their willpower and step out of the influence of the demonic. The demoniac of the Gadarenes used his will to run to Jesus and worship Him in spite of the influence of a whole legion (thousands) of demons which controlled him.

Demons have no respect or regard for the weak or the innocent. If a person is ignorant, practices idol worship or other violations of God's laws, he/she can come under attack. Without a spiritual defense they can become overwhelmed. The demonic presence, which came to visit, then comes to reside. So we see that young unprotected children can become possessed, especially if the parents are unsaved and involved in sin.

Most people only experience ***demonic oppression***. This may be periodic disturbances in specific areas of life. From time to time they may exhibit irrational or disruptive behavior. They may be troubled in mind or emotions, and usually fear is a part of their irrational thinking. A bad habit or addiction may have a more than normal compulsion. For example, when stressed, a person experiences an overwhelming desire to injure themselves. A person may struggle with a demonic influence for an episode, months or years.

Oppression is often associated with a trauma that has caused a person to allow doors to the demonic to be opened. The death of a loved one, divorce, illness, emotional or sexual abuse, or turning to occult practices, may precipitate an attack. Demons look for bad habits or areas of weak character. The surest area of attack is "pride" - rejecting God and turning to Satan for power, pleasure and status. The demon may promise you power, wealth, pleasure, etc. but he will exact a very high price in return.

Oppressed or possessed - it's just a matter of degree. Both conditions mean the person's will has been compromised to his or her own detriment, and the cause is supernatural evil. This can be due to the direct sin of the individual, (unforgiveness, hate, anger, lust, etc), but it can also be due to the sins of the parents. Demonic forces can be transferred to children. Environments can be created that invite and perpetuate demonic influences.

Whether a person is possessed or oppressed, it is difficult to remove the demonic influence without the cooperation of the ***will of the host***. In the Name of Jesus we can stop, bind up and limit the acting out or the effectiveness of the demon; but to cast him out from the host, some cooperation from the host is desirable, and in many cases, necessary. Words like ***casting out*** and ***exorcism*** refer to the process of gaining control of the demon and forcing it to abandon the host. Modern psychiatry struggles to address this area, for they can only sedate the host so the demon is limited, or over years of counseling hope to resurrect the host's will to rise up and cast off the abnormal (demonic) behavior. By the Name of Jesus and the Power of that Name, a person can be loosed forever, in a moment. Thank God that there is a ***Way of Escape***.



This term means that by repenting of sin and turning to God He will show us a path to freedom. A person may have to reap some of what has been sown, but the outcome will be determined by God rather than the devil.

Fallen angels are angels who rebelled against God along with satan and determined that they would no longer serve God. It is interesting at this point to note that angels and men have free will. They can make choices for their own benefit or for their own destruction. The angels that chose to rebel against God have also chosen to be an enemy to God's creation as well as God's created beings...man. Fallen angels are spirit beings that cannot die, but will eventually be placed in the Lake of Fire at the end of time, where they will be eternally separated from God. The *Bible* calls this separation from God death. The Lake of Fire is described as fire and brimstone, burning place of punishment (Revelation 20:10). This is called the second death. The first death is physical death. The second death affects both human spirits and angelic spirits, causing torment. This is the final resting place of the souls of humans who hate and reject God.

**\*\*\*The Truth needs to be told loud and clear –**

***God doesn't send man to hell. Man chooses hell.***

There are only two eventual realities - Heaven or hell. God is in Heaven, so if we choose God we go to where He is. To reject God is to not want to be with or under God. The only place you can do that is in hell; to be separated from God is to be in death, for God is life. So, after the first death you enter eternal life or eternal second death.

The leader of the fallen angels, satan, is a very powerful angel, also described as a "cherub". Cherubim and seraphim are large and powerful angelic creatures. Some cherubim actually guard the Throne of God, and stand in His presence. satan, lucifer, the devil, the dragon, the serpent, the evil one, father of lies, king of tyre, prince of darkness, (various names for the evil one) ... lucifer was also in Heaven near the Throne of God, in Ezekiel 28, and Isaiah 14. In these Scriptures it appears he was a powerful musical/worship leader who used his great beauty and power to turn other angels against God in a desire to elevate himself and take over the Throne of God. satan lost this battle and was thrown down to the earth, where by subterfuge deceit, he was able to make himself the "god of this (age) world". "Whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them." (2 Corinthians 4:4) Following the fall of Adam and Eve, many men and women were born on the earth. Most had earthly parents, but not all. satan and some of the very powerful fallen angels were able to materialize and mate with some of the women on the earth. How this was done, we are not told. They could have possessed humans or taken humanlike form. (Genesis 6, Jude 1, 2 Peter 2). The offspring from these unions were an abomination to God, but did produce some great and powerful beings. Many of these beings were giants. However, man was perverted by these evil angels. They were unacceptable in Heaven and therefore their spirits are still on the earth as demon spirits. Their final judgment will not come until the end of all things. Jesus, when faced with them, did not condemn them to hell but drove them out of their hosts or out of their regions. The demons ask Him in Matthew 8:29 "have You come to torment us before the time?" Many of the stories called mythology and folk tales may be a history of these unclean offspring. I believe these are what demons, ghouls, poltergeists, familiar spirits, ghosts of dead relatives, phantoms and UFO characters are. All of these express varying degrees of evil, and satan is over them all. To summarize, these would be spirits of evil men, fallen angels, demons, the forces of darkness.

There is a Paradise called Heaven, a place where God, His angels, and spirits of deceased saints dwell. There are heavens, the outer space of the galaxies. There is also *hell, hades, gehenna, sheol, a burning place, a holding place, a dwelling place of evil, a holding place of captive souls, a pit, the grave*. These names are all generally synonymous for a place of torment where *demons*, fallen angels, and spirits of people that have rejected God dwell.

**The Days of Noah and the Nephilium**

Because sin was so great, God brought a flood upon the earth; a cataclysmic event that destroyed the bodies of men as well as the bodies of the offspring of men and fallen angels. If satan and the fallen angels could pollute all of mankind, then of course, Messiah could not be born; except as an offspring of evil, with evil blood in His lineage. The world and mankind would never be free of the dominance of satan. satan and his fallen angels would rule and reign on the earth as their domain forever. It appears that Noah and his family were the only ones left on the earth who did not have the polluted heritage of the fallen angels in their lineage. We see this because the Hebrew words used in Genesis 6:9 say Noah was a righteous man, blameless (Heb. *tamiym* - without blemish, complete, full, unpolluted, perfect, undefiled) in his generations among the people of his time, and he walked with God. The Scripture is telling us that his bloodline was the last undefiled line. Noah was a good man but was not perfect; however, his lineage was. So God **flooded** the earth, to destroy satan's seed and to preserve a path for Messiah to come.

Jesus uses a direct reference to the days of Noah: "*As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be again*". The days of Noah were a hard time, a time of wanton perversion, violence and also a time where the nephilium, giants and supernatural evil beings were ruling and reigning upon the earth. It appears that the nephilium were the demonic offspring between mankind and lucifer's fallen angels. They resulted in beings that could traffic between the natural and the supernatural with disastrous results.

