

**THE
LIVING
WORD**

By

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**All Scripture quotations
from the King James Version
of the Bible unless otherwise stated**

Other books authored or edited by Bill Kaiser

**A Comprehensive Study of Righteousness
Adam, Jesus & Us; Spirit, Soul & Body: a Study in
Scriptures.**

Spirit, A Study in Scriptures

Who Is Christ?

Who, in Christ, are You?

No other Gospel

From the Heart

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INTRODUCTION

THE LIVING WORD is a book about the Word of God. It is not a book just about the Bible, although much attention is given to the Bible, its origin and its content.

THE LIVING WORD begins by examining what God means when He spoke the word "word", as recorded in the Bible.

Once we have examined the meaning God gives to "word" we will consider the Bible. We call the Bible the Word of God, yet in the literal sense it is a book which is the record of the Word of God. Who wrote the Bible? Why do we call that collection of Books the Word of God? We will address all of these questions and more.

After examining the Bible as the Word of God, we will examine the idea from John 1:14 that "the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,...full of grace and truth." When the Word was made flesh in the embodiment of Jesus, what did He say and why did He say it? Jesus did far more than teach us new ideas. By words, the Living Word was imparted to the hearer.

As we begin to see the Word as a living word, we can understand Peter, who wrote in First Peter 1:23, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." Being born again by the Living Word, we become living epistles of Christ (First Corinthians 3:3).

Our lives are message givers. We are letter carriers for God. Dare we say that we are living letters from God to His creation? Dare we believe that we are "THE LIVING WORD??"

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS A WORD?

Webster's Definition

Webster defines a word in many ways. He lists the following:

1. A brief expression,
2. A promise,
3. News, information,
4. A password, signal,
5. Talk, speech, lyrics,
6. Quarrel,
7. Speech, sound, or a series of sounds having meaning,
8. A letter or a group of letters,
9. A saying.

"Word" used in certain phrases or clichés also helps to define the meaning "word".

Cliché/	Phrase Definition
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Good word	praise
Play on words	pun
Man of his word	promise
At a word	
Word of mouth	spoken
Hard words	rebuke

Household word	common
In a word	short
In so many words	restated
In word	(or deed)
Of many words	verbose
The Word	The Bible
to be as good as one's word	faithful
to break one's word	
to eat one's word	to take back
to give one's word	promise
to have a word with one	argue
to have no words for	surprise
to take the words out of one's mouth	speak thoughts
word for word	exact quote

From these uses of "word" we see several other synonyms for "word"; namely, those words listed above which have the same meaning. In a word, synonym.

Hebrew Words

There are several Hebrew words translated "word"; *dabar*, *peh*, *pa'ah*, *imrah*, *emer*, *millah*, and *malal*.

Certainly *dabar* is the most frequently used. *Dabar* means a word, matter, thing or cause. It also means to arrange, speak, or subdue.

The word *peh* and *pa'ah* are less frequently used. They mean, mouth, blowing part, edge, portion, side, puff, or blow away.

Imrah and *emer* are rarely used. They mean commandment, speech, word, or something said.

Occasionally *millah* and *malal* are used meaning a word, a discourse, a topic, to speak or say.

Greek Words

The most frequently used Greek word translated "word" is *logos*. It means said, topic, reasoning, motive, computation or divine expression.

Rhema and *rheo* are used with less frequency and they mean to utter, matter, topic, speak or say.

The word *epo* is seldom used and it means to speak or say.

Apaggello means to announce, and is infrequently used.

God's Word

In John 1:1 we find recorded, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This is a familiar passage of scripture. When we read it we do not always think of what it means. Let us examine this verse to explore its meaning.

The Greek word translated "Word" in this passage is *logos*. It is also translated, saying, account, speech, or thing. *Logos* means something said (including the thought); a topic, reasoning, computation, or divine expression. Keep this in mind as we continue to explore John, Chapter One, verse one.

We can test the proper meaning of "Word" in John 1:1 by inserting several different synonyms in the verse while reading it.

The Bible As The Word

When one inserts the word Bible for "Word" in John 1:1, it reads, "In the beginning was the Bible, and the Bible was with God, and the Bible was God." Obviously, Bible is not a valid synonym for "Word" in this verse. The Bible did not exist in the beginning, for nothing existed in the beginning before God. The Bible was not God in the beginning, regardless of what some science fiction writers imply.

The Bible is a book, even a collection of books that are sometimes called "The Book." In the beginning there was no paper, no ink, and no cows to make leather covers. All of these elements, man has made from what God created in the beginning.

No, we cannot use Bible as a synonym for "Word" in John, Chapter One, and verse one.

Alphabetic Letters as Words

If we substitute the idea of letters for "Word" in John 1:1, we must first realize that they are merely graphic symbols for sounds. We then make the substitution in the verse by writing, "In the beginning were graphic symbols, and the graphic symbols were with God, and the graphic symbols were God." Here again it is obvious that letters or graphic symbols are not a valid substitutes for "Word" in John, Chapter One, verse one.

In the beginning there was nothing with which to produce a graphic symbol. To say that a graphic symbol was God is also a great distortion of God. God is not an inanimate thing. God created us in His likeness and image. We are

like Him. We are alive. God is not a thing. He is the "I AM THAT I AM," the essence of living beings. (Exodus 3:14)

No, graphic symbols are not a valid substitute for "Word" in John, Chapter One, verse one.

Audible Sound As The Word.

Knowing that books contain graphic symbols (either printed or written) that represent audible sounds, we shall test the substitution of "audible sounds" for "Word" in John 1:1. "In the beginning was the audible sound, and the audible sound was with God, and the audible sound was God."

Could it be that God is just some unintelligent sound? Is God just a whistle, a clatter, or a bang? Obviously not. God is an intelligent Being. He is not just some random sound.

Ideas As The Word

We must realize that books contain graphic symbols which are grouped together to form words. These groupings of symbols represent sounds, and the different sounds communicate ideas from one person's head, through their mouth to another. The ears of the second person pick up the sounds, and the brain reconstructs that image or idea in the mind of the person hearing.

So we shall substitute image for "Word" in John 1:1. "In the beginning was the image, and the image was with God, and the image was God." This also falls short of the full truth, but it comes closer to communicating the truth to us than anything else. We could amplify and clarify by

paraphrasing John, chapter one, verse one. "In the beginning was an image- idea, and that image-idea was with and in God, and that image-idea was the essence of God Himself."

This paraphrase is quite consistent with *logos*, which you remember means; divine expression or divine thought.

What is a Word?

A word is more than a book. Books are simply storehouses for graphic symbols. A word is more than a collection of graphic symbols (letters) grouped together to represent certain sounds. Sounds are simply a means to communicate words from the head, through the mouth, into ears, and into listening ears and heads.

A word is an idea, a thought concept or image in the mind.

Chapter 2

GOD'S RECORDED WORD

The Bible

We call the Bible, the Word of God. What do we really mean when we say that? We mean the Holy Bible is a record of what God has said to mankind, His creation, through the years. It does not record everything that God has said to everybody from the beginning. It does contain all that we need to know of God and His Son, Jesus Christ. It contains every practical instruction from God about living as a child of God in this creation. Of course we cannot possibly describe the Holy Bible in such a short sentence.

Collection of Books

The Holy Bible is really more than one book. It is a collection of sixty- six Books. In the King James Version and other Bible editions and translations used in Protestant denominations there are thirty-nine Books in the Old Testament and twenty-seven Books in the New Testament. There are also fourteen Old Testament books called the Apocrypha (meaning concealed or hidden). These Books are included in Bibles used by some liturgical churches.

In these sixty-six Books there are subdivisions of chapters and verses. The original manuscripts (which we do not have), even the earliest manuscripts (which we do have), do not contain chapter divisions and verse numbers. The Chapters and verses were added to the Old Testament by Cardinal Hugo in the Thirteenth Century. The New Testament chapter and verse numbers were added in 1551 by Robert Stephens.

Interesting Statistics

	O.T.	N.T.	TOTAL
Books	39	27	66
Chapters	929	260	1189
Verses	23,144	7,957	31,101
Words	602,585	180,552	783,137
Letters	2,728,100	838,380	3,566,480
Middle Books	Proverbs	II Thes	Mic & Nah
Middle Chapter	Job 20	Romans 8	Psalm 117
Middle Verse	II Chr 20:17	Acts 27:17	Ps 118:8
Largest Book	Psalms	Luke	Psalms
Longest Chapter	Psalm 119	Luke 1	Psalm 119
Smallest Book	Obediah	III John	III John
Shortest Verse	I Chr 1:25	Jn 11:35	Jn 11:35
Different Words Used	8674	5624	12,143
God is used			3,358
Lord is used			7,736

Five Books have only one chapter: Obediah, Philemon, II John, III John, and Jude.

Old Testament

Book Names	Authors	Dates
1. Genesis	Moses	1600~B.C.
2. Exodus	Moses	1600~B.C.
3. Leviticus	Moses	1600~B.C.
4. Numbers	Moses	1600~B.C.
5. Deuteronomy	Moses	1600~BC
6. Joshua	Joshua	1550~BC
7. Judges	Samuel	1126~BC
8. Ruth	Samuel	1120~BC
9. I Samuel	Samuel David Nathan Gad	
Compiled Isaiah		700~B.C. by
10. II Samuel	Samuel David Nathan Gad	
Compiled Isaiah		700~B.C. by
11. I Kings	Isaiah Jeremiah	1046-616 B.C.
12. II Kings	Isaiah Jeremiah	1046-616 B.C.
13. I Chronicles	Isaiah Ezra	1279-461 B.C.
14. II Chronicles	Isaiah Ezra	1279-461 B.C.
15. Ezra	Ezra	546-461 BC
16. Nehemiah	Nehemiah	446-430 BC
17. Esther	Ezra	516-506 BC
18. Job	Job (?)	1840-1700 BC
19. Psalms	Moses (1) David (73)	

	Solomon (2)	
	Asaph (12)	1500-450 BC
	Heman (1)	
	Ethan (1)	
	Korah (10)	
20. Proverbs	Solomon	1000 BC
21. Ecclesiastes	Solomon	1000 BC
22. Song of Solomon	Solomon	1000 BC
23. Isaiah	Isaiah	792-722 BC
24. Jeremiah	Jeremiah	685-616 BC
25. Lamentations	Jeremiah	616 BC of
Jeremiah		
26. Ezekiel	Ezekiel	622-600 BC
27. Daniel	Daniel	616-536 BC
28. Hosea	Hosea	781-711 BC
29. Joel	Joel	795-755 BC
30. Amos	Amos	679-648 BC
31. Obediah	Obediah	899-795 BC
32. Jonah	Jonah	853-824 BC
33. Micah	Micah	772-722 BC
34. Nahum	Nahum	786-757 BC
35. Habakkuk	Habakkuk	679-648 BC
36. Zephaniah	Zephaniah	679-648 BC
37. Haggai	Haggai	557-525 BC
38. Zechariah	Zechariah	557-525 BC
39. Malachi	Malachi	557-525 BC

New Testament

Book Names	Authors	Dates
40. Matthew	Matthew	37 AD
41. Mark	John Mark	57-63 AD
42. Luke	Luke	58-63 AD
43. John	John	90 AD
44. Acts	Luke	63 AD
45. Romans	Paul	58-60 AD

46. I Corinthians	Paul	59 AD
47. II Corinthians	Paul	60 AD
48. Galatians	Paul	60 AD
49. Ephesians	Paul	64 AD
50. Philippians	Paul	64 AD
51. Colossians	Paul	64 AD
52. I Thessalonians	Paul	54 AD
53. II Thessalonians	Paul	54 AD
54. I Timothy	Paul	67 AD
55. II Timothy	Paul	68 AD
56. Titus	Paul	67 AD
57. Philemon	Paul	64 AD
58. Hebrews	Paul (?)	68 AD
59. James	James	45 AD
60. I Peter	Peter	60 AD
61. II Peter	Peter	61-65 AD
62. I John	John	90 AD
63. II John	John	90 AD
64. III John	John	90 AD
65. Jude	Jude	66 AD
66. Revelation	John	96 AD

These are just a few of the amazing statistics of the Bible. From them we realize that there must have been a higher authority controlling the content of His Word with its marvelous unity and internal confirmation.

Chapter 3

WHO WROTE THE BIBLE?

The Bible is compiled of sixty-six books. The King James Version was written between 1600 B.C. and A.D. 96 a span of more than 1600 years, by more than thirty authors.

Moses

The author of the Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy), is said to be Moses. He was born about 1571 B.C., the third child of his parents, Aaron and Miriam being older. Exodus, Chapter Two, relates to us the story of his birth.

Moses was born an Israelite in Egypt, but was saved from slaughter when Pharaoh's daughter found the infant Moses floating in a basket among the reeds of the sea as she bathed.

Therefore, Moses was raised and educated in the courts of the Egyptian Pharaoh. With such an education, he could probably read and write and had opportunity to cultivate many other talents.

After killing an Egyptian soldier when he was forty years old, Moses fled from the prosperity and authority of

Pharaoh's court to the back side of the desert. There he became a shepherd, a sharp contrast to his training and life style to that point in his life. Moses also took himself a Midianite wife at this time.

When Moses was eighty, God spoke to him out of a burning bush, sending him back to Egypt to lead Israel out of Egyptian bondage. Meek Moses, ex-prime minister and murderer, was made a great leader by God to lead three million people out of bondage.

Joshua

Joshua wrote the Book of Joshua. He was born in Egypt, the son of Nun, forty years before the Exodus of the Israelites. He was forty years younger than Moses.

It was Joshua and Caleb, two of the twelve Israelite spies, who brought back the good report about possessing the Promised Land.

Joshua was eighty years old when he took the leadership of Israel vacated by the death of Moses.

Samuel

Samuel is the son of Hannah, who cried to God for a son to satisfy her husband. She dedicated that promised son to God, and he was raised by the high priest, Eli. Because of this he had good rabbinical training.

Samuel was the last judge of Israel, and he was used of God to install the first king of Israel, Saul.

Samuel authored the Book of Judges and contributed to the Book of Ruth, First Samuel, and Second Samuel.

David

David was the youngest son of Jesse. He was a shepherd boy, poet, musician, and ultimately became King of Israel. David was a giant killer, an adulterer, and a murderer as well. We must never forget he was a man after God's own heart.

He contributed to First Samuel, Second Samuel, and wrote seventy-three of the Psalms.

Solomon

Solomon was the son of David and Bathsheba, possibly the first son born out of their legal marriage. As the son of the shepherd king (David), Solomon received every advantage of education available in that day.

Solomon was noted for his wealth and wisdom. The fact that he had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines should not surprise us, as we remember he is the son of David and Bathsheba.

Solomon authored Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomon, and two of the Psalms.

Isaiah

Isaiah was the son of Amos, and supposedly a member of the royal family. Therefore, he had the advantage of education, being able to read and write. He lived and ministered as a prophet during the reign of Uzziah,

Jothan, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah from 772 B.C. to 697 B.C. (or possibly 741 B.C. to 686 B.C.).

Isaiah wrote the Book of Isaiah, and he contributed to First and Second Kings, and First and Second Chronicles.

Jeremiah

Jeremiah was the son of a priest, Hilkiah. He was called to the office of prophet as a young man, a zealous man. Many call him the angry prophet. Because of his personality reflected in his writings, we identify zealous anger with the office of prophet. I am not sure God requires men to have zealous anger to occupy the office of prophet.

Jeremiah lived and prophesied during the reign of Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiakin, and Zedekiah.

Ezra

Ezra was a scribe and priest who lived in Babylon about 500-450 B.C. He found favor with King Artaxerxes to return to Israel to fulfill his vision.

Ezra contributed to First and Second Chronicles. He wrote the Books of Ezra, Esther, and possibly Nehemiah.

Daniel

Daniel was a man of noble descent and talents. He lived in Babylon during the reign of Jehoiakim and thus was

contemporary with Jeremiah. He was obviously a man of spiritual sensitivity to interpret dreams and visions.

Hosea

The son of Beerī, Hosea was contemporary with Isaiah and Amos during the reign of Jeroboam II. His prophetic zeal was stirred by an unfaithful wife. By this his prophetic eyes were opened concerning Israel's unfaithfulness to God.

Joel

Very little is known of Joel, and the time period of his prophetic ministry is uncertain. He was the son of Pethuel.

Amos

Amos was a shepherd and tree trimmer who lived in Tekoa, south of Bethlehem. He lived about 704 B.C. during the reign of Uzziah and Jeroboam, which made him contemporary with Isaiah and Hosea. It would appear that he was not from the same advantaged background as Isaiah and Daniel.

Obediah

Little is known of Obediah. He authored the Book by the same name, the shortest Book of the Old Testament.

Jonah

Jonah was the son of Amittai who lived in Gath-hepher between 832 B.C. and 770 B.C. before the reign of Jerobaom II. Little else is known of his life, except what we read in his own story of trying to run from God and how God dramatically returned him the Nineveh in the belly of a great fish which the Lord had prepared.

Micah

Micah exercised the prophetic office during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Thus, he was contemporary with Hosea, Amos in Israel, and with Isaiah in Judah.

Nahum

Nahum is also somewhat a mystery. Even his place of residence is in question. Some surmise that he prophesied during the reign of Hezekiah.

Habakkuk

Authorities believe that Habakkuk lived and prophesied during the reigns of Josiah, Jehoahaz, and Jeroiakim. Other facts are unknown about him.

Zephaniah

Zephaniah was a fourth generation descendant from Hezekiah who prophesied during the reign of Josiah from 639 B.C. to 608 B.C.

Haggai

Haggai prophesied in Jerusalem after the return of Israel from Babylon. He lived from 600 B.C. to 520 B.C. or so.

Zechariah

Zechariah is the Son of Berechiah and the grandson of Iddo. Some say he was the son of Iddo. He was a priest and prophet.

Malachi

Malachi prophesied during the time of Nehemiah about 432 B.C.

Other Old Testament Authors

Many others contributed to the Old Testament, such as Asaph (wrote twelve Psalms), Heman (wrote one Psalm), Ethan (wrote one Psalm), Korah (wrote ten Psalms), and possibly Job.

Matthew

Matthew wrote the Gospel according to Matthew, the Gospel to the Jews. He was the son of Alphaeus. Matthew is also called Mattathias, Matthias, and Levi in the Bible. He lived in Capernaum and served as a customs tax collector until Jesus Christ called him to follow Him. As a publican, Matthew was also a collector

of Roman taxes. He lived at least thirty years beyond the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Mark

Mark is the author of the Gospel according to Mark, the Gospel to the Gentiles. Many authorities believe that Mark, who traveled with Paul, and John Mark are one and the same=Mark, the Gospel writer.