The books of Jude and Peter tells us that the angels that were responsible for perverting the bloodline of man were bound in hell, but it appears they will be released for a short time during the last days. Were they also bound and cast into outer darkness, or were they locked into the bosom of Abraham and held in hell until judgment? Or are these the demon spirits that wander the earth even today waiting the end of all things? We know that satan is still loose in the earth, we know that demons are still loose in the earth and so also are powerful evil angels. The prince of Tyre, the prince of Babylon, the prince of Egypt and so forth are names for satan and his leading angels.

**End Times**

I believe that the prophetic words spoken by Jesus and the prophets are in some ways figurative but should be taken most often literally. When Jesus speaks figuratively, He uses parables and terms such as “This is likened unto”. When Jesus speaks in Bible prophecy we find Him being direct, as He describes what would happen to the Apostles and the early believers after His ascension, and as He describes further end times events, which are also directly described in the book of Daniel, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Ezekiel and many of the other prophets, as well as writings of John in the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Let us lay some foundation and define some Biblical terms.

First of all, the Bible tells us that a day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is as a day. When we look carefully at this, we realize that God is trying to tell us that since He is outside of time in Paradise (Heaven), there are no clocks and there is no time. But on earth we are in time. For God Who is outside of time, the passing of one day or a thousand years are all equivalent. We experience Him using terminology as “seven days”, “seven weeks”, “seven years”, and only a careful study will show us that He may mean one day equals a thousand years, therefore seven thousand years, or seven thousand eras or segments of time.

When we look back over numbers and divisions of time we find some amazing things, especially associated with the number seven. God ordained man to have seven days in a week. God ordained there to be seven feast holidays, each one describing great Biblical and theological events that can be measured. For example, by the appearance of the Messiah, the coming of the Lord associated with the blowing of trumpets and the announcement of a new year, Rosh Hashanah and the Fall Festivals, the giving and the liberation of the Jews at Passover, the coming of the Lamb of God to be crucified at Passover, the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the giving of offerings and first fruits, the first Fruit to God being Jesus, then the Apostles, then the three thousand souls at Pentecost, gifts given unto God, to name just a few, of the things revealed in the seven feast days (will explain later in detail).

In addition to this, we have seven churches being divided up into seven historical epics, seven angels over those seven churches, seven Spirits of God, seven times seven equaling 49 – years leading to Jubilee, days leading to Pentecost, seven steps up to the Throne of God, too many more to mention now without going into a study of it. God’s number of completion is seven. Scripture points to man’s period of time as six thousand years with a one thousand year millennial reign of Christ and then the coming of the Father to be with His creation in a new Heaven and a new earth, culminating in a seven thousand year period for mankind to be reconciled to the Father.

If we take the time spans described in the Bible, beginning with Adam and the years that he lived and then subsequent patriarchs and the years that they lived, and the subsequent times given in the books of 1&2 Kings, 1&2 Chronicles, and follow the years that were allotted to each king that reigned, followed by the years of captivity under the Assyrians and the Babylonians and then under the Romans, we come to realize that we are now in the season of the ending of the sixth thousandth year. When we look across Bible History, we see certain seasons of time. We see about 1000 years per span; Adam to Noah and Abraham, from Noah and Abraham to Moses, from Moses to David, and from David to Jesus Christ, and from Jesus, 2,000 years of the church age and through the church age we see a total of six thousand years.  $1+1+1+1+2 = 6+1$  (Millennial Reign) = 7 Total years = 7000 years of man. Two thousand years where man lived as he chose to be under the influence of satan, without the

written “Law”. 2,000 years under the Law as recorded by Moses. 2,000 years under the grace of God provided by Jesus, and now we await His soon return to reign for 1,000 years. In the first epic of time, God announced that man’s lifespan would be a hundred and twenty years. It is believed that this is a hundred and twenty years of Jubilees. A Jubilee being fifty years. Therefore, if we multiply 50 times a hundred and twenty years of Jubilees, we arrive at six thousand years. Man’s time then being complete, Messiah would come to rule and reign for the last one thousand year period, thereby culminating and preparing us for perfection, the coming of the Father, after seven thousand years, completing from Genesis to Revelation.

In addition to this, the Jews, at the time of this writing, are counting themselves in the year 5759. A careful examination of Jewish history points out an amazing number of years that are unaccounted for. This is due to the fact that the Jews did not count the years that were spent in captivity. For example, the seventy years in captivity in Babylon. In addition to that, there were years that were not counted because of overlap between the death and birth of certain kings; some of Israel and some in Judah. So by taking the years of the patriarchs Adam to Noah, Judges, and then the reigns of the various kings, add the uncounted years (remembering the Jewish year is 360 days) and Voila! Thanks to the calculations of Avi Ben Mordechai and other writers, we come up with the amazing possibility that some 241 years were unaccounted for. Two hundred forty one plus 5759 brings us to the year six thousand, plus or minus a few years.

Let us also clear up a few other issues. In our culture a child’s age begins to be counted at birth. Many other cultures begin to count the age of the child at conception. Therefore, in our culture by the time a child is one, he would be counted as two in other cultures, or as one year and nine months or so. When ancient Christians were celebrating the birth of Christ around December 25th, ancient pagans were celebrating the winter Solstice. Could it be that our ancient forefathers were celebrating the conception, not the birth? They surely weren’t celebrating a pagan ritual that included sexual immorality and other abominable activities.

Ezekiel 8:15: *“Have you seen this, O son of man? Turn again, you will see greater abominations than these”*. This Scripture is in reference to Tammuz, the illegitimate child of Samuramis, concubine of Nimrod. Nimrod is accredited with the building of the Tower of Babel, and Tammuz’ birthday was celebrated on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December, a day that child sacrifice would be done. It was known as a “child-mass”, where they would put a child on the altar and burn it. So, for all sun god worshipers and worshipers of the darkness, this was a day they celebrated as a high mass to satan. Jesus was born during the fall festivals. Scripture gives us a clue where it says that He was born and tabernacled among us, therefore His birth was culminated by the Feast of Tabernacles, not on December 25<sup>th</sup>.

If God is a God of purpose, design and seasons, and if we have been given the feast days to herald in and announce great events that have been prophesied, then it would make sense to count nine months from December and arrive at September, at the time of the Blowing of the Trumpets, to the Feast of Tabernacles, at a time when Jerusalem, Bethlehem and the surrounding cities would be filled to overflowing with revelers and celebrants ushering in the new year and atoning for sin. What better way could God announce a new year, a new Covenant, a new agreement, a new King? What better time, also, for a census. In December in Jerusalem it’s too cold or wet for travel, and another clue - shepherds don’t watch flocks out in the field in the winter. Errors have been made, lies have been told. Dates have been changed to get Christians to worship the sun gods and not the Jewish Son of God.