Mark is the son of one Mary of Jerusalem, the one who housed Peter when he was released from prison. It is quite possible that John Mark was Peter's convert. It is quite possible that Mark's close relationship with Peter had great influence on the content of the Gospel of Mark.

John Mark met Paul through Barnabas who was John Mark's cousin. His relationship with Paul was questionable since John Mark separated himself from Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey. However, Mark obviously joined Paul in Rome during the later years of Paul's life.

Luke

Luke, the Gentile physician, is the author of the Gospel according to Luke and the Book of Acts. He probably met Paul in Antioch of Syria, Luke's home town, and Paul's church home.

Luke's command of Greek and his physician's education mark him as a man of financial means and education. Luke traveled together with Paul to Macedonia and to Rome. These travels gave Luke firsthand knowledge to write the Book of the Acts of the Apostles.

John

John, the Beloved, was the son of Zebedee and Salomi, who ministered to Jesus. He was a fisherman and businessman whose home was in Bethsaida on the north shore of Galilee.

John was the youngest of twelve and lived to be more than ninety years old.

John wrote the Gospel according to John which is significantly different than the other three Gospels. It is the Gospel of Love and, therefore reflects John's personality.

John also wrote the three Epistles of John and the Book of the Revelation of Saint John while in exile on the Isle of Patmos between 90 and 96 A.D.

Paul

Paul, the son of a Pharisee tentmaker, was first known as Saul of Tarsus. His family was prosperous and influential in Israel in that day.

He was trained in Hebrew and Greek culture, and after his basic education in Tarsus, went to boarding school in Jerusalem to study under Gamaliel, the grandson of the famous Hillel, the major contributor to the mishna.

Saul persecuted the Christians in the early church by authority of the Sanhedrin, the ruling elders of Jerusalem. While carrying out their orders to return Christians from Damascus for trial, Saul was stopped by the resurrected

Jesus Christ and surrendered himself to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Zealous Paul appeared to be God's selected replacement for Judas who betrayed Jesus.

Paul wrote a major portion of what we now call the New Testament including Romans, First Corinthians, Second Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, First Thessalonians, Second Thessalonians, First Timothy, Second Timothy, and Philemon.

Peter

Peter wrote the Letters of First and Second Peter. It is quite possible that he exerted considerable influence on the Gospel of Mark, since John Mark was his convert and close friend.

Remember, Peter was a fisherman and businessman as was John. Therefore, he was a practical man, and he was "results" oriented. He was the intellect and theologian as Paul was.

James

James is the author of the Book by the same name.

There are several men in the New Testament named James. This James was the half brother of Jesus of Nazareth, and the Bishop of the church at Jerusalem.

Summary

We have briefly described twenty-eight of more than thirty contributors to the sixty-six Books of the Bible. Among them are murderers, adulterers, rich men, poor men, intellectuals, laborers, proud, humble, and the meek.

I do not point this out to criticize these men, or God, or the Bible. It is very important to realize the nature and history of these men if we are going to understand the nature of God's plan to redeem His creation and the nature of His Word.

God chose to send His Word through men, all kinds of men for all kinds of reasons. Later in this book we will give more detail to this understanding, but we introduce the idea here. God's Word is not a collection of laws, statutes, commandments, methods and procedures. God's Word is His Word to His creation, man. Therefore God chose to speak to men through men, that men might receive it and understand it. God chose to wrap His Word in mankind.

For this reason, God did not write the Bible. The Holy Spirit did not write the Bible. God chose to send his ideas to men, who were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write. Men wrote the Bible inspired by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit did not write the Bible. Men wrote the Bible as the Holy Spirit gave them inspiration. (I would say this a hundred different ways if I thought it were necessary. However, I believe you get the point.)

God chose to use men to write the Bible. Not necessarily men who qualified in our understanding, but men who made themselves available to God. Yes, they were chosen of God, but I believe that God chose them because they were available to be chosen. These men were not always Holy in their lives. They were not all

qualified by religious standards. They were not all qualified by natural standards of intelligence or education. But they all qualified in God's sight. For that reason the Bible reflects the realities of life and reveals a God who is well able to meet us in the reality of our need. For this I am thankful.

Chapter 4

THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

Not all men accept the Holy Bible to be the Word of God. A noted evangelist tells the story of ministering in India. He held up his Bible and said, "This is the Word of God." He thought that everyone would accept this truth, but he was surprised to find that many Moslems believe that the Koran is the Word of God.

How do we know that The Holy Bible is the Word of God? There are countless arguments we could put forth to justify our claim that the Holy Bible is the Word of God. However, there are just a few arguments which are necessary to prove our claim. I believe they fall into four simple categories:

1. Experience proves the claims of the Bible.
2. The Bible declares itself to be the Word of God.
3. The Bible proclaims history before archeology discovers history.
4. Science is confirming Biblical accuracy.

Experience

Probably the most convincing evidence to the unbelievers that the Holy Bible is the Word of God is

experience. We can experience what the Word of God promises. For unbelievers to experience signs, wonders, miracles, and healings that the Bible promises is very convincing to unbelievers. They are not only surprised at the miracles and healings, which are contrary to their natural thinking, but even more surprised to find that they were always promised to God's people in the Holy Bible.

This is the kind of proof that the evangelist in India used. As he believed God to heal and work miracles among the heathen, God proved Himself and His Word. People experienced healing and miracles promised by God in the Bible. Therefore, they accepted the Bible as the Word of God.

As I experienced the New Birth and saw it in the Bible, I saw that the Bible promised some benefits in life that I had not experienced. Therefore, I began to trust that things I found in the Bible which I had not experienced, I could experience. After finding out that New Birth was a Biblical experience, I then saw that healing was in the Bible. I believed that healing was a valid Biblical experience for some, but maybe not for me. Then I experienced healing, and having experienced the promise of healing, I saw that the Bible promises healing to all who believe.

I then read about the Baptism in the Holy Spirit in the Bible. By then I had enough confidence that the Bible was the Word of God, that I believed that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, as well as the gift of tongues, was for me also. I believed this was God's promise for me even before I experienced it.

It is by experiencing the Word of God, that God proves to us that the Bible is His Word.

By accepting the Bible as the Word of God, we find out what God has for all of His children; hope takes root, and faith begins to bring forth the promises of God in our lives to bring glory to God.

The Bible Declares Itself To Be God's Word

The Holy Bible states within its own covers that it is the Word of God. By itself this is not sufficient proof that it really is the Word of God. However, as the integrity of the Word is established in our hearts by experiencing the promises of God, we believe what the Bible says about itself. It is confirmation to us. Since the Bible is truthful about the New Birth, healing, and other promises, then the Bible is also truthful when it declares itself to be the Word of God.

Second Timothy 3:15, 16, says, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration, of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

Second Peter 1:19-21 says, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Of course there are other facts about the Bible that declare it to be the Word of God more directly.

As we remember that it is a collection of sixty-six Books written by some thirty or more authors over a period of 1600 years, we marvel at its amazing unity.

The fact that these writings, or even copies of these writings have been miraculously preserved through the hundreds of years is proof of God's hand upon the Books of the Bible. Surely countless other tablets, scrolls, and letters were written at the same time as the Bible Books, yet we have no great libraries of these historical writings, for they were not preserved. The Books of the Bible were miraculously preserved.

Another fact about the Bible that confirms it to be the Word of God is the confession of the prophets and authors who made reference to one another. The first five books (the Pentateuch) are referenced to by:

Joshua, Joshua 1:7, 1:8, 8:31, 23:6.

David, I Kings 2:3.

Solomon, I Kings 8:61.

Amaziah, II Kings 14:6.

Manasseh, II Kings 21:8.

Josiah, II Kings 23:25.

Asa, II Chronicles 14:4.

Jehoshaphat, II Chronicles 17:9.

Jeremiah, Jeremiah 8:8.

Daniel, Daniel 9:11, 9:31.

Ezra, Ezra 6:18.

Nehemiah, Nehemiah 13:1.

Malachi, Malachi 4:4.

Of course the most important confirmation of the divine inspiration of the Word of God is Jesus Himself. He declared the scriptures would be fulfilled in:

Matthew 13:14,

Luke 21:22,

John 13:18, and
John 15:25.

Jesus declared that not one tittle of the law would fail in
Luke 16:17.

Jesus spoke of fulfillment about Himself in Luke 24:25-
27, 44. He said that His words would not pass away in
Mark 13:31

Jesus Christ made reference to Old Testament Books in
Matthew 22:31-32, Luke 4:17-19, and Luke 16:29-31, just
to mention a few.

The Bible Proclaims History

The integrity of the Word of God is validated by its
historical accuracy.

In this day of secular humanism the creation story is
rejected by men, but there will come a time at the great
White Throne Judgment when all men will realize how
foolish it was to reject the creation account in the Bible.

Nearly every cultural group in the world records a great
flood in their history. For years, men discounted the flood
and the ark as myth. Now men find the remains of a great
wooden ark on mount Ararat, confirming this Biblical
history.

The ruins of a great tower remain in the fertile crescent
today. The size of the ruins indicates the tower should
have been 700 feet high. This could well have been the
tower of Babel in Genesis, Chapter Eleven, and verse
nine.

Archeologists have confirmed there was an Ur of the Chaldees.

In 1927 a landslide North of Jericho cut off the Jordan River's flow for several hours, leaving the river bed dry. This showed modern man how God could have made the Jordan River part for Israel to pass into the Promised Land.

In addition to natural history, there are man's confirmations of the integrity of the Word of God in fulfilled prophecy.

Micah 5:2 prophesied that Jesus Christ would be born in Bethlehem.

Isaiah 7:14 prophesied that Jesus Christ would be born of a virgin.

Daniel 9:24-25 foretold that the Messiah would be cut off (or crucified) 69 weeks of years (483 years) after the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem.

In Luke 4:18, Jesus quoted Isaiah 61:1, 2, to describe His own ministry and fulfill the prophecy.

These are just a few of the historical and prophetic confirmations that the Bible is divinely inspired.

Scientific Proof

The Bible spoke of science before it became the highly sophisticated field that it is today.

Isaiah 40:21-22 speaks of "the circle of the earth" meaning the earth was round, when men believed the

earth to be flat until the day of Columbus as late as 1500 A.D.

Job 38:35 says, "Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?" This speaks of lightning sending a message. Surely this speaks of electricity and radio.

Job 28:5 speaks of the center of the earth being fire.

Revelation 11:9 speaks of kindreds and tongues and nations seeing the dead bodies of the two witnesses lying three days in the streets of Jerusalem. How could thousands observe this other than by television!

Nahum 2:3, 4, speaks of chariots blaze with fire. It is obvious to us that Nahum speaks of the automobile, which the scientific world had no knowledge of until late 1800 A.D.

Summary

There will never be an end to books written about the Holy Bible. No one can absolutely prove the Holy Bible is the Word of God. Ultimately faith needs to be applied before accepting this truth.

However, the Holy Spirit will help us to wipe away objections to this truth that the Holy Bible is the Word of God.

Experience

As we experience the promises in the Bible, we accept the integrity of the Word of God.

Self Declaration

As we read the Bible, we will begin to believe what it says about itself, even before we experience what it says.

History

As we read the Bible, we find it contains an accurate, historical record. We have not always believed that, but new archeological evidence shows us the Bible recorded history accurately through the years.

Science

Many Bible statements and prophecies have made no sense to man, until science discovered new truth.

The Bible is the Word of God!

Chapter 5

THE BIBLE SPEAKS!

To find what the Bible says about the word "word", we will examine the way the Bible uses "word" in the English. We have already considered the various Hebrew and Greek words that are translated "word" in the English. We will now confine our study to the English "word" only, realizing that it has been translated from several other words in Hebrew and Greek.

"Word" is used more than 650 times in the King James Version. The Hebrew word *dabar* predominates in the Old Testament. The Greek word *logos* is predominate in the New Testament. Second Timothy 3:16-17 says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Therefore, it is good for us to consider all of the Word of God if we are going to gain a balanced understanding of "word".

Of the 650 uses of "word", some 250 (nearly 40 percent) are used in the phrase "word of the Lord." This phrase is used in nearly every Book of the Old Testament, especially in the major prophets. This shows us that these various authors, writing over hundreds of years, were hearing from one common source, the Lord, Adonai.

The verb "came" is used in about 136 verses out of the 650 verses that use "word". Somehow, the "word came" to the various men of God. It is not something that they made up, nor was it a product of their natural wisdom. The Word came to them from God. It came to them by the Spirit of God.

In 64 of the 650 "word" verses (about 10 percent), "hearing" is admonished. This is not just the hearing of the ear, or of the head, but a hearing by the heart.

"Doing" and "speaking" are less frequently related to "word" in these 650 verses. Yet each one, "doing" and "speaking" is related to "word" in about 45 of the 650 verses (about 7 percent each).

The next most frequent use in "word" verses is "reply", "promise", and "mouth". They are used about 14 times each.

There are a large number of adjectives used, especially in the New Testament scriptures, which describe the Word of God. Many relate the character of the Word of God itself; still others speak of our response to the Word of God.

Character of the Word

Abides	I Jn 2:14, Col 3:16
Sure	II Pe 1:19
Pure	Ps 119:140, Ps 12:64, Pr 30:5
Milk	I Pe 2:2
Good	Heb 6:5, II Th 2:17, Jer 29:10
Sweet	Ps 119:105
Incarnate	I Pe 1:23

Everlasting Truth	Lk 21:33 Ja 1:18, II Ti 2:15, Col 1:5, Eph 1:3, II Cor 6:7, Eph 5:26
Engrafted	Ja 1:21
Faithful	Tit 1:9
Endures	I Pe 1:25
Life	Mt 4:4, De 8:3, I Jn 1:1, Phi 2:16 Lk 5:1
Quick	Heb 4:12, Ps 119:107, Ps 119:15, Ps 119:154
Powerful	Heb 4:12, Heb 1:3
Salvation	Ac 13:20
Healing	Mt 8:8, Ps 107:20
Deliverance	Mt 8:16
Strength	Ps 119:28
Not Bound	II Ti 2:9
Free Course	II Th 3:1
Fire	Jer 23:29
Water	Eph 5:26
Cleanse	Jn 15:3, Ps 119:9
Merciful	Ps 119:58, Ps 119:76
Light	Ps 119:105, Ps 119:130
Apples of Gold	Pr 25:11
Seed	Lk 8:11, Mk 4:14-15, I Pe 1:23
Sword	Eph 6:17
Brings Faith	Ro 10:17
Nigh Thee	Ro 10:8
Brings Reconciliation	II Cor 5:19

This is surely an impressive list of the characteristics of the Word of God.

Is it any wonder that the Word exhorts us to relate to it in the following ways?

Our Relation to the Word

Praise the Word	Ps 56:4 Ps 56:10
Rejoice in the Word	Ps 119:147 Ps 119:162 Jer 15:16 Pr 12:25
Stand with the Word	Ps 105:28 Ps 119:17 Ps 119:38
Keep the Word	Ps 119:67 Ps 119:101
Remember the Word	Ps 119:16
Hide the Word	Ps 119:11
Trust the Word	Ps 119:42
Hope in the Word	Ps 119:49, Ps 119:74 Ps 119:81, Ps 119:114 Ps 119:147, Ps 130:5
Understand the Word	Ps 119:169 Neh 8:13

In closing this chapter, may I remind you that we have only considered scripture verses using "word". Even more enlightenment can be found as we consider synonyms for "word" such as scriptures, law, commandments, etc.

In this chapter we see further evidence that the Word of God is something more than a message or idea. We find the Word has life, healing, health, and power. The Word is an incorruptible seed; it endures forever. It seems that the Word of the Lord has all the character of God Himself.

Chapter 6

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

The Bible Says

In John 1:1 we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." We tested the meaning of Word in this passage in a previous chapter. I trust that examination brought understanding.

In John 1:3 we read, "All things were made by him (The Word); and without him (The Word) was not any thing made that was made." Here it is obvious that the Word is a Person with creative capacity. That Person with creative capacity had Life in Him, and that Life was the light of men.

Then in John 1:14 we read an astounding passage, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Why Made Flesh?

"...And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." God made the Word flesh for a reason. The Word of the Lord came to the prophets of God by the Spirit. They heard from God. But God did not make the prophets the

"Word made flesh." They only received messages, ideas by words from God. Out of these messages from God to the prophets, came the scriptures, the Mosaic law, and the mishna (traditional and religious law).

Obviously this was not sufficient or complete in God's plan and program, for God chose to do a new thing. For some specific purpose "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." The Word was made FLESH, not a list of do's and don'ts or rights and wrongs. God did give Moses the law to guide Israel in their daily living. Why then did the Word become flesh? Why was not the law sufficient Word from God to reveal Himself to us.

In the beginning, God created Adam. Adam was created, made, and formed in the likeness and image of God. Genesis 1:26 tells us God made man in His intangible image and tangible likeness. Genesis 1:27 reveals God created man in His own intangible image. Genesis 2:7 says, "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground...." God breathed into Adam the breath of life, and Adam became a living soul. In simple terms, God created a living being with freedom of choice.

For this reason God could not and did not send a simple mechanical or legal instruction to reprogram the living being which He had created. God had created a living being like Himself. Because Adam had freedom of choice, it was necessary for God to persuade Adamic man rather than to dictate or mechanically reprogram him.

Therefore, the word of the law did not affect a change in Adamic man, since the law could not persuade man but only reveal his sin.

In a like manner, Adamic man would not be persuaded by a word coming from a giant cassette recorder in the sky. Thank God for cassette tapes, but when we listen only to recorded messages, the teaching becomes cold and impersonal.

God's Word is living. Therefore, God chose to send His Word in the likeness of living and sinful flesh, yet without sin (Romans 8:3). God knew that Adamic mankind would only be persuaded to receive the Living Word of God as they saw the practical Living Word in the flesh, dwell among them (Adamic men).

God was so determined in this matter that He would not even send His word by His angels, who are actually His messengers. Angels could not demonstrate the Living Word, because they had no identification with the human experience, especially freedom of choice.

God was determined to demonstrate the Living Word through the likeness of Adamic flesh. So He sent His own Son, Jesus Christ, not with stone tablets of written law, not with a recorded doctrine, not as an angelic being, but in the likeness of sinful flesh. The Word was made flesh to dwell among Adamic men, to demonstrate the Living Word.

This tells us more about the nature of "word" than it does about God or Christ. It tells us the Word is alive. It is not just graphic symbols, ink on a page, a sound, or an idea. The Word of God is a Living Word. The vital manifestation of the Living Word is the Son of God that was with God in the beginning, and was the essence of God Himself in the beginning.