We know now that the ancient Catholics in setting the date for the birth of Christ, picked

not only the wrong time of year but also began counting at One AD, therefore eliminating Zero. In addition to those errors, if we accept the date chosen for AD 1 as Jesus' birth, we find that king Herod would have been dead at the time of Christ's birth. And we know from the Word of God and from historical records that King Herod was alive at the time of Christ's birth, for he attempted to have the baby infant, Jesus, destroyed. Most theologians are therefore in agreement that our present dating system is four years to six years in error. We may not be sure of the year, but we are almost certain of the season of Jesus' birth = the fall of the year 1 AD. I am confident that we are in the window between the six thousand years of man and the one thousand year millennial reign of Christ on the earth.

I further believe that 1996, which would be the accurate year 2000, was pivotal in terms of prophesied spiritual moves of God, and changes in the earth and climate and worldwide events. The highest number of Christian martyrs have occurred during this time period. From 1996 through the year 2000 the greatest number of tornadoes, cyclones, tidal waves, earthquakes, droughts, floods, have occurred. The highest number of deaths from disease and plague type illnesses have manifested and mushroomed almost beyond our comprehension during this time period, and are continuing to accelerate.

To further substantiate, let's take a look at the statistics from the 1990's:

(Sources FOX TV and the World Watch International US Geological)

\* Severe weather in the last 5 years has affected 1 billion people. Since records have been kept, from the late 1800's, one-third of all natural disasters occurred in the 90's.

\* There have been an average of 700 natural disasters per decade, except in the 90's, when there were about 2,400.

\* The most severe and costly disasters have occurred in the last 9 or 10 years, and that's with better warning systems and better engineering and materials for buildings.

\* Comparing the 70's with the 90's:

Floods - **130 million people affected per year** - a **700% increase** over the 70's

Persons affected by **hurricanes and tornadoes** - **600% increase**

Persons affected by **volcanoes** - **400% increase**

Persons affected by **landslides** - **200% increase**

\* From **1960 to 1989** there were about **1,000 tornadoes** reported.

From **1990 to 2000**, there were **1,000 per year**.

In light of the graphic increase in drought, famine and general climatic changes, it seems almost stupid to claim these things have always happened. On a major network I heard a meteorologist say: "We can not explain what's going on by using El Nino, La Nino, etc. These world wide phenomena are beyond our understanding". I thought, "He needs a Bible".

A great growth in radio and television evangelism is paralleled by widespread sex and violence through all forms of media. Ethnic and civil wars have broken out in over 51 countries worldwide with continuing varying degrees of escalation.

Explosion in technology and the information age has brought us to a place where we can clearly see the fulfillment of Bible prophecy concerning the mark of the beast, one world government, global economy and most importantly, we have witnessed an end to the time of the Gentiles. Gentiles are in control of Judea and the return of the Jews, as prophesied, to Israel.

Many theologians count the end of the age of the Gentiles as 1948-49. It is interesting to note, that if we count 1948-49 as that, then the age of the Gentiles is a jubilee, a forty nine year period culminating in 50 years. Slaves would be freed, debts would be cancelled and

whatever was taken from the children of Israel would be returned (Lev. 25). During the period from 1996 to the year 2000, the largest number of Jews returned to the homeland, and also the money taken from the Jews during the time of Hitler has been reclaimed from the Swiss banks where it was hidden, and is to be repaid.

Scripture (Jer. 16:16) tells that God would first send the fishermen to the northland. We believe that this is a reference to Russia. First, fishermen (evangelists) would come to reclaim the Jews and return them to the homeland, then it would be followed by the hunter, (persecutors) who would drive the Jews back to Israel. Evangelism in the Soviet Union during the period from 1996 to present is at the highest levels ever. During this period I went to Russia and saw a revival in action. Russian Jews are receiving the Gospel. At the same time as Jews are leaving, anti-Semitism is increasing. Many countries, including the U.S. are seeing a notable rise in anti-Semitism, but especially in the Soviet Union. Could it be that we are beginning to see the emergence of the hunters that will drive the Jews in even greater numbers to Israel?

Also of prophetic importance is that Jesus said when the shoots of the fig tree (which represents national Israel), are becoming tender, know that He is at the door. In other words, the season of His return would be marked by Jews becoming more tender of heart toward their acceptance of Yeshua as Messiah. This phenomenon is worldwide. Gentiles are beginning to embrace Yeshua's Jewish-ness and getting a deeper understanding of the Old Covenant as well as the New. Christians are embracing their Jewish brothers as welcomed members of the Body and Bride of Christ.

Jesus paints a scenario in Matthew, Chapter 24 of a combination of ethnic wars, unheralded violence, plagues, disease, and famine, all occurring at the same time as a sign. Then He states "*when this Gospel is preached to the whole world*". It just so happens that, because of radio and television and the number of missionaries in the field, this Gospel now has just about covered the globe.

By now you should be to the point of accepting the thesis that these are the last days or the end times, or that we are in the window of the six thousandth and seven thousandth year of completion. How long is this space? What is going to happen? What do we need to know and what do we need to do as true disciples of Christ? A true disciple must first recognize what is going on, which we have just discussed at length, and then we have to know what has been prophesied. The beginning of the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ discusses various churches. These churches are real churches that also represent various periods of the Church Age and types of churches. The prophetic time clock reveals that the church of Philadelphia, which has been doing pretty good, is followed by the church of Laodecia, which is lukewarm and unacceptable to Christ. It is a wealthy church, it is a complacent church, it is a lazy church and it is in need of being shaken up and set on fire; spiritual fire.

The church has become infected with the poison of the spirit of Babylon, which is wealth, idolatry, false religion and various forms of satan worship, and is generally found to be ineffective. Church leadership has proven to be self-serving and has forgotten it's original call and mandate from the Head Shepherd, Jesus Christ. The Spirit of God is calling forth those in the Body that will listen and return to the True Faith. The angel over the church of Laodecia is vigorously working so that the lamp, the light of this end times church will not be snuffed out, but be rekindled and burst into bright flame that will endure what Jesus said is coming upon the earth.

Our Lord states it very clearly and says in Luke 21:36, "*Watch therefore, and pray that*

*you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man”.*



**The End Times Messenger**

It's of great importance that a disciple knows the time frame that he is in. For in different time frames different emphasis is required by the Master according to His will, and what He wants accomplished. Whether or not one is convinced that we are in the end times is not a point worth a lot of debate. We are surely not in the beginning days of the church, nor are we in the middle days of the church. Jesus, in the book of Revelation, deals with the seven churches. These churches were real, but also serve as pictures of historical periods to come. It is generally agreed that these churches begin in the 1<sup>st</sup> century and follow on through to the end of days. We are in the latter historical period identified as the Church of Philadelphia and Laodicia. Peter, on the Day of Pentecost, declared the beginning of the End Times by quoting Joel 2:28: *"And it shall come to pass that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions..."*

An examination of the Scriptures shows us that in the end times the pressures that are upon the latter church are different than the pressures that are on the early church. We are always commanded, as in Matthew 28, verse 19&20: *"Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age"*. Our main goals are the same but the environment and tactics present different problems and pressures.

Our concern right now is that we are facing the very end of the world. Jesus told us (Matt 24:22) a time would come when man could destroy all life unless God intervened. Only now, with nuclear proliferation worldwide are we capable of having war followed by nuclear winter that could end all life. This is a truly amazing prophecy for 2,000 years ago. What then should the emphasis of our discipleship be in this dispensation?

In the 24th Chapter of Matthew, beginning at the 29th verse, we see that Jesus is speaking to His immediate disciples. He tells them about the Tribulation that is to come upon them; He talks about the destruction of Jerusalem, which is soon to be at hand by the Romans in AD 70. He says, *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."* Jesus goes on giving other information about signs and wonders and warning events that clearly did not occur during any of the lifetimes of the disciples.

Jesus tells them about the time right before the end, in verses 36, 37, and 38:

*"But of that day and hour no one knows, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be."*

This passage of Scripture is leading into His telling the disciples of the rapture, the quickening, the catching away of the saints in the same way that Noah was saved.

Matthew Chapter 24, verse 14 ***is so important*** that it bears repeating. He gives us the key clue that lets us know that our end time discipleship is different from the discipleship period of the Apostles. For He identifies how to know you are in the end times: *"And this gospel of*

*the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come”.*

It is obvious with the advancement of technology, radio, television, short wave, and satellite communications that evangelism and world witnessing have finally begun to close in and reach the entire world with the Word of God. Prior to these technological advances, witnessing had to be done one-on-one, by foot, by mail, boat or walking. In this day and age of advanced communication, we can see the end is eminent because in a matter of years, months or moments, the Gospel will have been preached to the entire world, and we are to witness to that fact.

That word witness in Greek is *martureo* - evidence, report, give testimony, testify. At the birth of the church the apostles and disciples were witnesses to the fact that God had “begun” to save all mankind through the Son, whose coming was foretold. We are to witness, to report, give evidence, testimony, testifying that He, the Lord, came, saw and conquered and is soon coming again! Jesus said, “...when you see these things happening, know that it is near - at the door!” (Mark 13:29). He meant that door to our earthly habitat.

Very few prophecies remain to be fulfilled. Of those unfulfilled, I eagerly await the signing of a peace agreement in the Middle East and the Rapture, which will reveal the antichrist and bring to fulfillment all of the remainder of history. We should, therefore, have a sense of urgency and expectation. We are witnesses to these facts; that the state of the world is near to completing the picture that our Lord foretold would come. As we examine prophecies fulfilled, we see a vast array of accuracy that only a Great God could have done. Very little remains to be done; therefore, we must be near the end of days.

Just as Peter on Pentecost said, “*This is that...*” we also must say, “This is that” and tell what the signs of our time point to. Jesus spoke of things that heretofore were totally unheard of and impossible until now. Now, man has arrived at what God foresaw the possibility of:

1. One world economy,
2. One world government,
3. A cashless society,
4. 666 microchip in the hand or forehead,
5. ‘I am Christ, I am God’ theology,
6. Revived goddess worship,
7. Ethnic and racial global wars,
8. A loss of respect for life,
9. A Jewish Nation reborn (in 1948),
10. Jews returning to Israel,
11. Global water and soil pollution,
12. Increase in natural disasters,

one after another - prophecies being fulfilled **right before our eyes!** This, then, is what we are witnesses to, as well as witnesses of the GOOD NEWS; lives changed, bodies healed, lame walk, blind see, deaf hear, poverty defeated, demons cast out; Jesus is the same “*yesterday, today and forever*” (Heb. 13:8) - **and we are a witness!**

Therefore, this is the end-time message that must be preached by the disciples: We must turn our attention to the immediacy of the situation. That the Gospel has been preached as a witness and that the end is clearly at hand (Matt 24:14).

Unlike the saints of a few centuries ago, who could only vaguely point to signs, and talk of what would be in the far reaching future, we can clearly just pick up a newspaper or watch the latest broadcast on television and deliver an end times prophecy filled sermon. Remember, Jesus said that no man knows the day or the hour, referring directly to a 24 hour period or an immediate point in time. But He did say we would know the season, for He says, “*Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see these things happening, know that it is near - at the doors*” (Mark 13:33).

An 'end-times disciple' must be able to identify the prophetic signs as described in the prophetic books, such as Daniel, Amos, Ezekiel, Revelation, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, in order to be effective in winning souls to Christ and preparing the saints for the trouble that is already upon the earth.

We have to be concerned about preparing many people who, at this present moment do not profess Christ, but because of our possible soon-to-be disappearance from the earth, they may be won over to the Lord. The events in Rev. 12 and 13 occur after the 'Rapture', but notice the beast is given power to overcome the saints; therefore, there are believers still on the earth after the church has been removed. Many of these saints will be converted due to the Rapture and the testimony of the church, as a result of: increasing persecution, the 'mark of the beast', and natural and supernatural end time events.

In Matthew 24:29, Jesus speaks about the sun and the moon not giving light, and stars falling from the heavens, the powers of the heavens themselves being shaken. In another place He says that hearts would tremble for fear of what is coming upon the earth (Luke 21:25,26). We realize that these events would turn many to Christ, even though the vast majority still on the earth at the time will foolishly curse God and not turn to Him (Rev 9:20,21).

The end-time disciple should first have a witness from the Holy Spirit as to the urgency of the moment, as well as an understanding of what period of time we are in. The Lord Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, promises to get us ready, and prepares us beforehand as to what to say and what to do. We should have an increased compassion for the friends and family who are now rejecting the Gospel, for it will become more evident to us that they are about to undergo the wrath of satan as well as the eventual wrath of God. It will be, literally, hell on earth. Because of this, we should cry intense tears and feel great compassion for the woes and sorrows that many people will suffer because of their love of earthly riches. Many will also perish because they will refuse to believe that this is 'the end'.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:3, we should note with sadness that there would come a great apostasy (falling away), and then "*the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition*". If this happens in our lifetime, it means that many of the people that we worship with now, that we have come to know, to love and care about, will not be able to stand firm in the Faith when it begins to cost something.

In verse 9, we read that "*The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of satan, with all power, signs, lying wonders...*" will be done in the name of evil. We have always had evil posing as good since the beginning of the church, but in these last days there will be more powerful manifestations of false and counterfeit miracles. These lies call for greater and greater discernment on the part of the disciples.

In light of Matthew 25, the telling of the wise and foolish virgins having oil or not having oil in their lamps, we realize that the oil represents not only the Holy Spirit, but the manifest power of the Holy Spirit, lighting up the lives of the virgins (believers). Therefore, the end time disciple must be equipped and prepared to wield that power that is available to them as expressed in Mark, Chapter 16, beginning at verse 15.