How Was It Made Flesh?

In Luke 1:26-27 we read, "...And the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary." God sent His chief angelic, messenger Gabriel to the virgin Mary with a message.

The message is in Luke 1:30-33, "Fear not Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and he shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

This is the idea that God had in mind. This is what God wanted to do. This message is not the Word that became flesh. It was a message of preparation. God sent this message to Mary because He would not violate her free will. God was asking permission, so to speak, to use her virgin body. God was not asking permission to make the Word become flesh. If Mary had not been willing, I believe God would have searched for another virgin in Nazareth to accomplish His plan. Whoever God would use, He would use by their permission and not by demand.

This also is consistent with God sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to persuade men to come to Him by their free choice.

Mary's Response

Having heard God's idea from Gabriel, Mary asked in Luke 1:34, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"

After telling Mary what God wanted to do, Gabriel then told Mary how God was going to do it in Luke 1:35. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

In Luke 1:38 we find the famous response of Mary to that understanding. She said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." Mary submitted herself to the Word of God. Not the dead letter. Not the law of Moses. Not to the idea alone. But Mary submitted herself to the Living Word of God. The Holy Ghost then came upon her and planted the Incorruptible Seed of the Living Word of God into her virgin womb, and the word, idea, image of God was wrapped in flesh. Hallelujah!

Chapter 7

THE LIVING WORD SPEAKS

The Living Word that was with God, and was the essence of God in the beginning, speaks. When the Word speaks, what does it say? When the Word speaks, what happens?

What does it say?

The answers to these two questions are simple but profound. When the Word speaks, it says, BE! Yea, that is right. It simply says, BE!

In John 1:3 we read, "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Who is the "Him" in this verse? The "Him" is the Word that was God in the beginning. The living Word made all things that were made.

The account of this creative making is found in Genesis, Chapter One, and verses three through twenty-nine. In that passage, "God said" something in verses 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, and 29. What God said was the Living Word. When God spoke, a representative portion of Himself came out. That living Word portion of God created in a tangible form after the intangible idea that

God had within Himself. To some this sounds like science fiction, but it is a spiritual fact.

What Living Word came out of the mouth of God? What did it produce?

Verse 3; Light be.

Verse 6; Let there be expanse to divide the waters.

Verse 9; Let the waters be gathered together.

Verse 11; Let the land put forth vegetation.

Verse 14; Let there be luminaries (stars) in the expanse of the heavens.

Verse 20; Let the waters swarm with abundance of living souls.

Verse 24; Let their land bring forth living souls.

When the Living Word came forth out of the mouth of God, bringing forth a representative portion of Himself, those ideas came into tangible existence. The Living Word created.

Jesus speaks!

The Christ of God is the Word that was God in the beginning. By the Christ- Word of God were all things made. This Christ-Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

The word dwelt is *skenoo* in the Greek. It means tent, encamp, reside, or tabernacle. It is taken from *Skenos*, meaning human body. Literally it means temporary, portable habitation. God sent His Christ-Word in a temporary habitation named Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus, the Christ-Word of God, for a temporary thirty years traveled in His portable habitation to impart the

Living Word to God's chosen people, even all of His creation.

Jesus delivered the Living Word by opening His mouth and speaking by the direction of the Holy Spirit, planting the seed of the Word where ever He went.

He Opened His Mouth

In Matthew, Chapter Five, we find the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew wrote an interesting introduction in verses one and two.

"And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying...."

The Holy Spirit inspired a detailed statement in verse two: "And he opened his mouth, and taught them saying...."

Since Jesus lived in the temporary habitation of flesh, that flesh had to cooperate to release the Word. So, Jesus opened His mouth so that the Word could come forth.

"...And He taught them...." The word used for taught in the Greek is *didasko*. It simply means to teach. The ancient English word *teacon* means to show. Jesus showed them something new as He opened His mouth. That new thing was a new idea which brought intellectual light to their minds.

When something new comes to us, one of two things will happen. We will reject it and remain the same, or we will accept the new idea. If we accept the new idea, we will

incorporate it in our thinking and our present thinking will be changed.

Now, it does not say Jesus tried to teach them. It does not say Jesus tried to change their thinking with new idea-words. No. Matthew 5:2 says that when He opened His mouth, "He taught them." He showed them something new with His idea-words and thereby changed them.

Saying

Jesus opened the mouth of His temporary, portable habitation, and changed their thinking with new idea-words...by saying.

When Jesus "said", He was not just acting as a cassette recorder, sending out words from His dictionary mind. When Jesus "said", He was not just bringing a message from God, as the messenger-angel brought a message to Mary.

When Jesus "said", it was the Word that was God in the beginning, showing something of Himself to the listener, changing the hearer by imparting a portion of Himself, the-Word-become-flesh-that-was-God-in-the-beginning to the hearer.

In other words (ha, ha) when Jesus opened His mouth, part of Himself came out. Not just sounds, not just words, not just ideas, but a representative portion of Himself came out.

Have you ever sucked the juice out of an orange? You cut a hole in one end, put your lips to the hole, squeeze the orange and suck. It's great, the ultimate in freshly

squeezed orange juice. But, toward the end, you not only get orange juice, you get some of the pulp as well. If you are not careful, you may get a portion of the rind. When this happens, you know it! It is not sweet, but bitter. You get not only the juice, but some of all the parts of the orange.

When Jesus opened His mouth and taught them saying, a total representative portion of Himself came out. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.

Eat the Word

In the Gospel of John, Chapter Six, we read John's report of the feeding of the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes.

After that miracle, Jesus walked on the Sea of Galilee in the night, joining His disciples in the ship.

The following day, Jesus exhorted the multitude, because they sought after Him, "...not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." (verse 26).

Jesus said, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."

The meat which endures unto everlasting life is to do the works of the Father. According to John 6:29, in Jesus' words, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent."

Therefore, the disciples asked of Jesus to give them a sign, that they may believe Him.

Jesus explained, "My Father giveth you the true bread from Heaven." He then makes a strange statement. "For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven...." Jesus did not say, "The bread of God is it." He said, "The bread of God is HE." The "He" that Jesus referred to was Himself. However, His disciples did not understand that.

Jesus said it directly in John 6:35, "I am the bread of life...." And again in John 6:48 He said, "I am the bread of life."

In John 6:51 Jesus said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Jesus continues to exhort His disciples to eat His flesh. In John 6:58 He says, "This is the bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth this bread shall live for ever."

By this time the words of Jesus have made the disciples so hungry to eat the flesh of Jesus that they probably are thinking of cannibalizing Him. However, this is far from what Jesus had in mind.

It seems as though Jesus leaves them without understanding as to how they can eat His flesh.

His disciples murmured among themselves. Jesus knew this and said, "Doth this offend you."

Then we find the answer in one of our favorite verses, John 6:63. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

That is the portion we remember, but it is preceded by, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing..." We use this quotation to teach about the spirit quality of words, and this is true.

However, the context of John 6:63 reveals Jesus' teaching to His disciples that although He is the Bread of Life, you cannot partake of the bread of Heaven by eating His flesh. You partake of the bread of Heaven by eating the words of Jesus, which are spirit and life.

The works of the Father are to hear, receive, and believe the Words of Jesus.

Chapter 8

THE WORD SAYS BLESSED

In Matthew Chapter Five, the Sermon on the Mount, the Word that was made flesh, opened up His mouth, and showed them a new idea-word as He taught them, by saying words that were spirit and life. What were the words that gave them spirit and life?

Blessed

The Sermon on the Mount opens with a series of blessings called "The Beatitudes." This opening with blessings sets Jesus apart from all other men. It sets the good news Gospel apart from religion. Jesus came to bless, not to curse. He came to forgive, not to condemn. He came to help, not to judge.

The blessings are:

Matthew 5:3; Blessed are the poor in spirit.

Matthew 5:4; Blessed are they that mourn.

Matthew 5:5; Blessed are the meek.

Matthew 5:6; Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Matthew 5:7; Blessed are the merciful.

Matthew 5:8; Blessed are the pure in heart.

Matthew 5:9; Blessed are the peacemakers.

Matthew 5:10; Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake.

Matthew 5:11; Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

That is quite a list of blessings. We call them "The Beatitudes." The word beatitude is from the French, and it means happy or blessed. The English word blessed comes from the Old English word, *bledsen*, which means blood covered. This obviously has connotations to the shed blood of Jesus Christ which brings happiness benefits to those who believe on Him.

The Greek word translated blessed is *makarios*. It literally means fortunate, well off, and happy. The Amplified Bible and the Wuest translation both translate the word *makarios*, "spiritually prosperous." As you see, even the Greek is not concise about the meaning of *makarios*, as the English is not concise about blessed.

Carefully note that Jesus said, "Blessed are." It is a command, even as God commanded, "Light be." Note also that Jesus did not say, should be, would be, or could be. There are not conditions in the Beatitudes. They are a list of commandments by "The Word" that was God in the beginning, who opened up His mouth and showed them a new idea by the speaking of spirit-word.

Now let us insert the phrase "fortunate, well off, happy, and spiritually prosperous", for the word blessed in the beatitudes.

Fortunate, well off, happy and spiritually prosperous are the poor in spirit.

Fortunate, well off, happy and spiritually prosperous are they that mourn.

Fortunate, well off, happy and spiritually prosperous are the meek.

Fortunate, well off, happy and spiritually prosperous are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Fortunate, well off, happy and spiritually prosperous are the merciful.

Fortunate, well off, happy and spiritually prosperous are the pure in heart.

Fortunate, well off, happy and spiritually prosperous are the peacemakers.

Fortunate, well off, happy and spiritually prosperous are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake.

From this amplified treatment of the word blessed in the Beatitudes, we begin to find some hints of the spiritual creativity that Jesus was expressing in this message. We begin to see a new idea about the Beatitudes.

Jesus is speaking to those things which were not as though they were. He was acting like the Father. Jesus said that He would in John, Chapter Five.

To clarify what I mean, allow me to give you the Kaiser paraphrased version.

Poor in spirit, be spiritually prosperous.

Mourning ones, be happy.

Meek ones, be well off.

Righteousness seeking ones, be fortunate to find.

Merciful ones, be faithful.

Pure in heart, be without guile.

Peacemakers, be abundantly bountiful.

Persecuted ones for righteousness' sake, be like God and keep sweet.

Promises To The Blessed

For each Beatitude there is an accompanying promise. Here is where the future tense of the verb to be, (shall) enters in. The blessings are TO BE right now. The promises are after the blessings, except for the first Beatitude.

Spiritual prosperity to the poor in spirit results in: "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven." It sounds like they reach out somehow and grasp a portion of the kingdom of heaven. In this possessive form in the Greek, they do not possess the kingdom of heaven; they become the possession of the kingdom of heaven. The Kaiser paraphrased version reads, "Spiritually prosperous are the destitute in the spirit (those who are not born again); for they are the dominion of the heavenly king." When we are born again, we become God's property, a subject of the dominion of the Heavenly King.

This was a new idea Jesus was showing them, by His spirit-word speaking. The Israelites, did not understand spirit, soul, and body concepts. They especially did not

understand being born again, as Nicodemus demonstrated in John, Chapter Three.

Promise to Mourners

Happy are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted. Mourning is a negative emotional condition. In the first Beatitude, Jesus makes a positive faith confession of new birth in the spirit realm. In this second Beatitude, the faith confession of Jesus is directed toward the soul realm function of emotions. Many believe that Jesus said that there is a blessing in weeping and grieving; these are negative emotional problems. If there is a blessing in mourning, then the promised comforting would be a curse. Obviously, this is not the case. Those who mourn are called happy by Jesus in the same faith confession as He made when He called the spiritually destitute, spiritually prosperous. Jesus had an idea that was new to the Israelites; the Holy Spirit would come to comfort their mourning.

Promise to the Meek

Jesus addresses Himself to the soul-realm intellect in the third Beatitude. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." The Kaiser Paraphrased version reads, "Well off are those who have a right mental image of themselves: for they shall get their unearned portion on the earth." Jesus is assuring them that the heavenly Father will provide for those who keep a right mental image of themselves.

Promise To Seekers.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." This is the Beatitude about the soul-realm operation of the will. Those who discipline their will toward righteousness, in the same frequency that they hunger and thirst, will be filled.

Filled with what? Filled with righteousness. Here again Jesus, the Word, is teaching them a new idea. The Israelites knew righteousness as the product of right doing. Jesus is telling them that righteousness is something one could be filled with. For those Israelites who consistently decided to do righteousness, Jesus taught that they would ultimately receive the gift of spirit-realm right standing with God the Father. They would receive it not because of their obedience, but because of their hunger for God.

Promise to the Merciful

Mercy is promised to the merciful. With this Beatitude, Jesus gives the first attention to conduct toward others.

The Kaiser paraphrased version reads, "Be faithful in mercifulness, for you will reap the mercy you have sown." This certainly was a new idea. The law promised judgment. Jesus taught that the first principle of relationship with others should be persistent mercy. This is what the Word, that was God in the beginning, says. The promise to the merciful is mercy.

Promise to the Pure in Heart.

There is no value in being merciful toward others unless it is done with a pure heart. "Blessed are the pure in

heart: for they shall see God," Jesus says. The Kaiser paraphrased version says, "Without guile are those with a pure selfless motivation: for they shall see God." The promise to those who are merciful with a pure heart is that they shall see God. Jesus does not explain how they shall see God. They may see Him in Jesus. They may see Him in a vision. I believe that we will see Jesus in others more than any other way. When your heart is pure you look beyond the problems of others and see their needs. You look beyond their carnal personality and see them as Jesus sees them. When your heart is pure you see what God intends for us all to be.

Promise to the Peacemakers

"Abundantly bountiful are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God," the Kaiser paraphrased version says. The promise given by the Word, that was God in the beginning, is that peacemakers will be called God's kids. Who would not want to be called a son of God? All of us would. Christians call themselves sons (and daughters) of God when they are born again. And so we are. But even those who are not born again will call us sons of God, when we continually make peace among people wherever we go. We will not judge things or people. We are not called to judge. We will be merciful with a pure heart and make peace.

When I was first called to the ministry, I just knew that I was called to change people so God could love them. It took me years to realize that I was called to love people so God could change them. Hallelujah! With that understanding, the Holy Spirit set me free and made the work of the ministry a great joy to me.

Promise to the Persecuted

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Here again, as in the first Beatitude, we find the phrase "theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Once again we chose to interpret that the people do not possess the kingdom of heaven; they become the possession of the kingdom of heaven, or of the Heavenly King. The Kaiser paraphrased version therefore reads, "Fortunate, well off, happy, and spiritually prosperous are they that are persecuted for righteousness: for even when persecuted, they are aware that they are under the dominion of the heavenly king."

The Living Word Speaks Promises

Thus the Living Word opened His mouth and showed them new ideas by what He said. The Living Word called them happy, well off, fortunate, and spiritually prosperous when circumstantially they were nothing like that at all.

The results of these expressions of the Living Word are promises.

They who eat the Word become the possession of the Heavenly King.

They who eat the Word have their emotions comforted.

They who eat the Word get their unearned portion on the earth.

They who eat the Word will be filled with spiritual right standing with God.

They who eat the Word shall reap mercy.

They who eat the Word shall see God.

They who eat the Word shall be called the children of God.

Chapter 9

THE WORD ENLIGHTENS

When the Word, Who was God in the beginning, speaks, light comes forth.

It is recorded in Genesis 1:3 that God said, "Light be." (The Emphasized Bible, Rotherham) The results: "There was light."

When the Word, Who was God in the beginning, became flesh and dwelt among us, He was the light of men. John 1:4, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men.">t51

When Jesus, Who was the Word that became flesh, opened His mouth and taught them by showing them new ideas, the minds of the disciples received light.

Jesus did not limit the light by just blessing them with the Beatitudes; He continued to expand on that light with the remainder of the Sermon on the Mount.

The Beatitudes are a basic outline of the Sermon on the Mount. The remainder of this famous teaching is a series of illustrations which bring further enlightenment on the meaning of the Beatitudes.

The following is a table of Beatitudes and the scriptural passage reference which brings enlightenment on each:

Beatitude Passage Reference

Poor in spirit	Matthew 5:13-20
They that mourn	Matthew 5:21-26
The meek	Matthew 5:27-32
They that hunger and thirst after righteousness	Matthew 5:33-37
The merciful	Matthew 5:38-48
The pure in heart	Matthew 6:1-34
The peacemakers	Matthew 7:1-14
The persecuted	Matthew 7:15-23

The Poor In Spirit

Spiritually prosperous are the poor in spirit; for they are the dominion of the Heavenly King.

As the spiritually prosperous, we are the salt of the earth. This speaks of our character and what that character does, just because we are salt. As the salt of the earth, we flavor, preserve, and heal in every situation; just because we are there; just because we are the righteousness of God in Christ.

"...But if the salt has lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted?" (Matthew 5:13) Often we are taught that salt will lose its savor at the drop of a hat. This is certainly not true. As a chemist, I know that salt needs a definite reaction with other chemicals before it loses its saltiness. We do not easily, if ever, lose our saltiness. We are the salt of the earth.

God Who spoke light into being in the beginning, sent the Word in the likeness of sinful flesh, and called Him the light of the men. This light of men opened His mouth and said, "Ye are the light of the world...." (Matthew 5:14) If Jesus said it, then it is true. You are the light of the world.

You are spiritually prosperous. You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world. God and His Son made you light, and they will not hide you under a bushel. God will set you on a hill where your light will be seen.

We need to understand that our good works are not the light. Matthew 5:16 says, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works...." Without the light of God shining through you, men will question the motive behind your works. When you let God's light shine through you, men see your love motive and interpret your works to be good rather than bad or selfish.

The Pharisees

The Word, that opened up His mouth and taught them by showing them new ideas, began to realize that some were resisting the new ideas. He then spoke to that resistance to overcome it as is seen in Matthew, Chapter Five, and verses seventeen through twenty.

He assured them that he did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. God will not permit the law to be taken away until all that the law prescribed comes to pass.

Therefore, anyone who breaks the law, or teaches others to do so shall be called the least under the dominion of the Heavenly King. Note that they are in the kingdom of God, even though they may be the least in it. If one will

do the law and teach others to keep it, they shall be called great in the dominion of the Heavenly King.

With this saying, Jesus assured the hearer that His new ideas would not destroy the old ideas, but only add to them.

They That Mourn

The illustration Jesus gives to enlighten us about the emotional problem of mourning is in Matthew, Chapter Five, and verses twenty-one through twenty-six. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment...."