We can and do have the ability to stomp on serpents and scorpions, which are poisonous theologies. We must expose and conquer workers of iniquity, come against sickness and prevail. A saint of God who does not believe in signs, wonders and the manifest Power of God will be more and more at a loss during this time period. Therefore, in raising up disciples, it behooves us to bring them along more quickly, teaching them the authority of the

believer, in order that satan cannot trespass on our Holy Ground (the church and its mission).

We must work with surgeon-like exactness to discern which believers, when once converted, are open to be anointed and brought along in the use of our God-given authority to combat demons and minister deliverance to the oppressed. When the Apostle Paul talks about “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*” (Philippians 4:13), he was specifically discussing being content, whether he was doing extremely well or he was doing extremely poor. He could thrive no matter what the circumstances were, have peace of mind and remain spiritually focused. Therefore, in these end times, when we will be faced with economic upheaval, instability, societal turmoil, inflation, recession, depression, and many natural disasters, Paul admonishes us to realize that no matter the circumstances, no matter the odds, God through Christ Jesus, will strengthen us to face whatever situation we may find ourselves in.

Noah was rescued, but Noah was also persecuted and had to work hard and preach hard as the flood approached. Therefore, as Jesus has given us these warnings and examples, we also must watch and prepare as good servants guarding the house, so that when He comes, He will find us ready.

*\*\*Jesus said, “...nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, Will He really find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8).  
Let us End times disciples see to it  
that the answer is a resounding Yes.*

It is of great importance that we see the signs, observe them and report on them in witnessing, preaching, teaching, as a means of preparing the unsaved, and strengthening the saints for what is unfolding before our eyes. A directness and reliance upon spiritual discernment and the leading of the Holy Spirit is more necessary than ever before. We must use our time wisely and effectively. We don't have time now for high-towered intellectual discussions and debates with those who are settled in their mind and have closed their hearts.

Warfare is real and imminent. The new age movement is upon us seeking to manifest signs, wonders and supernatural power. The occult is finding the ability to capture the minds of people through radio and television, and must be unmasked and banned in our homes and schools when possible. Warfare is an essential part of the training of discipleship. But now in these last days, satan and his demons are coming down from the heavens and up from hell as the Scripture tells us in the Book of Revelation, and he is coming with greater fury, because he knows his time is short.

The message of Faith and prosperity has been a blessing, that the church could grow fat and financially powerful in order to use all the technology that was available to evangelize the world. But now greater self-sacrifice is going to be required. The economics of the whole world will be challenged and thrown into chaos. Stress, opposition and persecution will be mounting against God's principals. We must have a sustaining Faith that balances us so that we can see what is really needed, what is really important and what is no longer of value. Sustaining Faith is that Faith that is focused on the long-haul, not instant gratification. Faith that stays strong while waiting on the Lord and staying hopeful no matter how long or how desperate things may seem. The prosperity message may well be reduced to just having a roof and some potatoes.

Just as in military conflicts, armies at first engage in battle from a distance, but near the end of the war have progressed to close range hand-to-hand combat, so spiritual battles of the end days have become more personal. satan uses technology (computers, politics, even

schools) to constantly undermine our Faith and principals.

In these last days some saints will miss out on the big house and land. Having multiple mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters as in Mark 9 will always be a part of the saint's package. Believers may all own together and share as in Acts 4:32-37 during the hard times ahead. What a glorious thought that the end times' body would dwell in unity, sharing what they have to the Glory of God.

In the end times, church programs and organizational institutions that are large and politically powerful will become ineffective, as discipleship will be trench warfare, sneaking, hiding, and clandestine in nature. The effective Christian will be a hand-to-hand, eye-to-eye, door-to-door believer who refuses to be stopped, ridiculed or dismayed by politics, popularity and the status quo.

Worship in these end times has changed and will continue to evolve. The line between Christian entertainment, performance worship and inner-sanctuary worship is becoming clearer. Anointing in worship has finally become more important than talent. Sincerity has become more important than polish. Worship has become less a spectator sport than ever before.

It may be hard to listen to untrained voices bursting forth in uninhibited, sometimes out of tune praise, but this is better than the old, dead, stale, controlled program worship. Shower-singers that love the Lord are getting involved in worship to the Glory of God. The professionals are using their gifts to lead others into the worship experience and this causes us to come more into one accord. When we as congregations come into one accord, the Spirit of God is blessed and heightens His presence. When this happens we enter into inner sanctuary worship, where God participates in the service. This is because He has promised to 'inhabit the praises of His people.' Individual and small group worship is becoming the 'battle preparation training mode'. The best soldier is the one that has a personal relationship with his commander, and knows the commander's goals. Worship establishes and develops a close personal relationship of trust, commitment and agreement.

In Acts we see that when the people got in one accord, God showed up (Acts Chapters 1, 2, 4, and 10). The presence of God in a worship service causes manifestations and miracle to happen. Brother Benny Hinn uses this to great effect. At his meetings there may be hours of praise until the people are drawn into an atmosphere where God is present.

*\*\* When God's presence shows up, things begin to happen.*

Many local churches have found this out. Also, large churches and small groups are finding that not much is needed, just unbridled love of God and a desire to be with Him.

This is what is needed in these end-times. As persecutions and struggle increase, we need to have that ever deeper awareness of the presence of God. Only this can give us the strength to deliver the end-times message, no matter what the obstacles.

A disciple a thousand years ago would always have upon his heart the thought, "Come quickly, Lord Jesus". But now the Holy Spirit has placed upon our consciousness an urgency that must be heeded if we are to be effective disciples for the Lord. This urgency is saying, "time is running out, I hope I get my work done!" Will Jesus find us worthy to be called end time disciples? Jesus said the last days would unfold like birth pangs of a pregnant woman.

In labor, things begin to happen at long, far apart intervals, then stronger and closer together. Well, if that is the case, then it's interesting to note the following:

1. The total number of martyrs is greater in the last 10 years (1990's) than all other previous decades since the Resurrection of Christ. Yes, more people have been killed for

Christ than during the Inquisition or the Roman Emperor's reign.

2. Seventy percent (70%) of all the Christians ever converted have been reached in the last ten (10) years (the harvest has begun).

3. Natural disasters and weather changes have been accelerating and have, in the 1990's, exceeded all other decades as the leader for disasters, and that pattern has continued on to that day.

4. Whether it is disease, famine, war, etc., you can be sure it is getting worse and more frequent.

Just like Jesus said, "*Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near*" (Luke 21:28). The end times disciple is different, for he must face a different time. God help us.

### **Rapture and Tribulation**

There are two periods of time that are of great importance. First, the coming **rapture**, which is immediately associated with the **great tribulation**. Both of these time periods are preceded and run concurrent with an epic called the *Day of the Lord*, the *Day of the Wrath of the Lord*, culminating in the *Great Day of the Wrath of the Lord*. “*The wolf shall dwell with the Lamb*” (Isaiah 11:6), “*And men will beat their swords into plowshares*” (Isaiah 2:4), but there is coming a time that precedes that. Peace that we can not wish away, hope away, dream away or prophesy away. Jesus has warned us that “*lawlessness will abound, and the love of many will grow cold*” (Matt. 24:12). As a result of increased demonic activity and mans’ sinfulness, God will bring judgment upon the earth. This judgment is called the Day of the Lord. It is not a single specific 24-hour day, but a prophetic series of events, natural and supernatural, the length being better understood by events, rather than dates.

The Day of the Lord will begin first with judgment of the house of God (the church), and then will be followed by judgment of the world, and those that dwell therein, human as well as demonic. The end time disciple is charged with the awesome responsibility of reaching the furthest corners of the world and his neighborhood and his block with a message of hope and assurity that God is able to save to the uttermost. He has promised that as in the days of Noah, when He delivered Noah by the Ark and saved him from the flood, He also will deliver the end time believers that are waiting for Him, believing for Him and preparing for His coming with a great supernatural event, called the quickening, the ‘catching away’ or the rapture.

The antichrist and his world dominion cannot take place as long as the church is on the earth. Were he (satan) to begin with a blatant, obvious global manner to take everything over, he would be spiritually opposed and unable to carry out his plan. Scripture tells us that he is cast down to the earth and knows that his time is short and therefore accelerates his activity. But “*the gates of hades can not prevail against it*” (over the church, Matthew 16:18). So the church must be removed before antichrist can fully rise to power. “It must be taken out of the way to reveal the identity of the antichrist.” (See 1 Thess.). So the next big prophetic event is the rapture at the end of world evangelism.

After judging the church and preparing the hearts of those that are wise virgins (those that are prepared for His coming in the clouds to gather the first installment of saints) the Bride of Christ, God in His infinite wisdom allows satan and his demons to be victorious over the saints that remain on the earth and emerge during the Great Day of the Lord, and also during the wrath of satan, the tribulation period. satan is given authority over the saints; Jesus tells us that those that will be put to death will be put to death, and those that will be tortured will be tortured, and those that will die of the sword will die of the sword (Rev.). But their Faith will stand, they will endure, for it says that “*they overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb and the Word of their testimony*” (Revelation 12:11).

Revelation tells us that the saints that are martyred during this time period cry out for their blood and the blood of their fellow saints to be avenged. But this revenge does not occur until the end of the Great Tribulation period, which is of the wrath of satan, ended by the wrath of God. The Great Tribulation is the time period described in Scripture as 7 weeks in Daniel, which is believed to be 7 years long. Tribulation began at the birth of Christ, is covered by grace, but began to accelerate after Pentecost. The Holy Spirit was given to strengthen us during this period, which has been increasing in intensity “*like birth pangs*” (Matt. 24). It is

marked by persecution against the saints and trouble for the church. As we near the “Great Tribulation”, the pressure will become global. God will grow the church richer and stronger throughout the tribulation until the Rapture, yet during the Great Tribulation, only saints still left after the Rapture will be under the hand of satan, as during the Roman Persecution prior to and after Constantine, the Inquisition, and the Persecution of the early church. Recently, the “Voice of the Martyrs” identified the 90’s as the highest period of Christian martyrdom, but these periods will be considered less horrible than the Great Tribulation. This 7 year period will have as its central event a peace agreement (Daniel 9:25-27), probably for Jerusalem. The antichrist will negotiate this peace and break it after 3 ½ years, betray and attack the Jews while continuing to persecute the saints. The remaining 3 ½ years will be beyond imagining, ending with the Christ intervening to save the Jews and those saints that are still alive.

*\*\*“Pray to escape what’s coming on the earth,” Jesus said,  
so plan on catching the Rapture Express.*

To summarize, satan knows his time is short, therefore he has come down to the earth (Rev. 12:12) and his wrath is explosive. He seeks world domination and to take as many people as he can into rebellion against God and against the Word of God, Yeshua. The church is judged, the virgins are separated between those that are prepared to go and those that are not prepared to go. Those that are prepared to go leave in the great catching away, the rapture of the church. As God pours out His judgment upon the earth and the evildoers in it, He seals and protects the saints from His wrath, but the saints are still exposed to the wrath of satan, for they refuse to take the mark of the beast, they refuse to cooperate with his world domination, and many are martyred for the cause of Christ, beheaded and killed by the sword and whatever other evil devices satan perpetrates upon the saints.

All of this occurs with a backdrop of increasing plagues, diseases, pestilence, violent conditions in the weather and economic and social upheaval. Those that call themselves true believers are sorely tested by the evil one and his world domination. And those that are the true saints are forced to profess Christ during a time unprecedented through all of history. As the world trusts in idols, and assuredly money is a great idol of wealth and power, we see in Scripture that in one hour, all of this is shaken. Could that one hour be a spiritual or material time, a short span of time wherein the stock market and other forms of commerce are unseated from their position of power and world domination, could not this be a Y2K type problem, or rapid inflation or depression that begins this great upheaval?

The Book of Daniel tells us that Daniel was told to seal up the Book of Prophecy until the end times, when people would be going to and fro and knowledge would be increased. It is pretty obvious that we are in the information age, which could not have been foreseen by Daniel. Supersonic travel by planes, buses and cars could also not have been known to him. People in the United States move approximately once every five years. We are definitely living in a time of great change, and we are so interconnected economically that if one domino falls, many others would be expected to follow suit.

Just recently the Bible Codes were revealed which have been hidden in the Hebrew Bible for 3,500 years. Equal-distant letter spacing has revealed Yeshua as Messiah, many end-time truths, even the Y2K problems are encoded. Too much fits together and is clearly on the horizon with the actors waiting for the curtains to go up.

It is safe to say that the church would see these end time events unfolding; possibly the collapse of banks, superstructures of governments, morality, political and military



infrastructures begin to be compromised, as the antichrist begins to make his move. But Scripture tells us in Thessalonians: *“He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. And the lawless one will be revealed...”* (2Thess. 2:7). This “He” could be the church or this “He”, as some teach, could be the presence of the Holy Spirit as evidenced in the church.

In any event the antichrist will emerge out of a backdrop of a world calling out for answers amid many problems, hoping for a savior that will restore all things and bring peace and prosperity. These events, of course, are ushering in the Day of the Judgment of the Lord. The church will be judged, and then the church will be raptured, after all of the wise virgins that are chosen to go in the rapture have been identified and called to be pulled off of the earth.

At this point and time the earth is groaning and beginning to revolt against man, that has polluted it, burned it, robbed it and destroyed it. Evil forces are mounting to assume control to establish themselves as one world government, one world order, and have sworn to destroy the saints. There are no Scriptures to indicate that as the church begins to leave the scene that they acquire any social or political dominance over any society or portion of society.

There appears to be no Scriptures that claim that the church, before it leaves, will achieve any great status or dominance over satan and his demons except in the spiritual realm. Actually Jesus points out that persecution against the church and against the saints will be mounting. Persecution against the Jews, even as they are called back to Jerusalem in the latter days, will be increasing. satan’s power will be more evident as counterfeit miracle signs and wonders will begin to be demonstrated by the forces of darkness, imitating the great and wondrous powers of the Holy Spirit.