Jesus gains the confidence of the new-idea resisters by starting with a statement that they all knew and agreed with. Surely that is love and mercy in action. Then He adds the new idea without destroying or taking away the old idea.

The old idea that Jesus refers to is "thou shalt not kill." Nothing causes us to grieve or mourn more than the loss of a loved one in death. This is especially difficult for us if that death is unexpected (as is the case when someone is killed). The loss of a loved one by accidental death or even by murder is the greatest cause of mourning that Jesus and the Father know of. We are exhorted by the Lord not to be the cause of grief or mourning by killing or murdering someone. Why? because it will cause great negative emotions to rule the life of those who are mourning.

Then Jesus introduces the new idea. "But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause

shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say unto his brother, *Raca*, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." (Matthew 5:22) Jesus is simply saying, "Not only does murder cause men to mourn, but causing them to get angry is also a negative operation of the emotions that is just as harmful." Therefore you should not mourn or even get angry with your brother without a cause, for either one of these negative emotions will rule your life until you get those emotions out of your life. You see, Jesus understood that as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Jesus was laying the groundwork of a new idea to help men understand that negative emotions were self destructing. Therefore, we should expect the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to come and dwell in us to comfort our negative emotions and keep our hearts and emotions on the positive side of things. It is only when our emotions are on the positive side that we will be able to live the way God wants us to live.

In Matthew 5:23, 24, Jesus continues to help us understand how to deal with negative emotions.

"Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

Jesus is giving the understanding that you cannot come to God when you are angry with your brother. You cannot "buy off" God by giving offerings or promises to God to gain His favor, while you are angry with your brother.

We cannot justify keeping our anger against our brother by doing great things for God or His kingdom. We can only live God's way. We must forgive, forbear, and always have a good report if we are going to live with

comforted emotions that allow our hearts to remain open to others and to God.

Two-Heart Theory

As I resisted this new idea of Jesus', I tried to bargain with God. "God," I said, "let me have two hearts. With one, I will keep open to You. With the other I will open up only to very close friends that I can trust." The Lord replied that anyone with two hearts is a freak. There are no freaks in God's kingdom.

"OK, Lord," I countered, "just one heart, but two doors. I'll keep one door open to you, and the other door will be firmly locked with pass keys given to just a few personal friends."

Again the Lord would not accept my proposal. We have one heart. It is to be open to God. If it is open to God it is open to everyone, friend and foe alike. If our heart is closed to anyone, it is closed to all, including God.

I cried out to God. "This is not fair. When enemies tramp through my open heart, they leave hurts and scars. I cannot handle the hurts that unthinking men inflict in my open heart."

The Lord sweetly replied, "Trust Me. The Comforter will come and comfort your mourning, anger, and other negative emotions. You can walk through this life with an open heart toward me and all others as you walk in the Spirit, trusting in Me."

Let the Holy Spirit comfort your emotions.

Agree With Your Adversaries

The last illustration Jesus gives us about mourning is in Matthew, Chapter Five, verses twenty-five and twenty-six. "Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him...." Why should we do that? Do not let your emotions rise up to justify you. That is called pride. It is a negative emotion that will also destroy us. Do not let your emotions defend your error. If you do not, you will lose your case and end up in jail until you have paid your debt.

The Meek

Jesus, the Living Word, enlightens us about meekness with the ultimate illustration of anti-meekness, of pride, in Matthew, Chapter Five, and verses twenty-seven through thirty-two.

Once again with loving consideration, Jesus starts with a statement that the new-idea resisters cannot resist. "...Thou shalt not commit adultery...." That is what the law said. That was the old idea.

What does adultery have to do with meekness? Adultery is the ultimate illustration of anti-meekness or pride. One who commits adultery is basically saying by his actions, "My spouse is not good enough for me anymore." To have that attitude about the one who is your covenant partner in life, the one who you once thought was worthy of your exclusive attention, is certainly the ultimate in anti-meekness or pride.

Then Jesus adds the new idea. "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Here again, Jesus takes the

judgment of God out of the realm of the outward performance of the law into the inward attitude of the heart.

Jesus then follows with illustrations that enlighten our minds. "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee...if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee...."

Why would Jesus exhort us to do such an extreme thing? Would He really expect us to pluck out an eye or cut off a hand? No, I believe not. Such a thought is ridiculous. God does not call us to mutilate our bodies in such a way.

We find the answer to those illustrations in Matthew, Chapter Five, verses thirty-one and thirty-two. "But I (Jesus) say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery." You would not pluck out your eye. You would not cut off your hand. Why do you even think of doing such a ridiculous thing as to put away your spouse, who has far more value to you than even your own eye or hand.

Do not get such an inflated image of yourself as to throw away your spouse. If that is the proud image you have of yourself, God cannot give you unearned possessions on this earth. When we become proud, we cut ourselves off from God to earn our own way. Let the Holy Spirit teach you the proper mental image of yourself. Put on meekness.

They That Hunger and Thirst After Righteousness

Jesus enlightens us about the fourth Beatitude, "Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled," in Matthew, Chapter Five, verses thirty-three through thirty-seven.

Jesus starts with the old idea, "Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths...." Jesus is simply saying, "When it comes to expressing your will, do not just promise to do something, without doing it. When you promise to do it, then do it.

Then Jesus introduces the new idea, "Swear not at all."

Swear not by heaven it is God's throne.
Swear not by earth it is God's footstool.
Swear not by Jerusalem it is the city of the King.
Swear not by thy head you cannot change its color.

What does this mean? Simply this. Do not get God to cosign your promises. Do not say, "If I do not do it, God will send someone else to keep my promise." Do not try to have God cosign your promise. Simply say, "Yes" then do it, or say, "No" and forget it.

The purpose of this enlightenment is that we begin to understand the value of our own words. If we do not appreciate the value of our own words, we cannot possibly appreciate the value of God's Word, the Word that became flesh, Jesus Christ.

The Merciful

The Living Word, Jesus Christ, enlightens His disciples about being merciful in Matthew, Chapter Five, and verses thirty-eight through forty-eight, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

With this old idea, Jesus shows His knowledge of tradition. This is not a statement of mercy but of justice.

Jesus quickly adds in the next verse, "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." The traditional law would say, "smite them back." But Jesus is giving them a new idea. Do not smite them back, but be merciful. Give them the opportunity to smite you on the other cheek.

Jesus begins this new idea with the statement, "Resist not evil." He knew how the mind works. The things that occupy our minds will control our decisions and actions in life. Therefore, we should not occupy our minds with resisting evil. This resisting evil will cause our minds to be occupied with evil. Thus evil will control our decisions and actions. We should not be controlled by evil, but by good and by God.

To keep from resisting evil, turn the other cheek. To keep from resisting evil, when a man requires your coat, give him your cloke also.

If you are compelled to go one mile, do not resist, but go two miles to prove your positive willingness.

If someone asked you to give to them, give willingly. Thereby you will operate with God's mercy rather than with justice. Therefore, you will obtain mercy, rather than justice.

Jesus gives a second enlightenment about mercy with another old idea. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy."

Then Jesus presents the new idea, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

There is no virtue in loving the loveable. But there is great virtue in loving the unlovely. This is how God the Father is, and this is how we should be=like the Father. Being merciful rather than judgmental, we will be perfect even as our Father in Heaven is perfect.

The Pure In Heart.

Jesus continues to enlighten the disciples with further teaching in the Sermon On the Mount. The next illustration encompasses the entire sixth chapter of Matthew. It is the illustration for, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

In verse one of Chapter six, Jesus begins the new ideas about purity of heart with illustrations about giving. Do not give your alms to be seen of men. If you do you have no reward of your Father which is in Heaven.

In verse two, Jesus begins with "therefore". The word therefore means you lose your reward from God by giving in public, so do not sound a trumpet before you when you give. Those who do have their reward, but it is not from the Father.

Then Jesus presents the new idea in verse three. When you give, do not even let your right hand know what your left hand is doing. Give in secret and your Father will reward in public. When you give in public, your heart is not pure before God. When you are willing to give in

secret, your heart is pure, and you will not only see God, but you will be rewarded of Him in public.

Jesus continues to illustrate purity of heart as He speaks of prayer. Do not pray as the hypocrites who love to stand in public and pray that they may be seen of men. They get their reward by the recognition of men. Pray in the privacy of your prayer closet where your motivation is to please God alone, and not men. And when you pray, do not use fancy words and much repetition. Your prayers are not effective because you are a talented speaker, but because you express your heart to God in simple terms. God knows what you need before you ask, so you do not need to persuade God with your much speaking.

Then Jesus gives them the pattern for prayer with what we now call the Lord's Prayer. This is not intended to be a memorized prayer as we have done in the Church today. Jesus intended it to be a pattern for prayer.

"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name." Address yourself to your heavenly Father, whose name is Holy. Be reverent and respectful for you are talking to the creator of the universe, the Father of all.

"Thy kingdom come." This reminds me of the first Beatitude, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Remember the Kaiser paraphrased version, "Spiritually prosperous are the poor in spirit; for they are the dominion of the heavenly king." The kingdom, or king's dominion, comes when we who were spiritually poor become spiritually prosperous, by being born again. When we pray, "Thy kingdom come," we are praying for others to get born again.

"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" reminds me of the second beatitude, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." It is the will of the Father to comfort those who mourn. There will be no mourning in Heaven; there will only be joy and rejoicing.

"Give us this day our daily bread." This speaks of the third Beatitude, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." As we ask God, having a right mental image of ourselves, not demanding from God but asking in humility, we will see God provide what we need every day, even our daily bread.

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" speaks of mercy of the fifth beatitude. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen." This speaks of walking in the pathway of righteousness. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

Jesus then closes this portion of the illustration about prayer by exhorting men to forgive others their trespasses, so that the Father in Heaven will forgive them their trespasses. Be forgiving when you pray so that God the Father may see your purity of heart. When you forgive you act like God.

Then Jesus turns to the subject of fasting to again illustrate purity of heart (verse sixteen). When fasting, do not advertise it by telling others, by having a long face, or drawing attention to yourself. Your fast should be as unto God not to gain attention from men. The purpose of a fast is to deny your flesh. If you advertise your fasting in any way, you may deny the physical flesh, but you sure do

glorify the carnal nature, which is also called flesh. We should deny both the physical flesh and the carnal nature if we are fasting as unto God. Keep your heart pure. Keep your motivation pure toward God. What you do toward God should not be publicly advertised.

Jesus then returns to giving again with further illustrations about purity of heart. In verse nineteen, He exhorts, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal." This is the old idea that men lay up treasures upon the earth.

Then Jesus introduces the new idea in verse twenty. "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." This is not just an illustration about money. It is an illustration about those things, both tangible and intangible, that occupy your heart. You must keep the things dearest to you to be the things of God, not of this earth. The reason is simple. The things that are dear to you are the things that determine the purity or impurity of heart.

The subject seems to change as Jesus talks about the eye being the lamp of the body. If your eye is kept on good things, good light enters your body. If the eye is not kept on good things, your body shall be full of darkness. Keep your heart pure by laying up treasures in Heaven and keeping your eye on the good things of God.

The last illustration that Jesus gives to enlighten His disciples about purity of heart is in verses twenty-four through thirty-four. No man can serve two masters. It is true. You cannot work for two people at the same time. The commercial world knows this. You cannot have two bosses. If you do you will have conflict about which one you like best, or even who you are to obey in certain

situations where both of your bosses are giving you direction. The problem is more than that of outward efficiency or performance. The more serious problem is that of the attitude of your own heart. Serving two masters will bring frustration to your heart, and you will lose purity of heart.

For that reason, do not look to earthly sources for your provision. God feeds the fowls of the air even though they do not sow or reap. God clothes the lilies of the field, yet they do not work for their clothes. Likewise will God provide for your food and clothes.

That does not mean that we do not work. We should work because we are doing something constructive that we want to do. We should not be working because we have to work in order to eat and to be clothed. God intends for men to be fruitful and multiply. This means that we stay busy with our hands and minds to multiply and be fruitful because we have a vision, a desire. But men have made work something that we must do in order to eat and be clothed. If you are working for that purpose, you will not be happy. God will provide what we need to eat and wear, even through our working, but we should not work for food and clothing. God is our source for that. What am I trying to say? The difference is in the attitude of the heart. Look to God as your source for food and clothing, and work because that is what you love to do. Then you will not be serving two masters and your heart can stay pure and happy.

Therefore, take no thought for your food or clothing, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (verse 33) Do not worry about tomorrow. God will take care of you tomorrow, just as He has taken care of you today, even more abundantly. Let not your heart be troubled, look to

God as your loving Father who will provide for your needs, and keep a pure heart toward God and all of the people in God's creation, both saved and unsaved.

Peacemakers

In Matthew, Chapter Seven, verses one through fourteen, Jesus enlightens His disciples with illustrations about peacemakers. "Judge not, that ye be not judged." You are not called to determine who is right and who is wrong. For the standard you use to determine who is right and wrong will also be used to measure your conduct. Not one of us can claim to have lived such a perfect life so as to qualify to determine the rights and wrongs of others.

I used to think that God had called me to change His people through teaching so that God could love them. Oh how I tried to change others! After several years of wondering why people did not love my wonderful ministry, the Lord graciously spoke to me. He said, "Bill, I have not called you to change the world so I can love them. I have called you to love the world so I can change them." From that moment on my life and ministry began to change. The motivation of my heart has changed from that of judging others to determine how they needed to be changed. God has lovingly changed my heart so that I now love people and desire to help them to be happy.

We are not called to judge the world, or to change them, for none of us qualify by our perfection to change others. We all have missed it.

We are called to love the world, to be peacemakers, to help others find happiness in this life, as God has helped us to find peace and happiness.

I have found out through many experiences that it is far better to be happy than right. I do not mean that it is good to be wrong. No, I mean it is far better to have peace in your heart than to strive for satisfaction in your heart that you have done something right. For you see, we seldom do anything absolutely perfectly by any standard. So we should allow our hearts to rest in the peace of God's love and mercy, rather than to constantly strive for absolute perfection in performance.

Rather than judge anyone, we should be merciful, as Jesus teaches in Matthew, Chapter Seven, and verses seven through twelve. To treat men as you would like to be treated is to fulfill all the law and the prophets.

Jesus concludes His enlightenments about the Beatitudes with two illustrations. Walk the straight and narrow way, for therein will you find life. Do not walk there because you have to, but walk there because you love the Lord and know that there you will find happiness for yourself and help for others.

As you walk the straight and narrow, beware of false prophets who come in sheep's clothing. You will know them by their fruits. Do they sow discord, and strife? Jesus said, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Be a doer of the Word; not just a doer of the Law, for in doing the law your heart can be far from God. Be a doer of the Word, not a doer of the King James Version or any other letter of the word; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. Be a doer of the Sermon on the Mount. You cannot be a doer of the Sermon on the Mount in a

legalistic manner, for the Sermon on the Mount demands a purity of motivation of your heart.

Jesus is calling us to be a doer of the Living Word of God, to even live and move and have our being in Him, not just in outward performance but in the attitude of our heart. The key is found in a single word or phrase, love=the kind of love that allows our faith in God to work.

When Jesus finished, the people were astonished for He taught them, gave them new ideas, as One having authority, not as the scribes had taught them.

Chapter 10

WHAT DID THE WORD SAY?

The Word that was God in the beginning, the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us, had much to say to God's people. Jesus Christ said much by how he lived and ministered. He also said much by what he spoke, his teaching.

Jesus addressed himself to many subjects in the four gospels. Those topics include:

1. The Scriptures
2. Prophecies about Himself
3. Ministry of Jesus
4. Salvation
5. Sin - Transgression from the Law
6. Promises of Jesus
7. Prayer
8. Faith
9. Divine Health
10. Commandments of Jesus
11. Teaching of Jesus
12. Righteousness
13. Fruit of the Spirit
14. Judgment of Jesus
15. The Godhead
16. Second Coming
17. Last Words of Jesus.

For your convenience we have listed the scripture references with one sample scripture on each subject. Look up those scriptures which are referenced, and allow the Holy Spirit to make them real to your spirit. We should all value the words of Jesus in every area.

SCRIPTURES

Authority

John 5:39 "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."

John 7:38, John 10:35-36, Matthew 26:54, Mark 14:49, Luke 24:25-26

Fulfillment

Luke 4:21 "And he began to say unto them, this day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

Luke 21:22, Luke 13:18, John 17:12, Matthew 24:34-35

Jesus' Words

John 5:24 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

John 8:31, John 8:37, John 8:43, Revelation 3:8, Revelation 3:10, John 12:48, Mark 8:38, Mark 13:31, John 5:47, John 12:47, John 14:23, John 15:17.

Doers of the Word

Luke 8:21 "And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it."

Luke 11:28, Matthew 7:24-25, John 15:3, John 6:63, John 8:51, John 17:17

Receiving the Word

John 17:8 "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me."

Luke 9:44, Matthew 19:11, John 8:55, John 15:20, John 17:6.

Living by the Word

Matthew 4:4, "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Jesus Quotes Genesis

in Matthew 19:4-5

in Matthew 23:35

in John 7:22-23

in John 8:56

in Luke 17:28-32

Genesis 2:23-24

Genesis 4:8

Genesis 17:9-14

Genesis 18:22

Genesis 19:26-36

in Matthew 8:11 Genesis 28:12-22.

Jesus Quotes Exodus

in Matthew 22:32	Exodus 3:6
in John 7:19	Exodus 20
in Matthew 15:4	Exodus 20:12
in Matthew 5:21	Exodus 20:13
in Matthew 5:27	Exodus 20:14
in Matthew 19:18	Exodus 20:15-16

Jesus Quotes Leviticus and Numbers

in Matthew 8:4	Leviticus 14:1-7
in Matthew 5:33	Leviticus 19:12
in Matthew 12:31	Leviticus 19:18
in John 3:14	Numbers 21:8-9
in Matthew 12:5	Numbers 28:9-10
in Revelations 2:14	Numbers 31:16

Jesus Quotes Deuteronomy

in Matthew 4:10	Deuteronomy 6:13
in Matthew 4:7	Deuteronomy 6:16
in Matthew 12:29	Deuteronomy 6:4
in Matthew 4:4	Deuteronomy 8:3
in John 5:46	Deuteronomy 18:15
in John 8:17	Deuteronomy 19:15
in Matthew 19:8	Deuteronomy 24:1

Jesus Quotes Psalms

in Matthew 21:16 Psalms 8:8

in John 15:25	Psalms 35:19
in Matthew 26:23	Psalms 41:9
in John 10:34	Psalms 82:6
in John 6:32	Psalms 105:40
in Matthew 22:44	Psalms 110:1
in Matthew 21:42	Psalms 118:22.