In an effort to spread the Gospel during the last days, many saints of the church will be martyred. The true church of God will be oppressed, bent, but not broken. It will stand in the Faith, enduring to the end. One Scripture that raises many questions says that there will be a great **Apostasy**. This is taken by many to mean that there will be a falling away from the Faith; that in the church, prior to the rapture, as it is being tested, many will abandon the Faith and will not endure when persecution and pressure comes.

The root word of *Apostasy* is Ap`o. This word also could be interpreted as a falling away as a catching away or a snatching away (from the earth). It could be a reference to the rapture, and not to a falling out of the Faith.

Remember the antichrist can not appear until there is a rapture of the church, which will cause him to be revealed. Were the antichrist to emerge now and declare himself, the church will, with Bible in hand, oppose him and expose him. The church would move as one united front world wide and exercising its mandate and power overcome the antichrist, before he could get started.

From Jesus’ telling us of the ten virgins, (Matthew 25) it would be safe to say that there will be an awakening of the church as the wise virgins prepare for the coming of the Lord, but that there would also be many foolish virgins who are not ready to go. There will be a falling away from the Faith as the antichrist exerts pressure on people in churches who have no oil (Holy Spirit) in their hearts. In any case, the wise virgins (the church, which includes enlightened Jewish believers) that have endured, will be the Bride of Christ and will be taken away before the apex of evil has thrown the world into the last part of the tribulation (2 Thess. 2).

We must remember that during the great tribulation, the antichrist has established a new world government, and has gained control over Jerusalem. He is pursuing the Jews and is

reeking havoc all over the planet. The antichrist cannot possibly do this unless “*He is taken out of the way*” (2 Thess. 2:7), namely the church (ready virgins), has been removed. Therefore, the apostasy, (falling away of the weak, no oil, heretics) has occurred - as well as the apo-stasy (falling away from the earth, rapture) has also occurred. Therefore, I conclude whichever viewpoint you take, both will come to pass.

The virgins that are left, as well as those people who were witnessed to by the church and now have turned to the Lord during the Day of the Lord, or during the tribulation period, are now saints of God. The events of the rapture and the tribulation have made it clear to people exactly what the final costs are for those who have not taken the mark of the beast and have rejected the antichrist, and his new world order. Many will be martyred or put to death. However, saints will stand during this great period of trial and testing. They will be unable to buy or sell or trade, but yet and still, God will make a way for them to survive.

Throughout time we have been guaranteed as people of Faith that we will not suffer on this earth the **wrath of God**. We see examples of this in the deliverance of Noah by the Ark, the deliverance of Lot from Sodom and Gomorrah - and it will be the same in the end days. The church and the saints of God that go in the rapture nor shall the saints that remain after the rapture, suffer the wrath of God. God will supernaturally protect His people from the Day of the Lord, and the punishment that is coming on those that have rejected Him. As has been the case since Adam, will be the case now. Believers will always have spiritual victory over the evil one, but we will be subjected to earthly and physical forms of martyrdom. We are encouraged, admonished and warned that these things will come, but our Faith is to sustain us, support us and we will endure physical hardship and even death for the cause of Christ.

The end time disciple is guaranteed that even though satan may torment our bodies, he cannot have our soul or our spirits, that we are under the loving care, and have the accompanying Holy Spirit that is promised to never leave, nor forsake us. All the saints in the Word suffered greatly at the hand of satan, but throughout all of their suffering, their Faith never waned. And it is their Faith that made them strong through their suffering, and the things that are coming will be the same as the Word has shown us. But we are told to endure to the end.

When will satan and these evil spirits get what’s coming to them? Is the church victorious over them? Where are they now in this season? Remembering that Jesus is our model for life, death and for victory, we must look at the end times struggle through Jesus’ eyes. The type of victory that is preached in many of our churches looks like worldly victory. It says to us that Jesus came down from the cross, beat up the devil, and ruled and reigned on the earth - but not so. Scripture tells us clearly that satan was able to brutally beat Jesus, place thorns upon His head, nails in His feet and in His hands, and pierce His side. But that His spiritual life was victorious in this death, in that throughout the experience Jesus never faltered in His Faith. This is the Faith that is the victory over the world.

Jesus continually warns the end times church that winning involves enduring to the end. That no matter what is said about us, done to us or placed upon us, He will be Faithful to the end, and to not abandon the Faith.

*\*\*Enduring Faith is what binds the church together,  
across all the epics of time.*

Across these long six thousand years of man the true test of Faith is; no matter what satan does or what the world says, do we still trust in God and hold to our Faith? This is the testing of Job, this is the testing of Abraham, the testing of Peter, James, John and Jesus Christ

Himself, the saints who died for the cause of Christ during the Roman persecution, the Inquisition and the Reformation, and even up to today and these coming end times.

The church must be spiritually victorious over satan. he cannot demonically possess us against our will, demonically control us, infect our body with disease, or take our spirits to hell. Scripture tells us that Jesus conquered sin and death. It also tells us in the Book of Job that God allowed Job's family, finances and even his physical body to temporarily come under attack, but that satan was barred from taking his soul. Therefore, satan and demons can temporarily subject us to all types of situations here on the earth. Symptoms in our body and pains, diseases, crumbling finances, political and social upheaval, but in the end he cannot have dominion. Nor should he be given dominion by a Blood bought child of God who is promised eternal hope, eternal salvation, and Faith as his victory.

A true disciple of Christ should say, as Shadrach, Meshach and Abed Nego said, *"our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up"* (Daniel 3:17,18). A saint should say the same as Job: *"Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him"* (Job 13:15). God has not promised us that the attacks will not come, but He has promised us that in the end we will be victorious over the attacks. He has also promised us that His judgment will be meted out against evil and evildoers. He will establish His Kingdom and He will establish Yeshua on the Holy Mount in Jerusalem for the Millennial Reign. This will be followed by God the Father putting away death and evil forever and coming down from Paradise to dwell with us eternally.

**The Conclusion of the Matter**

The Christian of today has become very much like the world, a creature of comfort and a creature of habit. We desire to have things go on as they are and want to believe that almost without effort of energy, we are just going to fly off into Heaven and everything's going to be 'hunky-dory.' This is not Scriptural, nor is it wisdom. Things are not as they used to be and things are not going to be 'hunky-dory'. The needs of believers in worldwide evangelism are not being met; many are hungry and tired, many are beaten, many are disappointed, but yet and still their Faith is strong and they endure. As I am writing now, many people are being martyred, and loss of life is the price they are paying for their stand of Faith.

Therefore, what makes us think that we also will not be tested nor have to stand against the discomforts of life, and / or the test of our Faith? Persecution is going to come, the evil one will mount himself against the church and all true believers, along with the Jewish nation.