Jesus Quotes The Prophets

in Matthew 12:3	I Samuel 21:6
in Luke 4:25	I Kings 17:9
in Luke 4:27	II Kings 5:1
in Matthew 12:42	II Chronicles 9:1-12
in Matthew 23:35	II Chronicles 24:20-22
in Matthew 13:14	Isaiah 6:9
in Matthew 21:13	Isaiah 56:7
in Luke 4:18	Isaiah 61:1
in Matthew 24:15	Daniel 9:27
in Matthew 9:13	Hosea 6:6
in Matthew 12:40	Jonah 1:17
in Matthew 12:41	Jonah 3:5
in Matthew 26:31	Zechariah 13:7
in Matthew 11:10	Malachi 3:1.

PROPHECIES ABOUT CHRIST

His Betrayal

Matthew 17:22-23 "And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill, and the third day he shall rise again. And they were exceeding sorry."

Matthew 26:2, Matthew 26:21, Matthew 26:23-24, Matthew 26:45-46, John 13:18.

Death By Crucifixion

John 3:14 "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of God be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

John 8:28, John 12:32, Luke 9:44, Matthew 10:18,
Matthew 20:19,
Matthew 20:28.

Resurrection

Luke 9:22 "Saying, The Son of men must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day."

John 2:19, Luke 13:32, Matthew 12:40, Matthew 17:22-23, Matthew 20:19, Mark 9:31.

Ascension

John 7:33 "Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me."

John 6:62, John 16:5, John 16:10, John 16:16, John 16:28, John 20:17

Second Coming

Matthew 24:30 "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the

earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

Matthew 24 (entire chapter).

MINISTRY OF JESUS

Jesus Declares His Ministry

Luke 4:18-19 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Deliverance

Matthew 11:4-5 "Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them."

Luke 11:20, Luke 13:32, John 8:36, John 9:4, Luke 19:10

Works That Men Believe

John 10:37-38 "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the

works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him."

John 11:15, John 11:42, John 13:19, John 14:11, John 14:29, John 17:21.

Only Through Jesus

John 14:6 "Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Matthew 11:27, John 12:26, John 12:24, John 15:16, John 15:23, John 16:23.

Do The Fathers Will

John 5:30 "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just: because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."

John 4:34, Matthew 6:10, John 6:38, John 8:29, John 8:55, Mark 14:36.

Say The Fathers Words

John 12:49-50 "For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak."

John 8:38, John 7:16-17, John 14:24, John 17:14.

Do The Fathers Works

John 5:36 "But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me."

Luke 2:49, John 9:4, John 10:32, John 10:37-38, John 15:24, John 17:4

Seek The Fathers Glory

John 7:18 "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him."

John 13:31-32, John 8:49-50, John 14:31, John 17:1, John 17:4-5.

Christ, The Bread of Life

John 6:35 "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

John 6:32-33, John 6:50, John 6:51, John 6:54, John 6:56, John 6:57.

Christ, The Good Shepherd

John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

John 10:9, John 10:2-4, John 10:7, John 10:10, John 10:14-17, John 10:27-28. Mt54

Christ, The Vine

John 15:1 "I am the vine, and my Father is the husbandman."

John 15:2-8, John 15:16

Christ, The Light Of The World

John 8:12 "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

John 12:35-36, John 12:46, John 9:5, John 3:19-21.

SALVATION

Christ's Invitation

Matthew 11:8 "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

John 7:37-38, John 10:9, Matthew 22:9-10, Revelations 3:20, Revelations 22:17.

Drawn To Father

John 6:44 "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day."

Matthew 11:25-27, John 6:37, Matthew 4:11-12, John 8:47.

Repentance

Mark 1:15 "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Luke 13:4-5, Luke 5:32, Luke 16:30-31, Luke 15:18-19, Luke 18:13-14, Luke 15:7.

Forgive

Mark 11:25-26 "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."

Luke 6:37, Luke 17:3-4, Matthew 18:22, Matthew 18:35, Matthew 5:23-24, Luke 24:47, John 20:22-23, Mark 2:9-11, Luke 23:34, Luke 7:47, Matthew 3:28-29.

Forgive Through Faith

Luke 7:48-50 "And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

John 3:15-18, John 5:24, John 6:35, John 6:47, John 11:26, John 12:46.

Born Again

John 3:3 "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

John 3:5-12.

Confess Christ

Matthew 10:32-33 "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

Luke 12:8, Matthew 16:15, John 9:35, John 11:25-26, John 6:67, Luke 9:26.

Baptism

Mark 16:16 "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Matthew 28:18, Matthew 3:15, Mark 11:30, Acts 1:5, Luke 12:50, Matthew 20:22-23.

Endure to The End

Matthew 24:13 "But he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved."

John 8:31, Luke 8:15, Luke 21:19, John 15:4, John 15:9-10, Luke 21:34-36.

Forgiveness and Healing

Matthew 9:5-6 "For whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? but that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house."

Matthew 8:3, Mark 5:34, Luke 4:18, Matthew 15:26, Luke 13:16.

Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Luke 11:13 "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

John 4:14, John 6:63, John 7:37-38, John 14:16-17, John 20:22, Luke 24:49.

Life Abundantly

John 10:10 "The thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

John 4:14, John 8:12, John 5:28-29, Matthew 10:29-30, John 11:25.

JESUS SPEAKS OF SIN

Disbelief in God's Son

John 3:18 "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God."

John 5:43, John 6:36, John 8:24, Luke 12:9, John 12:47-48, Mark 16:16, Matthew 17:20, Matthew 14:31, John 4:48, John 15:22-24, John 5:45-47.

Idolatry

Matthew 4:10 "Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Matthew 23:9, Matthew 6:24, Matthew 10:37, John 12:25, Luke 8:14, Mark 10:24.

Pride

Mark 7:21-22 "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness."

Luke 14:11, Matthew 23:5-10, John 5:44, Luke 14:8.

Blasphemies

Matthew 15:19 "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."

Matthew 4:7, Matthew 5:33-36, Matthew 23:16, Matthew 31:32.

Dishonoring Parents

Mark 10:19 "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not fear false witness, Defraud not, Honour the father and mother."

Matthew 15:3-4, Mark 7:10, Matthew 15:5-6, Mark 7:12-13, Luke 15:12-13.

Murder

Matthew 5:21-22 "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say of his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

Matthew 15:19, Matthew 19:18, Matthew 26:52, John 8:44, Revelations 22:14- 15.

Adultery

Matthew 5:27-28 "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

Matthew 5:32, Matthew 15:19-20, Matthew 16:4, Matthew 19:8-9, Revelations 22:15.

Stealing

Mark 10:19 "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother."

Matthew 15:19, Luke 12:33, John 10:1, John 10:8, John 10:10, Matthew 21:13.

Lying

Matthew 19:18 "...Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,"

Mark 7:21-22, John 8:44, John 8:55, Revelations 2:2, Revelations 22:15

Hypocrisy

Matthew 23:13 "But woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against

men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."

Matthew 23:13-30, Luke 12:1, Mark 7:6, Matthew 6:1-2, Matthew 6:5, Matthew 6:16, Luke 13:15.

Covetousness

Luke 12:15 "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in abundance of things which he possesseth."

Mark 7:21-22, Luke 12:16-23, Luke 12:29-30, Mark 4:19, Luke 16:15, Matthew 6:19, John 6:26-27, Luke 16:11-13, Luke 14:16-24, Luke 10:41-42.

Worldliness

Matthew 16:25-26 "For whosoever will save his life will lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Matthew 22:1-14, Luke 12:45-46, Luke 16:19, 22, 23, Luke 21:34, Luke 17:26-29.

Unforgiveness

Mark 11:26 "But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."

Matthew 18:19-25, Matthew 5:46-47, Matthew 5:23-26, Matthew 18:17, Luke 9:55-56.

Evil Communicators

Matthew 5:37 "But let your communications be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

Matthew 12:34-37, Matthew 15:11, 18, Luke 19:22, Matthew 6:23.

Judging

Matthew 7:1 "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

Matthew 7:1-5, Luke 6:37, John 7:24, John 8:7, John 8:10-11, John 8:15-16.

PROMISES OF JESUS

Keep Commandments

John 14:21 "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

John 14:23, Matthew 5:19, Matthew 7:24-25, John 15:10, John 15:14, Revelations 22:14.

Him Who Follows Christ

Mark 10:29-30 "And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or

brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

John 8:12, John 10:27-28, Matthew 16:24-25, Matthew 19:21, Matthew 4:19, John 12:26.

Resurrection

John 6:44 "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

Luke 14:13-14, Luke 20:35-38, John 5:21, John 11:25

Works of the Holy Spirit

John 16:8 "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

John 3:8, John 15:26, John 14:26, John 16:13.

Christ's Presence

Matthew 28:20 "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Matthew 18:20, John 14:18, John 14:20-23, John 14:28.

Answers to Prayer

Matthew 21:22 "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

Matthew 7:8, Matthew 7:11, Matthew 18:19, Luke 11:8, Luke 18:7-8, John 15:7, John 14:13-14, John 15:16, John 16:23-27, Mark 16:17-18.

All Things Are Possible

Mark 9:23 "Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."

Matthew 17:20, Luke 17:6, Mark 11:22-24, John 11:40, John 14:12.

Authority Over Satan

Luke 10:18-19 "And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall be any means hurt you."

Matthew 18:18, Mark 16:17, Matthew 17:21, John 12:31, John 8:36, Luke 13:16.

To Givers

Luke 6:38 "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with

the measure ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

Matthew 6:3-4, Luke 11:41, Luke 16:9, Luke 14:13-14, Matthew 10:21.

Abundant Life

John 10:9-10 "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

John 7:17, Matthew 11:28-30, John 14:27, John 15:11, Matthew 16:18.

Overcomers

Rev 2:17 "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."

Revelations 2:7, Revelations, 2:11, Revelations 2:26-28, Revelations 3:5, Revelations 3:12, Revelations 3:21.

Rewards

Matthew 10:41-42 "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall, in no wise lose his reward."

Luke 6:35, John 4:36, Matthew 16:27, Matthew 25:21, Luke 19:17.

PRAYER

How To Pray

Luke 11:2-3 "And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Luke 18:13-14, Mark 11:25, Matthew 6:6-8, Matthew 7:7, John 15:7, Matthew 7:11, Matthew 21:22, mark 11:24, Matthew 18:18, Luke 11:5, Luke 18:1-8.

In The Name of Jesus

John 14:13-14 "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye ask any thing in my name, I will do it."

John 15:16, John 16:23-27, Mark 16:17-18.

Pray For What

Matthew 26:39 "And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Luke 21:36, Luke 11:13, Luke 6:28, Matthew 14:38, Luke 10:2, Luke 22:32.

Worship

Matthew 4:10 "Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

HEALING

Healing

Luke 10:8-9 "And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: and heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

Matthew 11:4, 6, Luke 10:19, Mark 9:39-40, John 14:12, Mark 16:17-18.

God's Will To Heal

Luke 4:18-19 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Matthew 8:3, Matthew 8:7, Matthew 12:11-12, Luke 13:16, John 9:4, John 11:4.

TEACHING OF JESUS

Angels

Luke 20:36 "Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

Matthew 22:30, Matthew 24:36, Matthew 26:53, Luke 15:10, Luke 12:8, Matthew 25:31, John 1:51, Matthew 18:10, Luke 16:22, Matthew 24:31, Matthew 13:49, Matthew 13:39, Revelations 22:16.

Satan

Luke 10:18 "And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

John 8:44, Mark 3:23-26, John 14:30, John 16:8, Matthew 25:41, Mark 4:15, Matthew 13:25-26, Luke 11:24-26, Luke 13:16, Luke 22:31-32, Revelations 2:10.

Marriage

Mark 10:6-8 "But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and the twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh."

Children

Matthew 18:3-6 "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me."

Matthew 18:10, Matthew 18:14, Luke 18:16, Matthew 21:16.

Chapter 11

THE WORD SPEAKS PARABLES

A parable is a story about a natural thing or circumstance which parallels spiritual or moral truth.

Jesus Christ, the Word that was God in the beginning, the Word that became flesh, opened up His mouth and gave a new idea by the words that He said; His words were spirit and life.

Being flesh-wrapped Word, Jesus Christ spoke to God's people with words that they could receive. With love He first confirmed the old ideas, even the law, but then with love He added new ideas that spoke to the attitude of the emotions, mind, will and heart. Because He was wisdom and love, He spoke to God's people with words they could receive and understand. For that reason, He often spoke in parables, stories of natural things that gave spiritual or moral enlightenment.

In Psalm 78:2 it was prophesied, "I will open my mouth in a parable...." In Matthew 13:34 we find, "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them."

PARABLE	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
Two Debtors			7:41-50
Sower	13:1-23	4:1-20	
Seed		4:26-29	
Tares	13:24-30		
Mustard Seed	13:31-32	4:30-32	
Leaven	13:33		
Hidden Treasure	13:44		
Costly Pearl	13:45-46		
Drag-net	13:47-50		
Wicked Servant	18:21-35		
Good Samaritan			10:25-37
Rich Fool			12:16-21
Barren Fig Tree			13:6-9
Wedding Guest			14:7-11
Great Supper			14:15-24
Counting the Cost			14:25-35
Lost Sheep			15:1-7
Lost Coin			15:8-10
Prodigal Son			15:11-32
Unjust Steward			1-13
Rich Man and Lazarus			16:19-31
Unprofitable Servant			17:1-10
Unjust Judge			18:1-8
Pharisee and Publican			18:9-14
Labourers			
Vineyard	20:1-16		
Pounds			19:11-28
Two Sons	21:28-32		
Vineyard	21:33-46	12:1-12	20:9-19
Wedding Feast	22:1-14		
Ten Virgins	25:1-13		
Talents	25:14-30		

Debtors

In Luke 7:41-50, we find Jesus giving a new idea through the parable of the two debtors. Read it before you continue.

A certain creditor forgave two debtors. One he forgave one hundred pence. The other he forgave only fifty pence. From this Jesus teaches that one, who is forgiven much, loves much in return. Then he goes on to use an illustration of the woman who was with them at the time of this teaching. She demonstrated much love to Jesus as she washed His feet with her tears and wiped His feet with her hair. She then anointed His feet with ointment. Through this love that she showed to Jesus, He was moved to forgive her sins.

The moral of this story is this. As we desire people to love us, forgive them as they miss it in their relationship toward us or others.

The Sower, The Seed, The Tares, and The Mustard Seed

These four parables will be considered in detail in a following chapter.

The Leaven

In Matthew 13:33, we read the parable of leaven.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman teaching here is that the dominion of the heavenly king is of great value to those who find it. It is hidden from the natural man, but it can be found by those

who will search for it. When you find the hidden treasure, be willing to sell all you have to obtain it, for it has great value.

The Costly Pearl

In Matthew 13:45, 46, we find the parable of the costly pearl. Again, the teaching is about the dominion of the heavenly king being of great price. When the merchant found the pearl of great price, he sold all that he had to purchase it. So also, when we find the dominion of the heavenly king, it is of such great value that we should be willing to sell all to purchase the dominion of the heavenly king. Understand that the heavenly kingdom cannot be purchased with money. Jesus is saying that God's dominion is of greater value than anything that we can imagine. We should put the kingdom of heaven first place in our lives.

The Drag-net

In Matthew 13:47-52, Jesus draws on the parable of the drag-net for his new ideas. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:" The good ones will be saved, and the bad ones will be cast into the furnace of fire.

Jesus taught this parable to let the scribes know their responsibility.

The Wicked Servant

Jesus tells us the parable of the wicked servant in Matthew 18:21-35. Peter asked Jesus how often he

should forgive a brother who sinned against him; seven times?

Jesus responded to Peter with the parable of the wicked servant. The "kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king which would take account of his servants." His servant owed the king ten thousand talents. He could not pay and would have been sold into slavery as well as his wife and children, but he pleaded for mercy. The King forgave him his debt. The servant then would not forgive one who owed him a mere hundred pence, but had him cast into prison. The king found out about the unmerciful character of the servant whom he had forgiven and had him delivered to the tormentors until he paid his debt.

Jesus concludes this parable by saying, "So likewise is the parable of the Good Samaritan to explain "who is your neighbor."

A man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho was beaten by thieves. They stripped him, beat him, and left him half dead.

A priest passed by but did not help him for fear of the thieves.

Likewise a Levite passed him by on the other side of the road.

Then a certain Samaritan came by and stopped to help him. Now the Samaritan was not a Jew as were the priest and Levite, yet he helped the beaten man. The Samaritan bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine. He put the beaten man on his beast and brought him to the next motel.

When the Samaritan left the motel the next day, he left money for rent and food, with instructions to take care of the recuperating man.

Jesus then asked the lawyer, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?"

The lawyer replied, "He that shewed mercy on him."

Jesus commanded, "Go, and do thou likewise."

This is a parable about love and mercy. Obeying the letter of the law is good, but not enough. We must "go and do" love and be merry."

But God said unto him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"

With this parable, Jesus is teaching us not to be covetous of things. The kingdom of heaven is more important than things.

The Barren Fig Tree

The barren fig tree parable in Luke 13:6-9 is a parable of mercy. It is a parable Jesus gives in response to some who judged the Galileans Pilate had sacrificed. They must have implied that these Galileans were great sinners, because God had allowed them to be sacrificed by Pilate.

Jesus replied in Luke 13:2, 3, "Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because

they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Then Jesus follows with the parable of the barren fig tree. The tree had no fruit on it for three years. The owner wanted to cut it down because it was not fruitful. It was just a burden to the ground. But the keeper of the vineyard pleaded for one more year. "Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day?"

There was yet no reply from them.

Jesus then expounded the parable of the wedding guest, Luke 14:7-11. It is a parable of meekness and humility, whereby we establish God's priorities rather than legalism.

The parable says when you are called to a wedding do not sit in the highest seat of honor. There may be someone of higher honor than yourself who is also invited. Surely you would be embarrassed to be asked to move to a less honorable seat.

When you are invited to the wedding feast, take a seat of low honor. Then if necessary, your host will ask you to move to a higher seat. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

The Great Supper

Jesus immediately followed the wedding guest parable with the great supper parable, Luke 14:15-24.

In the great supper parable, Jesus simply instructed that the best feast would have guests that would not pay you

back by inviting you to a feast the next week or month. Those who are aware of their need, those who need help, who will joyfully receive the invitation, will eat bread in the kingdom of God. The self sufficient who have excuses will not make it.