*\*\*All the great patriarchs of Faith earned their place in the Word and history by the things that they suffered. Scripture does not demonstrate that the end time believer will be spared any suffering or testing of his Faith.*

As god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4), satan has the ability and the power to take advantage of man's errors. satan will capitalize upon each error and use it to seize more power and imprison the minds and the economy of the world, bringing things closer to a global economy. God will allow this, for He has prophesied that there will be a collapse of finances, and the wealth of Babylon will fall in one hour. The world must be united under one great power. Revelation 18 points out the kings and merchants of the earth are all shaken. Rev. 18:17: *"For in one hour such great riches came to nothing"*.

Any believer that is in the world system or trusting in the world system will be sadly disappointed, as this whole world system is doomed to fail according to the Word of God. Therefore, if we are in the market when the market goes down, we go down with the market. The Spirit of God is available to tell us when to get out of the market and to give us wisdom as to how much in the world we should be at certain times.

Man's attempt at artificial intelligence is paralleled in the Bible by the building of the Tower of Babel, and as the Tower of Babel led to babble, computers will fail one day to communicate and systematically maintain control over all of the knowledge that we have gained and the transference of it. But we must now use all the tools to further the Kingdom.

We are to exploit every situation for the cause of Christ, for the distribution of the Gospel and evangelism of the world. We are to call out with a loud voice, "Come quickly, Lord Jesus!", and we are to pray diligently that we escape what's coming on the earth, for Jesus has made it very clear that these things will come to pass - no man can stop it, and it will be a terrible time to be on the earth during the day of the Lord or the wrath of satan, during the great tribulation. Cataclysmic events are coming. We must use everything in our means and all of the wisdom that we have to provide for the church, for the saints and for those that are willing to listen to the Gospel.

Jesus said, *"as it was in the days of Noah..."* (Luke 17:26). During the days of Noah, Noah was given a vision for what God was going to do and what God was doing. God provided the supernatural manifestation of water and the materials and the animals were sent. But nonetheless, Noah had to implement God's vision, and Noah still had to build the ark. If we know that natural disasters, economic upheavals, pestilence and disease are on the way,

and that God has promised relief, should we not also make all possible preparations and be in full preparedness, not only to evangelize, but to survive during these hard times? To put to use all of the skills and knowledge and information that we have to maintain healthy bodies and minds, and then use our wisdom and our preparedness as a tool to minister the Gospel.

Jeremiah warned the children of Israel not to believe the prophets that spoke that everything was going to be fine and that Israel would be protected. He pointed out that everything was not going to be protected, that they would be led into captivity and suffer greatly under the hand of their enemies, that poverty and slavery were at hand for the sins that they committed. When Israel suffered, we have no Scriptures that tell us that Jeremiah ate well while everyone else starved. On the contrary, he starved along with them and suffered without a roof or a home and was led away just as the other Israelites were led away. The difference is that he was comforted by the hope of the sustaining love of God and was secure in his Faith that this was God's plan, and things were unfolding as they were supposed to.

The message should be loud and clear in these end days, repent and be ye baptized and be saved, spiritually saved, spiritually strengthened to withstand what is coming upon the earth, looking up as the Lord draws ever nigh, ever closer, moment by moment, day by day.

The end time disciple must surely get the message out that we are in a time that has been prophesied by God and will be filled with natural disasters, economic disasters, pestilence and disease. Our message should be twofold: first, that if we call on the Name of the Lord He will provide an escape for us (called the rapture), and then secondly, if we do not heed His warning and reach out to Him, then we will remain on the earth during the time period called the Tribulation.

We must tell people that during this time of tribulation the antichrist will seize as many souls as he can, as well as control over the earth, and that the only safe haven is to turn to the Lord and seek His face. We must encourage people and build their hope, for God did provide manna in the wilderness, He did see to it that the cruets of oil during Elijah's time did not give out, as long as the man of God was in the house. The Prophet Elijah had no food, so God sent ravens to provide him with sustenance. God has often placed angels to encamp round about to protect His people from the work of the devil, as well as from God's wrath as it is being poured out upon evildoers.

Therefore, we have this confidence that God is still on the Throne and is in charge. But we must also let people know that since He is in charge, end times events have been prophesied and will come to pass. There is a time period of repentance and crying out to God for Him to stay His hand, in order that He might withhold His wrath. Eventually, that time period will pass and judgment will come.

Jonah was sent to preach to the Ninevites, that they might repent and turn to God and God would spare their city. The Bible shows us that Jonah did go preach, though reluctantly, and God did spare Nineveh. But Scripture does point out and history confirms that they later returned to their sin, there was no call for repentance and the city of Nineveh was, in fact, later destroyed.

I believe that up until the very last possible moment, we should always cry out to God in the hope that human suffering and destruction of property could be postponed, if not even a reprieve given to hold back the wrath of God. There is a time for the healing of the land, but there also is a time of cleansing of the land from all evil and removing all the work and the iniquity of the evil one. The Bible tells us that it is the latter that is upon us. The Lord Jesus Christ and His angels will come to bring about the 'Day of the Lord' (the wrath of God),

which will be poured out upon all evil doers, but that His mercy and His grace will be available right up until that last moment.

Therefore, this must be our message, that these events have been prophesied and will come to pass, our prayers though, can place a hedge of protection around us, that would keep the angels of God encamped round about us, that we might be safe from the outpouring of the wrath of God.

But our message must also include that once we begin to pray, once we are converted and turned from our wicked ways, we have an enemy who will immediately come to seek us out. Satan seeks to kill us, to destroy us, to rob us and to test us, to see if we are truly of the Faith and if we can, by pressure and opposition, be turned about to deny the Lord. It is unscriptural and naive to think that we will not suffer persecution during these last days. It is also unscriptural to think that we will not be touched whatsoever by the effects of technological problems and other worldwide problems that are coming upon the earth. It is Scriptural to believe that without a doubt, our Faith and the love of God will sustain us, will buoy us up and will strengthen us. We can withstand any form of persecution, poverty, physical or mental attack.

Let the words of the old hymn be our message to the world: "I don't know about tomorrow, but I know Who holds my hand".

When will the Lord come? Will it be this year? Next year? Four years from now? Five? Six? Seven? I leave it up to the Lord. But it is interesting, and I suspect that we should see the Lord coming in the clouds, in our lifetime. But whether He comes in our lifetime or not, I am sure that He will come, for He has promised us so, and the Gospels tell of it.

So I will live my life and be a disciple that tells everyone that will listen that Jesus' return is imminent, that technology, world markets, cashless society, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes at unprecedented levels, all warn us to "*look up when you see these things coming, for your redemption draws nigh*". This is no time for soft peddling and making excuses for what the Gospel preaches. Jesus is nearer today than ever before, and we need to be excited about it. We know the Scripture that proves God foretold our present conditions. We know that He's real and Faithful and we should be planting seed and pulling in the Harvest as if night is coming...for it is upon us. The dawn will not break without the night. It's definitely not morning, so it must be evening or early night. So get busy.