Counting The Cost

In Luke 14:25, the Bible says a great multitude went with Jesus. He said to them, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." (See verses 25-35.)

Jesus is really not calling people to hate relatives and themselves. He is saying that if you are going to be my disciple, you must love Him more than relatives, and even more than your old way of living. If your relatives do not follow Jesus also, then your love for Him will cause you to hate the sin and flesh which they have chosen to stay with. You must continually, on a daily basis, carry with you your decision to follow Jesus.

Jesus illustrates this decision making with the parable on counting the cost, Luke 14:25-35. No one builds a building without determining the cost first, will go after it. When you find it, you will rejoice.

Likewise, joy will be in Heaven over one lost sinner who repents.

This simple parable also speaks of the decision of repentance in the area of the will. It tells us that repentance is far more important to God than self righteousness.

The Lost Coin

The parable of the lost coin is like unto the parable of the lost sheep.

The parable of the lost coin tells of a woman with ten pieces of silver who loses one piece. She calls her children and sweeps the floor until the lost piece is found. When she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors to rejoice with her.

The Prodigal Son

The parable of the prodigal son is one of the best known parables in the Bible. It also is like unto the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin. In this parable we have the lost son.

The younger of two sons asked for his portion of inheritance. After spending that portion, he ended up working on a farm feeding pigs.

In the midst of his problems, he realized he would be better off working for his own father, so he shows the value of repentance. It does not devalue faithfulness as the elder brother thought. (See Luke 15:11-32.)

The Unjust Steward

In Luke 16:1-13, we find the parable of the unjust steward immediately following the parable of the prodigal son. A rich man called his steward to account for all that he had been in charge of, for some had accused the steward of wasting his goods. The steward was to account for things

or he would no longer be steward. The steward reasoned to himself, What shall I do? He decided to ask all of his lord's debtors to repay half of what they owed. The steward was commended for his wisdom by his master. He was considered wise because he reduced the debt of the debtors, and therefore made friends of them. For if he would have been dismissed, he would need friends to help him find a new position. Apparently his master saw that as wisdom and kept him on the payroll.

Those who are faithful over little will be given responsibility over much. If you do not know how to be faithful with such a carnal thing as money, how can you be counted faithful to govern over true riches, meaning spiritual matters? If you are not faithful to watch over that which is another man's, who will give you that of your own to watch over?

I believe this parable is given for further understanding of the faithfulness of the elder brother in the parable of the Prodigal's Son. There is value in faithfulness. It is a parable to teach us about the will. Make decisions and stick with those decisions. God will then make you ruler over spiritual things when you have learned to stick with your decisions in wisdom. There is value in the Prodigal's Son repentance, but there is also value in the decision of the elder brother to stick with it. Of course, if jealousy rises up, even the elder brother will miss it.

Jesus then concludes his parable of the unjust steward with this statement. "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Jesus uses this same illustration in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6:24. There he uses it as an illustration for "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Keep your heart

pure by deciding who you are going to serve so that you may be faithful. You cannot make a quality decision and stick to it if you serve two masters. Therefore, you will not be faithful. Decide who you are serving and be faithful to that master.

The Pharisees criticized Jesus for this teaching for they coveted all things. Jesus told them that they justify themselves before men, but God knew their heart. What the Pharisees counted to be good, God counted an abomination. Jesus told them they cannot violate the law and get by with it in God's sight. If you put away your wife, you commit adultery. This teaching also is talking about making a quality decision and sticking with it. You decide to marry. Stick with that decision. Be faithful and God will honor it.

The Rich Man And Lazarus

The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus carries on with this teaching about not serving two masters. In Luke 16:19-31 we find the parable. (Some consider this not to be a parable). There was a rich man clothed in purple and fine linen. There was also a poor beggar named Lazarus (not the Lazarus who was Mary and Martha's brother), who desired to eat the crumbs from the rich man's table. They both died. They both went into Hades, the abode of the dead. Lazarus went into Abraham's bosom. The rich man to the other side of a great gulf. The rich man cried for mercy, for a drop of water to be placed on his tongue. Abraham replied to the rich man, Remember in your lifetime you had the good things and Lazarus had the evil things. Now he is comforted and you, rich man, are tormented.

The rich man then begged that someone from the place of the dead (Hades) visit his five brothers and warn them of possible torment. Abraham told them that they had Moses and the prophets. If they would not believe them, they would not believe someone sent from the abode of the dead.

The point of this parable is simply that decisions for righteousness have to be made in this life. This life is the time to prove our faithfulness. This life is the time for us to make our quality decisions and stick with them. It will be too late when we see the torment after death.

The Unprofitable Servant

Jesus continues this teaching in Luke 17:1-10, with the parable of the unprofitable servant. Jesus says, "...Offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!" It is better to be cast into the sea with a millstone around your neck than to be an offender. If your brother trespasses against thee, rebuke him. If he repents, forgive him, even seven times a day.

The apostles cried, "Lord, Increase our faith."

And the Lord said, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard only kept yourself from the torment of the rich man in Hades.

The Unjust Judge

In Luke 18:1-8, we find the parable of the unjust judge. There was a city judge who feared not God or man. There was a woman in the city who asked to be avenged.

The judge said to himself, I do not fear God or man, but I will avenge this woman so she will leave me in peace.

Jesus said to them, Listen to that judge. Likewise, God will avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him though He bear long with them. He will avenge them speedily.

Comparing this parable to the parable of the unprofitable servant, we see that even though our obedience does not require God to reward us, according to the parable of the unjust judge, if we will petition God, He will speedily avenge us. God will take care of you who ask in faith believing.

The Pharisee and the Publican

In Luke 18:9-14, the Bible speaks directly about the purpose for the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteously in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard." Those hired early in the morning agreed to work for a penny a day. At the third hour he sent others to help in the vineyard and told them they would be paid what is right. The sixth hour he did likewise. Even the eleventh hour he did the same, sending those who had been idle all day into the vineyard at the eleventh hour.

When it was time to pay all the workers, they started with those who were hired last. He paid those hired in the eleventh hour one penny. All were paid a penny, regardless of how long they had worked. The one hired early in the morning thought he would be paid more.

They murmured saying that those hired in the eleventh hour received as much as they who had worked all day.

The householder told them that they received what they had agreed upon. "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" (Verse 15)

The parable is concluded with that memorable statement in, verse 16, "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many are called, but few chosen." This is a repeat of the same. Another servant had invested one pound and earned five pounds. A third servant had not invested his one pound, not even to earn interest, but had hidden it for safe keeping.

The nobleman was pleased with those who had invested, but he was displeased with the third servant who earned nothing.

This is one of the more popular parables, often called the parable of the talents. It is used to teach men that they should invest their talents without fear and not hide their talents, or money.

Jesus did not give this parable primarily to teach against holding back your talents or money. He gave this parable to teach that there was still time to invest. In verse 11 we read, "And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear." (See verses 11-28.)

There is yet time to invest the time, talent, and money God has given us to reap a profitable harvest for God.

The Two Sons

The parable of the two sons in Matthew 21:28-32 was given by Jesus in response to y which Jesus taught. They would not believe him. By the parable of the two sons Jesus is saying, "If you do not believe what you say enough to act on it, there is no authority or credibility in your words." The chief priests and scribes did not believe their own words enough to act on them therefore they did not believe and accept the words of Jesus.

This is a parable about authority and credibility.

The Vineyard

The parable of the vineyard is a second parable addressed to the chief priests and scribes. This parable is found in Matthew 21:33-46, Mark 12:1- 12, and Luke 20:9-19.

A householder planted a vineyard and gave it over to a husbandman to keep. The householder sent his servant to receive the fruit. The husbandman beat one, killed another, and stoned another. The same thing happened a second time. The householder sent his son and he was killed.

Jesus asked, "When the Lord of the vineyard comes, what will he do with the husbandman?"

They answered, "He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandman."

The king said to his servants, "The feast is ready, but the guests are unworthy. Go out and bid all to come in."

One man came without his wedding garment. The king was outraged and had the man bound hand and foot, taken away, and cast into outer darkness. Even though the king was inviting all to come to the feast they still had to come the proper way. After all, the king was still having a wedding feast.

Jesus spoke this parable to them when they wanted to lay hands on Him and kill Him, but they did not for fear of the people. Jesus taught this parable to tell them that God was calling them through his teaching. But they would not listen to the teaching. They would not come to the wedding feast, and, therefore, God would call others who would come.

If you do not receive the words of Jesus, you do not receive Jesus. If you do not act on the words of Jesus, you do not receive Jesus. We must all examine ourselves to see if we have received the words of Jesus and acted on them.

The Ten Virgins

In Matthew 25:1-13, we find the very popular parable of “the ten virgin’s talents”. The one with two talents had made another two talents. The one with one talent had buried it and returned it to his master. The master was not pleased with the one who had buried his talent. He was cast into outer darkness.

This parable also teaches us about the coming of the Lord to rule on this earth. Have we invested what the Lord has given to us, or have we simply buried it. This is not a parable about natural talents which we have or have not invested. This is parable about talents which the Lord has given us; the Word of God, the Spirit of God,

the faith of God, the righteousness of God, the love of God. What have we done with these? Have we buried them or have we given them away and seen them multiply among other people to the profit of God, to the expansion of His kingdom?

Summary

Thus we see how Jesus communicated to God's people with simple stories that portrayed great truth. We should do the same today as we preach the Gospel to a lost and dying world.

Chapter 12

THE WORD SPEAKS OF HIMSELF

The parable of the sower, the seed, and the mustard seed are all found in Mark, Chapter Four. They all speak of the Word as a seed, where it is planted, how it grows and what grows. These parables are in Mark, Chapter Four, and verses one through thirty-two. The parables stop in verse 32, but the Holy Spirit goes on throughout the Book of Mark to illustrate these parables with experiences and teaching of Jesus through Mark, Chapter Eight. Let me lead you through these marvelous truths.

Read Mark, Chapter Four, and as you read keep in mind that Jesus Christ is the Word become flesh. This is a parable about the Word, Jesus Christ, and how He works in our lives.

In the parable of the sower we find four kinds of soil: wayside soil, stony ground, thorny ground, and good ground.

Wayside Soil

The seed that falls on the wayside is immediately stolen by Satan according to Mark, Chapter Four, and verse fifteen.

Stony Ground

The seed that is sown on stony ground is immediately received with gladness, but afflictions and persecutions come to steal it as is seen in Mark, Chapter Four, verses sixteen and seventeen.

Thorny Ground

The word that falls on thorny ground is made unfruitful by cares of this world, lusts of other things, and the deceitfulness of riches, Mark, Chapter Four, verses eighteen and nineteen.

Good Ground

The seed that falls on good ground brings forth some thirty, some sixty, and some one-hundred fold return according to Mark, Chapter Four, verse twenty.

The point is this; different types of soil will bring forth different degrees of multiplication from God. You can determine what kind of soil you are by the kind of thinking you have. Put on the mind of Christ, think the thoughts of God, and be that good ground that produces some thirty, some sixty, and some one-hundred fold.

The teaching about the parable of the sower does not stop as Jesus finishes His explanation. The Holy Spirit

continues the teaching through the stories that follow in the Gospel of Mark.

Satan Comes Immediately

As the disciples crossed the sea of Galilee after Jesus taught them the parable of the sower, they came to Gadara, where they were met by the Gadarene demoniac. Satan met them to challenge the authority of Jesus and therefore the teaching of Jesus about the parable of the sower. This tells us that Satan wants to stop the living Word from finding its way to our heart if he possibly can. Obviously Jesus met the challenge and delivered the Gadarene demoniac. Likewise, to keep the Word sown in our heart, we must stand our ground against Satan as is demonstrated in Mark, Chapter Five, and verses one through twenty. I believe you have been successful in this. Otherwise you would not have received the living Word, Jesus Christ, as your Lord and Savior and been born again.

This is an illustration of Satan immediately coming to steal the Word, as the parable of the sower teaches us about the wayside soil in Mark, Chapter Four, and verse fifteen.

Afflictions and Persecutions

The next illustration given us by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is in Mark, Chapter Five, and verses twenty-one through forty-three. This is the story of Jairus who had a sick daughter. Jesus was going with Jairus to heal her, when they were interrupted by the woman with the issue of blood. She had an affliction. She believed that if she could but touch the hem of Jesus' garment, she

would be healed. She believed and she received. The Word is greater than affliction. Do not let afflictions steal the Word.

How many say, "Aunt Susie died of cancer. If God would let Aunt Susie die of cancer, then I cannot believe in Him"!

How many people have you heard say, "If God will take this arthritis away, then I will believe on Him"?

Well, God really is gracious. He has healed many in their unbelief, just to get them to believe. But many test God and therefore allow afflictions to keep the living Word from coming into their heart and becoming fruitful.

But what about Jairus? Did he allow the temporary delay to steal the Word and his faith? Read the whole story. They got to Jairus' house, only to find that during the delay his daughter had died. That alone would cause many to lose the seed of the Word and faith. But Jairus did not lose it. All the people were weeping. Jesus said, "Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth." With that statement, they stopped weeping and laughed Jesus to scorn. That is called persecution. Jesus did not allow that to stop Him. He went in and raised Jairus' daughter from the dead. By this we see that Jesus overcame affliction and persecution.

This is an illustration of what can happen to seed sowed in stony ground in the Parable of the Sower as interpreted in Mark, Chapter Four, and verse sixteen.

Cares of the World

Following the story of Jairus' daughter being raised, the Holy Spirit illustrates the cares of the world, that which comes against the seed sown in thorny ground. In Mark, Chapter Six, verses seven through thirteen, Jesus sends His disciples forth two by two. He sent them with only a staff, no scribe, no bread, no money, one pair of sandals, and only one coat. He sent them without any worldly goods knowing that God would take care of them. They were not to care for the things of this world as they cast out devils and healed the sick.

Deceitfulness of Riches

Then follows a story that looks as though it does not belong in this place in Mark, Chapter Six, and verses fourteen through twenty-nine. It seems to be an abrupt change of thought, but the Holy Spirit knew what He was doing as He inspired Mark to write. It is a story about Herod, King of the Jews. Herod was one of the worst scoundrels in the history of Israel. Although King of Israel, he was far from the character of Moses, Joshua, David, and Solomon who went before him. Herod had married Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. To reward Herodias' daughter for dancing, Herod gave her the head of John the Baptist on a silver platter.

What does all this have to do with the parable of the sower? Simply this. Herod is the epitome of what riches can do to a man. Note that I do not say what riches will do to a man. Do the riches have you, or do you have the riches? Herod was possessed by his riches and it deceived him. Therefore, he had no faith in God, and he lived a life of fleshly carnality to the utmost.

The cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches are the thing that hinder to word from producing when it

is sown in thorny ground. Do not let other things compete with Jesus, the Living Word in your heart.

Good Ground Seed Illustration

Now we come to this final point of this writing about the Parable of the Sower. The good ground received the seed that brought forth the harvest. The harvest that came from multiplication was made into bread. The bread was multiplied to feed the multitude. The Holy Spirit uses this story about multiplication of the loaves and the fishes as an illustration for good ground bringing forth some thirty, some sixty and some one hundred fold.

The Loaves and the Fishes

This story of the loaves and the fishes is found in Mark, Chapter Six, and verses thirty through forty-six. There is an even more detailed account in Matthew, Chapter Fourteen, verses fifteen through twenty-one. Of course we cannot forget that John, Chapter Six, tells us about the little boy who brought the loaves and the fishes to the scene. Some say there is no miracle in the story. They believe that the loaves were giant loaves, enough to feed 5,000 normal servings. If that is true, it must have been a miracle for one small boy to carry those five loaves and two slippery fishes. Well, either way you believe, there was a miracle involved. I believe the loaves were normal size and God multiplied them to feed the five thousand.

In this story there were 5,000 men fed plus women and children. They were fed with five loaves and two fishes, and they had twelve baskets full left over. Remember that. We will come back to it later.

Shortly after that, we find the second story of multiplication of loaves and fishes. This is in Matthew, Chapter fifteen, and verses thirty-two through thirty-nine.

In this story there were 4,000 men plus women and children. They had been with Jesus for three days. I can imagine the disciples, trying to figure everything out, where to get bread and how much to get. Surely they remembered the feeding of the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes. They quickly decided to look for four loaves. If five loaves can feed five thousand, then four loaves should feed four thousand. But that is not how God did it. Jesus used seven loaves and a few fishes to feed 4,000. (In my understanding a few is three or more.)

Now let's compare the two events:

People left	Loaves	Fishes	Baskets
5,000	5	2	12
4,000	7	3+	7

We now need to test to see if our thinking has come into agreement with God's thinking. Have we heard what the Living Word says about Himself? Do we understand how the Word multiplies Himself? To check this, imagine that you are confronted with the need to feed three thousand. How many loaves and fishes would you need?

People Left	Loaves	Fishes	Baskets
5,000	5	2	12
4,000	7	3+	7
3,000	9+	5	2

As you see, I have chosen 9+ loaves to feed 3,000, along with five fishes, with two baskets full remaining. Study it briefly and I believe you will see why I chose these. For every 1,000 fewer people to feed, you need at least two more loaves, and about one and one-half more fishes. It seems that the fewer people we serve the fewer baskets full we have remaining.

Do you see what I see? The greater the problem, the less God took to solve it.

"Oh, that cannot be! That is ridiculous. That does not even make good sense." I know all of that. It is against good logic, at least against man's logic. Remember, dead seeds bring forth the multiplication. This does not make sense to man either. It doesn't even make sense that God would feed five thousand with five loaves. If we are going to believe that God can multiply the loaves and the fishes, why not go all the way and believe that God solves big problems with simple solutions. You see, brethren, "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." (I Corinthians 1:27)

The Thief

In the parable of the sower, Jesus does not teach the disciples what tries to steal the Word that is sown in the good ground. The good ground does not give up the seed (Word) that it receives. It keeps it and multiplies it. However, there are attempts to steal the Word from the good ground, even though they are unsuccessful. Jesus does not teach about the attempts to steal the word from good ground, but as we look at the Holy Spirit's illustration for this parable we see the thief clearly.

Read Matthew, Chapters Fourteen, Fifteen and Sixteen. In these chapters we find Matthew's account of these two stories of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes.

In Matthew, Chapter Fourteen, verses fifteen through twenty-one, we read the account of the feeding of the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes. There were twelve baskets left over.

In Matthew, Chapter Fourteen, verses twenty-two through thirty-three, we find what happened immediately after that first multiplication of loaves and fishes. The disciples went across the sea of Galilee, and Jesus came walking on the water in the middle of the night. That is the time that Peter stepped out of the boat and walked on the water. When Jesus and Peter returned to the boat the disciple exclaimed, "Of a truth thou art the Son of God." They believed because they saw the miracle.

They then came to Gennesaret, where they brought all that were sick and Jesus healed them. "...and as many as touched were made perfectly whole." (Verse 33) When men believe, God can work even more miracles. When the Word has found good ground in our hearts, God can do wonderful things through us and around us.

Finally, we come to the first clue, as to what would try to steal the Word in good ground. In Matthew, Chapter Fifteen, verses one through nine, we read of the scribes and Pharisees coming to Jesus after these wonderful healing miracles. They said, "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread." Jesus had just fed 5,000 with five loaves and two fishes, walked on the water, healed the multitude and the scribes and Pharisees said, "It doesn't count. You forgot to wash your

hands." How ridiculous can one get! Jesus had already done the work. The seed had found good ground. The power of God was operating. The Pharisees could not receive it for they judged that it was not done according to the law.

Jesus replied to them, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" It was the tradition of the scribes and Pharisees that caused them to resist God.

WATCH OUT! Tradition will eat your lunch. Tradition will keep you from receiving from God. Tradition makes the power of God of no effect. Tradition will make your heart anything but good ground.

If you have done something the same way three times, you are in danger of establishing a tradition. If you always brush your teeth the same way, it may be easy for you to do everything else the same way. You may worship God always the same way. If you do, you may not be worshipping God in Spirit and in truth. God is a God of variety. You cannot approach God in the same traditional way every time. You have to approach God by and in the Spirit if you are going to please Him. Without faith it is impossible to please God. If you worship God the same way every time, then you are secure in your approach to God. You have become stale in religious tradition and there is no faith required on your part, for you trust in your tradition and not in God.

Jesus then goes on to explain to the multitude that it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth that defiles a man (Matthew 15:11). If you put a little bit of dirt in your mouth because you eat with unwashed hands, it will not defile you in God's sight. But if you allow garbage to come out of your

mouth in the form of negative words of unbelief, that will defile you.

His disciples expressed their concern that Jesus had offended the Pharisees by speaking so pointedly to them. Jesus said, "They are blind leaders of the blind." And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." (Matthew 15:14)

Then in Matthew, Chapter Fifteen, verses thirty-two through thirty-nine, we find the story of feeding the four thousand with seven loaves and a few fishes. Immediately following in Chapter Sixteen, we find the scribes and Pharisees once again questioning the ministry of Jesus because it was not traditional. This time they tempted Jesus by asking Him for some sign from Heaven. Jesus replied that the sign that they will receive is the sign of Jonah. They all knew the story of Jonah in the belly of the great fish for three days. Jesus was speaking about Himself in the tomb for three days, but they knew not what He was saying.

Once again Jesus went with His disciples across the sea. When they had come to the other side, Jesus said, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." He was speaking of their tradition and unbelief in the resurrection of the dead. Jesus was saying that their thinking was as leaven in bread. Leaven is often used in the Word of God as a type of sin. It is a sin to let tradition and unbelief govern our thinking. It will eat your lunch!

Now see how tradition was already creeping into the minds of the disciples. Matthew 16:7, "And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread." The disciples thought that Jesus was speaking about the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees

because the disciples had forgotten to bring any bread with them. They were thinking, "since we have no bread, the bread of the Pharisees will be the winner in the great battle between our bread and the bread of the Pharisees," or something like that.

The disciples obviously had determined that when Jesus used bread to feed the multitudes, then there would be great healings. It had happened twice in the last few days, and surely Jesus would do it the same way again. But, alas, we have not bread for Jesus to multiply, so there will be no healings.

The disciples had let the use of the bread become a tradition only after two experiences of multiplying the loaves and fishes. How quickly tradition invaded their thinking. They had become as traditional in their thinking as the Pharisees had been. Old tradition will eat your lunch and new tradition will eat your lunch. New tradition is still tradition. Do not let tradition rule your thinking.

How Does the Word Multiply?

The living Word of God, the Word that was God in the beginning, the Word that was made flesh to dwell among us, brings us a new idea with the parable of the sower. He is the Seed. The Seed will fall on all kinds of ground. If you will provide good ground, the Word of God will find its way into your good-ground heart, and there the Word will spring up to multiply and reproduce itself within us.

The Seed Word of God was planted in a tomb. As the Seed Word of God died, God made a way for it to bring forth a great multiplication. That way was for us so that we could believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and that God raised Him from the dead. By that good ground attitude of

our heart, we make a way for Christ to live in us and through us.

How can we assure ourselves that our hearts are good ground? The answer is simple. Believe that with God, nothing is impossible. Believe that God can raise the dead. Believe that God can solve big problems with small answers.

Parable of the Seed

Following the parable of the sower in Mark, Chapter Four, verses one through twenty, we find the parable of the seed in Mark, Chapter Four, verses twenty-six through twenty-nine. This parable likens the kingdom of God to a man who planted seed, then he would sleep and rise, and the seed would spring and grow, but the man did not know how it did. The earth bringeth forth fruit of itself.

When you have received the Word of God, let the good ground of your heart bring forth as God wills. We do not always patiently do this. We think there is something that we can do to help the seed come forth.

One thing we do is plant more seed on top of it. If one seed is good then one thousand seeds are better. Any good farmer knows that is not true. Surely the more seeds we plant, the more harvest we will get. But planting more seeds does not help one seed come forth any quicker, or more assuredly. The earth brings forth the fruit. Our good ground hearts are all that God needs to bring forth His own Word from our good ground hearts. Relax! Enter into that rest of faith. God says He will bring forth fruit from His Word in your good ground heart, and He will do it.

The other thing we do to help bring forth fruit more quickly is to dig up the seed. We lose faith that it is in our hearts, so we check to see if it really happened. Dig up the seed. Yes, there it is. We cover it over again thinking we have helped the little seed. All we have done is cause the seed to start all over again in the process of multiplication. Leave the seed alone. Assure yourself that you have received the Word seed and it will bring forth fruit. Do not be tempted to dig it up.

How does the seed grow in the good ground? The answer is simple. It grows God's way. Relax and let God grow it.

Parable of the Mustard Seed

In Mark, Chapter Four, verses thirty through thirty-two, we find the parable of the mustard seed. How can we describe the kingdom of God? What can we compare it to, Jesus asked?

"It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth." (Verse 31) We would rather have the kingdom of God not like a mustard seed, but like a very large avocado seed. We could easily eat and never feel the mustard seed as we swallow. We would rather feel them as we swallow. We would rather have a great assurance that we have the seed in us. No. The kingdom of God is like the little mustard seed. It is a small seed which we do not feel as it enters that good ground of our heart. We take it by faith, not by feelings.

But when it grows up, wow! It "becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches." (Verse 32) The

kingdom of God is like a seed planted in the good ground of your heart. It is a very small seed that we do not feel, but we receive it by faith. We do not dig it up, nor do we plant more seed on top of it. We just know that it is there, growing. But when it grows up what a mighty multiplication it produces in our lives. What a change God brings into our lives as we let the Word find the good ground of our hearts.

Chapter 13

BORN OF THE WORD

The Bible Says

Peter writes in First Peter 1:22, 23, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

Born Again?

Those who have not received the Word of God do not know what it is to be born again. They are "the wayside soil" of the parable of the sower. Satan came and immediately stole the seed of the Word.

Others may have received the Seed of the Word and been born again, but they were like the "stony ground" of Mark, Chapter Four. They became very excited about the blessing of receiving Christ, the Living Word, but the excitement was short lived. There was no depth of soil, no depth of commitment. When sickness, discouragement, or persecution arose, they fell away from their faith in God.

Many are like the "thorny ground" of the parable of the sower. They receive the Living Word, but in ground that maintains interest in the world, riches, and other things. These born-again Christians become unfruitful.

Finally, the parable of the sower speaks of the "good ground." Those who receive the Living Word into good ground become fruitful, some thirty, some sixty and some one-hundred fold.

Some who will read this book have had the seed of the Living Word stolen from them. Maybe that is you. If it is, be encouraged. You can change your own heart and receive the Living Word into good ground by opening your heart right now. Invite the Living Word, Jesus Christ, to come into your heart.

Some who are reading this book have been born again, but sickness, discouragement, and persecutions have caused you to doubt. Do not trust in the circumstances. Trust in the Living Word, Jesus Christ. Trust what the Living Word said in the Written Word. John 6:37, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

I am sure you know of others who receive the Living Word into the "thorny ground" of the parable of the sower. They are the ones who are not single minded or single hearted in the things of the Lord. Many would criticize them for lack of dedication. I believe however, that God's leaders may not have given them a pure, clean image of the glorious work that was done in their heart when they were born again. Yes. It is their heart. But let us not be too quick to condemn others in the body of Christ. You may be one who is in that state. Be encouraged. You can pull up the thorns and purify your

heart before God. Jesus said in Mark 12:30, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment."

Praise God for the privilege of being or becoming good ground. That is the ground that produces for God. That is the good ground that will multiply the seed which is received. I believe you are that good ground. I believe your life will count for God in this wonderful day of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

How Did the Word Come?

In the beginning the Word did not come; it simply was, as we have read in Genesis, Chapter One, verse one, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." God did it by expressing the idea that was the essence of God with words. "Light be." And Light was.

At another point in time, let's see what one's response is to the Word that is. God sent a message by His chief messenger, Gabriel, to a virgin named Mary who was espoused to Joseph. The Word did not come to Mary by Gabriel. He just brought her the possibility. As we said in a previous chapter, Gabriel brought a message from God to see if Mary was willing to be used of God. Mary responded to the messenger by saying that wonderful one-liner, "Be it unto me according to thy word." (Luke 1:38) As a result, the Holy Spirit planted the seed of the Word in the good-ground womb of Mary, and thereby the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

That Seed-Word that came into the womb of Mary was born in Bethlehem of Judea. The Word that was made flesh tabernacled among us. That is to say, He was a

temporary portable house of the Word of God. The Word grew in stature and wisdom and in favor with God and man. When about thirty years old, Jesus Christ began His public ministry of declaring the idea that God had for His people from the beginning. It was a new idea to man, so Jesus suffered much persecution for the change that He brought. Finally, they crucified Him. He was buried, but God did not allow Him to remain in the tomb. God raised Him up by His glory. Jesus Himself taught in John 12:24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it dies it bringeth forth much fruit."

This was what happened to Jesus Christ of Nazareth. He was placed into the tomb, dead. But God raised Him up and in the process, made it possible for the Christ-Word of God to be multiplied. Jesus Christ made a way for you and me to be born again, and thereby receive the very spiritual character of God with God as our Father.

Received the Incorruptible Seed

There was a day when you heard a message from God. It may have been an evangelist (ev-angel-ist) who convinced you that God wanted to use your body. It may have been someone where you work giving testimony as to what God had done for them. It may have been a desperate cry out of your own heart to God for help that allowed God to send His message to you. One way or another you heard a message from God. But the message did not produce the new life in you.

If anyone is to be born again, they must say, as Mary said, "Be it unto me according to thy word." I do not mean that you must use those exact words. Seldom does anyone say those exact words. No. God is not calling us

to repeat some mystical formula. That is religion. It will not get you born again. But somehow, with your own words, you cried out of your heart to God, "Help me," or "Heal me," or "Deliver me," or "Save me!" When you cried out of your own heart, the Holy Spirit of God came right in with the Living Word of God, just as He did with Mary. As a result you were born again. You were made a new creature in Christ Jesus. You were forgiven of all your sins, and made pure as the driven snow. You were born again of the Spirit as Jesus taught Nicodemus in the third chapter of John.

How Does the Word Grow?

The parable of the seed tells us how the seed grows in us. Christ is the Seed-Word of that parable. He grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.

The parable of the seed tells us that the sower does not know how the seed grows. The sower just keeps living day and night and the earth causes the seed to grow. That is not to say that we cannot create a climate that is favorable to the growth of the seed. But we directly do not cause the seed to grow. The seed and the soil produce growth, because they were designed by God to do just that.

Scientists are finding out more every day about the growth process. Although they know more about what happens when a seed grows, scientists have not yet found the mystery of life, even in a simple seed. Scientists have taken seeds from Egypt that were stored in tombs for thousands of years. While in the tombs, the seed did not sprout and grow. Curious as the scientists are, they planted some of that ancient seed. What happened? You guessed it. The seed sprouted and grew.

Man has not and will not find out why or even how a seed begins to grow. Only the One who designed the seed knows that mystery.

For that reason, we should not worry about the seed growing in us. God planted it there. God knows that the human heart, whether it be stony ground, thorny ground, or good ground, will receive the Word of God and cause it to grow. Some heart conditions are more favorable to growth and fruitfulness than others, but in all the heart-ground conditions, the Seed- Word grew. God will cause His word to grow in you.

Why Does the Seed Grow?

The only purpose for any seed is to reproduce after its own kind. Apple seeds produce apple trees that produce apples that produce more apple seeds. The Word of God was planted in your heart by the Holy Spirit of God for just one purpose. God wants to multiply the Word that was God in the beginning. God wants the character of Jesus Christ to be multiplied in the earth today. The "corn of wheat," Jesus Christ, fell into the ground and died, that God might bring forth a multiplication of the Word Who became flesh and dwelt among us.

The Living Word of God was planted into your heart that it might grow and reproduce after its kind. That kind is Jesus Christ. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Now we who are flesh are becoming Word and dwelling among them. Yes. Just as the Living Word became flesh, now flesh is becoming Living Word.

Christ was the Message

John 5:19, 20 records the message which Jesus Christ gave to those who hated Him because He had said that God was His Father. "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these that ye may marvel."

Jesus Christ only reproduced the Father. He said in John 14:9, "...He that hath seen me hath seen the Father...." He not only looked like the Father, He said what the Father would say, and did what the Father would do. Jesus Christ was a reproduction of the Father in such detail and intensity that He was the Father. This is a mystery, but Jesus said in John 10:30, "I and my Father are one." I caution you not to become legalistic about this statement, since that attitude about this verse has brought division to the Body of Christ. We also know that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinct personalities also. Yet there is truth in what Jesus said, "I and my Father are one."

Back to John 5:19. Jesus said, "...The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do....." Now that we are born again of the incorruptible seed, the Living Word, now that we are sons and daughters of the Living God, we need to set ourselves about the task at hand. We are to do what we see Jesus Christ doing, what we see the Father doing.

Plastic Screw Drivers

Several years ago before I was born again, my oldest son, Barry, was only two years old. His grandfather had

given him his first tricycle. What a tricycle it was! It was shiny green and white with white handle grips and handle grip guards. From the ends of the handle grips green and white streamers blew in the breeze as Barry frantically pedaled the little twelve- inch wheel down the side walk. Barry would climb on that tricycle and scream out in his little voice, "vrooom, vrrrooomm, vrrroooooommm." Then he would pedal down the side walk as fast as his little short legs could pedal. Oh, what joy I had in watching my son rides his tricycle!

It was Christmas time, and Barry's tricycle was in the living room in our third-floor apartment. Under our little Christmas tree, Santa Claus had left Barry a small tool box about 10x5x2 inches. In that tool box were several plastic tools; a hammer, a saw, pliers, and a screw driver. As I watched Barry play with his new tools, my heart once again was filled with joy. My boy, that is, MY BOY, took his plastic screw driver and went to work on his tricycle. Now, I want you to understand there was nothing wrong with his tricycle. I had seen to it that his tricycle was meticulously cared for. Nevertheless, Barry went to work on his tricycle with his plastic screw driver, working diligently to fix an un-broken tricycle. How proud I was of MY BOY!

Why was I so proud? I was proud because I loved my son. In John 5:20, we read, "For the Father loveth the Son and sheweth him all things that himself doeth...." If I had written that verse I would have written, "For the Son loveth the Father." But that is not what Jesus said. He said, "For the Father loveth the Son." Please note carefully the difference between what I would have written and what Jesus said. Jesus said, "For the Father loveth the Son."

So often we are exhorted like this. "If you love Jesus, you would obey His commandments and do his works." That is good. When we love someone we want to please him. Do you remember your first elementary school or high school romance? Because we had a strong feeling toward our girl friend or boy friend, we wanted to do something to please him or her. We wanted to express our feeling for them. We usually found out that this desire please them by our attention or actions caused a problem. If they rejected our advances and our attention, then how quickly we would reject them in response! That is the way selfish brotherly love (*phileo*) responds.

Jesus loved the Father. But He did not do the works of the Father only because Jesus loved the Father. Jesus did the works of the Father because He knew the Father loved Him. This is a much higher Godly motivation. When we know that someone loves us, we have a much greater motivation to do something for them. (Husbands love your wives, for when they are assured of your love, they will respond by doing things for you.)

Now let us go back to why I was so proud of MY BOY. I loved my son, Barry. I was so pleased with him because I saw him trying to act like me, his father, with his plastic screw driver. In those days (remember I was not born again), I had a 1948 Plymouth business coupe with a skinned off trunk and a Hollywood muffler. I would get in the car, start it up, and gun the engine: vrooom, vrrrooomm, vrrrooommm. Then, off I would drive. Quite often, the engine would not run as smoothly as I liked, so I would get out my screw driver, open up the hood, and work on the carburetor. Little did I realize that what I did, taught my son far more than what I said. The reason Barry screamed out, "vrrrooom, vrrrooomm, vrrrooommm," when he rode his little tricycle, is that he had watched and heard me drive away in the old

Plymouth business coupe with the Hollywood muffler. The reason he got out his plastic screw driver to work on the unbroken tricycle, is that he had seen me work on that carburetor with my screw driver. Why did he do it? He knew that I loved him, and he wanted to be like me, his dad.

Get Out Your Plastic Screwdrivers

The purpose for God sending His Word into you and making you a new creature in Christ is not just to save your spirit. He sent His Word to heal you. He sent His Word to teach you. He sent His Word to prosper you. He sent His Word to reproduce after its own kind in you. He sent His Word to you so that you might take it into all the world to make disciples (to teach) of them, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Get out your plastic screwdriver, begin to act like the Father, and listen to the Father rejoice with you. Oh, how the Father loves you. He loves you so much that He sent His only begotten Son, to show you Himself, to become that corn of wheat that fell into the ground and died, that he might be multiplied through you and me. God gave His Son so that we might become His Sons.

As you allow the Word to grow in you, as you become more Word and less flesh, you will see more and more people come to Jesus Christ and be born again because you are allowing the Living Word to come to them through you. As you put on the mind of Christ and take up the will of God for your life every day, you will multiply the seed sown in you.

You Are the Message

So many Christians today do not understand that we are the message. They can only understand that we give the message. But for us to just give the message makes the Word of God just a set of rules or principles to live by. Yes, there are Godly principles which we are to live by if we are going to reflect what God has reproduced in us through faith in Jesus Christ. However, many religions would agree to the value of the Christian principles, even the teachings of Jesus Christ. But they would not agree that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. In John 14:6 the words of the Living Word are recorded, "Jesus said unto them, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." There is something more than a message involved. There is something involved that no principles could impart. There is something to being a Christian that only Jesus Christ could impart. That something is the new birth of the spirit man; that new creature in Christ Jesus that Paul records in Second Corinthians, Chapter Five, and verse one.

The Word became flesh, because there was something more that God wanted to do for us than give us a message. The Word became flesh to impart life to us and to demonstrate that the life that He gave could be lived right here and now, on this earth. For that reason, we not only have a message to give to people, but we ARE a message to live to people. (Pardon the poetic license.)

Yes, you are the message. The way you live speaks louder than what you say many times. You cannot reproduce the image of God or the life of Jesus Christ, as God intended to multiply and reproduce in you, if you speak love and live hate, if you speak power and live weakness, if you speak mercy and live judgment, if you speak peace and live strife. Oh, yes, you may speak the message for a season, but sooner or later your life style

will become known to those who hear you speak, and they will not receive your words because you do not demonstrate that you live by those words yourself.

Living Epistles

We read in Second Corinthians 3:2-6, "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

In Christ, we are living epistles. What is an epistle? The word epistle is taken from the Greek word *epistole* which simply means letter. The Greek root word is *epistello* which means to communicate by letter. That root word comes from two Greek words, *epi* and *stello*. *Epi* simply means to superimpose upon, or distribution. The word *stello* means to set fast, repress, or abstain from associating with. This word *stello* may well be the root of our English word stall meaning that portion of a barn or stable that separates, represses, or keeps animals from associating with one another. A stall is therefore a portion of a stable, which is a house for animals.

Therefore, an *epi-stle*, or *epi-stello*, is a distributed portion of the whole. Let me help you see what I mean. We are all familiar with the word installment, especially when we are talking about payments. We make installment payments on our house. We make installment

payments on our cars. Each month we send a portion of the whole debt, to pay off the debt. Do you remember the Saturday afternoon matinees, where we saw installments of serials, continuing stories about Superman, *Nioka* the Jungle Girl, or some other romantic episode? We saw a portion of the entire story each week. Do you see what I mean by in-stall-ment. An installment is a sent forth portion of the whole.

Your are an Installment

You are a Living Epistle. You are a message from God to His creation. You are a letter sent from God and His Son Jesus Christ into a lost a dying world. You are not the entire message. Jesus was the only complete message. But you are an *epi-stello*. You are an epistle. You are a sent forth portion of the entire message. You are a word sent in Jesus' name, to reveal Jesus to those who are sick, poor, discouraged, lost. Jesus came to seek and to save those who are lost. Jesus is now seeking and saving the lost as you go forth and live the life, with love, not strife. You are the only "Jesus" that some will ever see or hear.

You are a portion of God's message to His creation today. Do you know what word you are? Are you "love"? Are you "righteousness"? Are you "joy"? Are you "peace"? Are you "healing"? Are you "prosperity"? Note I did not ask you, Do you speak love? Do you speak righteousness? Do you speak joy? It is good to speak those things. But if you speak those things which you are not, you are only giving a message, and not a living message. God and Jesus want you to be a living message, a Living Epistle, read of all men.

If you speak love and live hate, you are not reproducing after God's kind. Men will read what you are and, therefore, will not hear what you say.

The Sky is the Limit

We are not restricted to one word. The sky is the limit. Heaven does not limit us as to how much message we can live or we can give. God does not limit us to one revelation from His Word. Although one revelation, if it is the right revelation, is all we need. That revelation is a revelation of Jesus Christ. Paul had that revelation, by Jesus Christ appearing to him on the road to Damascus. Out of the revelation of Jesus Christ came the revelation of righteousness, faith, grace, and what it is to be in Christ.

You may now have a revelation of one word. That one word may be love. When you have a revelation of love, you not only speak love, but you live love. That one word may be righteousness. When you have a revelation of righteousness, you not only speak righteousness, but you live righteousness. Whatever revelation you have, you not only speak it, because it is a revelation it becomes part of you=part of your life style, part of your very being.

As you continue to receive the Living Word of God, through Bible study, through meditation, or through revelation of the Holy Spirit, your life becomes more than a single word. You may become a complete sentence before Jesus comes again. Some of you desire so much of Jesus Christ that you will soon become a complete paragraph for God. There are some whose hunger for the things of God and yieldedness to the Spirit of God will permit their lives to become complete chapters to God's people. How big a portion, what size of an installment,

how much Living Word do you want your life to be? You can become a complete book for Jesus. I am not talking about adding a new book to the Bible. I am talking about your allowing the Bible to live through you. How much Bible do you want to come alive through you to God's creation? The more I live for Jesus, the more I desire to become a complete encyclopedia, a complete set of books for Christ.

You are born of the incorruptible seed, the Word of God. You are now God's message to His creation. You are now flesh becoming Word. Do not limit God. Let the Holy Spirit make your life a living library for God's glory.

Chapter 14

RECEIVING REVELATION

Go with the Living Word

We, who are flesh, should be becoming the Living Word. We should minister or give spirit and life. Not all who minister the Word of God realize that they are carriers of the Living Word. Many feel it is sufficient to repeat the King James Version, or even to repeat what they heard someone else preach or teach. This is not what God has called us to. We are called to release the Living Word. We cannot release what we have not received.

"M & M" Ministry

I call this release of the Living Word, the "M & M" ministry. Yes, M & M.

Let me tell you a parable of the M & M's. You probably know what M & M's are, because you have seen them or even eaten them. They are those chocolate, sugar-coated candies.

There are two kinds of M & M candy. Some M & M's are just sugar-coated chocolate morsels. The other variety of M & M sugar-coated chocolates have peanut centers.

These two kinds of M & M's are as two kinds of people. The plain M & M's (the sugar coated chocolate only) are as people who have not been born again. They have no Seed-Word in them.

The peanut M & M's (peanuts, covered with chocolate and sugar coated) are as people who have been born again. They have the incorruptible Seed-Word in them.

The plain M & M's have no significant food value. The chocolate is the old man and the sugar coating is the outward appearance. No matter how attractive the sugar or how tasty the chocolate, there is no significant food value in them. If a person is not born again he has no life to give. I want you to understand that this plain M & M type can make you hungry for something, but it cannot satisfy any hunger. The only thing that can truly satisfy is the Word-Seed (peanut), and this type has none.

The peanut M & M's have good food value in the peanut. The chocolate and sugar coating, the old man and the outward appearance, have no more food value than have the plain M & M's. But the peanut M & M's have the peanut. The peanut is the Living Word, the spirit. The Seed-Word peanut represents the value that has life changing ability.

Now the peanut M & M's come in a great variety of sizes, shapes, and colors. Some have very small peanuts with thick coatings of chocolate and sugar. These are of value to the one who eats them, but they would be of greater value if the peanuts were larger. The more valuable M & M's have larger peanuts with very thin layers of chocolate and sugar. I found one once with a double peanut in it. Oh, praise God for the double portion of His Spirit.

In the beginning was the Seed-Word peanut. (I do not mean to be blasphemous, but only to open your understanding.) The Seed-Word peanut was coated in the likeness of sinful chocolate and sugar coating called flesh.

We were as plain M & M's. But we were made new kinds of M & M's as the seed-word peanut was planted into us. (By this parable I do not mean to imply that we had no spirit before we were born again.)

As ministers of the Living Word, our objective should be to feed the biggest peanut (spirit) with the minimum chocolate and sugar coating as possible.

Increase the Peanut

As we are flesh becoming Word, we should do all that we can to increase the peanut (Seed-Word spirit within us).

Second Timothy 2:15 exhorts us to, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The American Standard Version reads, "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth."

The King James Version sounds like we should study, understand, and memorize the Bible. That is good. We should all have understanding of the Bible. We should know the Bible. However, many have memorized vast portions of the Bible and many have university degrees about the Bible, but do not have the Living Word. They are not born again. The peanut Seed-Word they have is

man made; it is plastic. Such a peanut will not reproduce after its own kind, nor will it feed. It is religious chaff.

The American Standard Version gives us a different idea in the word diligence. We should faithfully present ourselves to God, so that we will handle aright the Word of Truth. The Bible records and contains the Word of Truth. But the Word of Truth is Christ. He is the Word. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6). The Word of Truth is Christ, the Living Word. Unless we faithfully present ourselves to God, it is possible that we may mishandle this Living Word.

To increase the size of the Seed-Word peanut in us, we need to submit ourselves to God. That does not mean that we ignore the Bible. We certainly should read and meditate on the Bible, for in the Bible the Holy Spirit can show us the Living Word. Very few of us would know Jesus Christ and be born again, except someone read or quoted the Bible to us. Yet some, like the Apostle Paul, have had Christ revealed to directly or by the Holy Spirit. They too were born again by the Spirit of God.

We should read the Holy Bible, because it is the Holy Bible that was written by men inspired of the Holy Spirit. We therefore must read with an open heart, so that we may receive the same revelation that was placed into the hearts of the writers when the Bible was written.

We can read the Bible looking for truth, but we should read the Bible to feed on the Truth, Jesus Christ. We can read the Bible looking for guidance, but we should read the Bible feeding on the Way, Jesus Christ. We can read the Bible looking for ways to live, but we should read the Bible feeding on the Life, Jesus Christ. We can read the Bible to find new principles, but we should read the Bible to feed on the principal, Jesus Christ.

You can use the Bible as an operator's manual, or you can eat the Word and become the Living Word. Either one is good. But God is wanting to reveal the Living Word to His creation.

You can increase the size of the Seed-Word in you by your reading the Bible with an open heart. You can increase the Seed-Word in you by faithfully submitting yourself to God in prayer. You can increase the Seed-Word in you by praying in the Spirit and worshipping God.

Revelation

This increase of the Seed-Word peanut can be called revelation. Webster's dictionary defines revelation as striking disclosure. When the Holy Spirit, the Teacher, makes something real to us we call it revelation. Some would call it illumination or enlightenment.

In the beginning God said, "Light be," and "There was light." When the word became flesh and dwelt among us, He was called "the light of men." In Psalm 119:105 we read, "The word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Jesus Himself illustrated the new birth of the Spirit in the Sermon on the Mount by saying, "Ye are the light of the world." (Matthew 5)

As the new birth brings us spiritual light and makes us the light of the world, so revelation brings enlightenment to our minds. However, we must allow the Holy Spirit to give us striking disclosures of understanding.

I am sure you have experienced revelation—the time when you suddenly observed a truth became real to you.

You may have felt as though you were the only person who ever saw that particular truth. In fact, thousands before you have had similar revelations. You wonder why you never saw that truth before. It seemed so clear and simple after you received it. Before you had struggled to find understanding, but it would not come. Then the Holy Spirit shined light upon the truth, and revelation came upon you.

Receiving Revelation

I especially remember receiving the revelation of righteousness. At that time I was born again and baptized in the Holy Spirit. But my Christian experience was like a roller coaster; up one day and down the next.

I picked up a book about righteousness and could not stop reading it. The words seemed to jump off the page. Each line of the book fell into place in my mind and heart. The more I read, the better I felt. Light seemed to flood my mind about righteousness. I began to see truth about righteousness that was not even written in the book I was reading. Heaviness lifted from me. I felt as though I had been born again all over again. I felt much the same way I felt when I was born again.

After reading that book on righteousness, I preached the finest sermon I had yet preached in three years of ministry. I thought the entire congregation (all fifteen of us) would get the same excitement of revelation that I had. Some did, and some did not. I thought the revelation would last forever. But it did not. It slowly slipped away, as the old circumstances began to once again invade my thinking. I did not know how to hold on to the revelation of righteousness.

Sustaining Revelation

Some two years went by before I heard a popular teacher give a message on righteousness. As I listened to that teaching, the revelation light of righteousness flooded my mind and heart once again. This time I would not let it go.

The Holy Spirit sent me into the Bible. I began to type all the King James Version scriptures that used the words righteousness, righteous, and righteously. There are over 530 of them. I typed them in the order they were used in the Bible. Then I separated them one from another so that I could sort them into categories. Once again I typed the verses into categories. I have typed that complete set of scriptures about righteousness more than twenty times. I literally have pounded those scriptures into my mind and heart with every stroke of the typewriter.

By going to the Bible, I fixed that light of righteousness into my being. The first time I received the revelation of righteousness, it was like a flashing bulb or blinding light. But it was not sustained enlightenment. However, the second time that revelation of righteousness came; it was like a floodlight that has continuously enlightened my heart.

My point is simply this. Revelation is of no value unless you sustain it. The basic way to sustain revelation is to study what the Bible says about the subject of that revelation. You see, the Bible is the record of revelation that the Holy Spirit gave to men in times past. The Holy Spirit will use the Bible and the revelation in it to sustain the revelation that the Holy Spirit has personally given you.

I must inject at this point that any revelation which you get from God by the Spirit will in no way contradict the previous revelation given to men and recorded in the Bible. Many have departed from the basic check and have been deceived. What God gives you personally will not be contrary to the Bible.

There are several things we can do to sustain the revelation:

1. Study the Bible on the revelation subject.
2. Meditate on the subject of the revelation.
3. Remember what the first thought was when you received that revelation.
4. Remember how you felt, how your emotions responded to that revelation.

Response to Revelation

Pride is the greatest enemy of revelation. The first response to revelation, especially the first revelation we may receive is this. We think we are the only one who has ever received light on the subject. For that reason, the enemy tries to steal that revelation by the entrance of pride. Pride and revelation are mutually exclusive. Pride and deception are partners. Pride and revelation cannot exist together. When pride comes in, revelation light leaves. You may continue to speak the words of the revelation, but they will be empty words. No light will accompany the words as you speak.

When revelation comes, remember, the only thing you contributed was a hunger born out of weakness and needs. It was God's doing by the Holy Spirit and you have no basis for pride or glory. Resist pride and keep the revelation light flowing.

The Only Revelation

When revelation comes to us, it is very welcomed light. It answers many questions or erases the questions which really need no answer. The removal of frustration and the installation of peace and joy that comes with the light is wonderful.

That experience is often so wonderful that we want to share it with everyone. We convince ourselves that this revelation we have received is the very revelation that everyone else needs. This is, as they say, "a kissin' cousin" to pride. It is born out of an agape love desire to have everyone receive the light that has blessed you. But we must understand the Holy Spirit tailor-made the light for you. He can and will tailor-make it for others.

When I received a revelation of righteousness, I was convinced that righteousness was the one and only revelation that everybody needed to live in victory. For some time, I thought others who resisted, or were not blessed by this "one and only" revelation of righteousness, were on the verge of blasphemy. I did not understand that tailor-made light of the Holy Spirit.

After a while I began to realize that light comes in different colors, and revelation comes in different names. Some names for other Biblical revelations are: love, righteousness, faith, grace, authority, deliverance, healing, prosperity, peace, etc. I pray that we will not allow the different revelations to divide the body of Christ, but to blend us together, as various colors of light mixed together make white light, the Light of Men.

The Ultimate Revelation

There is one revelation which is more blessed, more enlightening, and more fruitful than all others. That is the revelation of Jesus Christ. He is the ultimate revelation. He is the Word that brings light. He is the Light.

When I talk about Jesus Christ as the ultimate revelation, I am not talking about being born again. When you were born again, Jesus Christ came to live in your heart, to make you a new creature in Him. I am talking about the revelation, the enlightenment, the realization that the Holy Spirit brings to your conscious mind. The realization that Christ dwells in you. It is one thing to be born again and have Christ dwell in you. It is quite another thing to realize in your conscious mind who the Christ of God really is. This realization is not intellectual knowledge about Christ, but an inward knowing that surpasses intellectual knowledge. This is a personal enlightenment by which this Biblical promise takes on a greater reality in your life.

This reality is often present when we are born again, but we may not know how to keep it. This reality may come again when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit. But still, we may not know how to keep it. We can have this revelation of Jesus Christ and we can keep this revelation of Jesus Christ. How? by diligently submitting ourselves to God, a workman with humble assurance, handling aright the Living Word of Truth.

Chapter 15

MINIMIZE THE CHOCOLATE

In Chapter Fourteen, I presented the parable of the M & M's. The parable likens people to plain M & M's or peanut M & M's. As born-again peanut M & M's, we should have a highly developed, well fed (big in size) spirit- peanut, a thin soul-realm chocolate coating, and as thin as possible body- realm sugar coating.

The spirit-peanut size can only be influenced by the Holy Spirit revelation and enlightenment. We can contribute to this only by our hunger and yieldedness. After that, revelation is in the hands of God.

There is, however, much that we can do to minimize the soul-realm chocolate coating. Of course, it is necessary for us to do so, for the less chocolate (old man) there is, the more Spirit of Christ will be tasted as people eat of us. (I have not made a clear distinction between the human spirit and the Holy Spirit within us. I do not think it is necessary to quibble about such a difference in this analysis. If you are born again, God is the Father of your human spirit. The Holy Spirit is your brother as is Christ.)

The Key

The key to reducing the soul-realm chocolate is the will. We were created by God as free moral agents. Adam

could always make his own decisions. God made him that way so that Adam could reflect God's creative character and love character. Both require freedom of choice. Adam used that freedom to choose to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. By that choice Adam fell.

When the Word that had become flesh was crucified and He was planted in the tomb, God made this life available to all through multiplication. But only those who decided to receive Christ as Lord and Savior were born again. Our decision can permit God to cleanse us from sin and make us new creatures in Christ. Or our decision can prevent God from saving us. A new life in Christ is available to all in God's economy. We are the ones who accept or reject God by our will. Nevertheless, it is God who does the work.

Our will directly affects our new birth in Christ. Our will directly affects the planting of that Seed-Word peanut within us, making us a new kind of M & M person.

The will also directly effects how much of the old man chocolate coating remains. We can be born again, but by our decisions never allow the Holy Spirit to deal with our carnal character. We can reject the comforting, teaching, and guiding of the Holy Spirit and continue to walk after the flesh. Of course, if we do that, we resist the manifestation of God's blessings in our lives also.

The will is the key. We can decide to be stiff-necked and hard hearted, thereby keeping a thick old-man chocolate coating on the spirit-peanut. Or we can decide to be comforted, teachable, and led by the Holy Spirit; thereby we minimize the old-man chocolate coating. With a thin old-man chocolate coating, we will taste more like the spirit-peanut Christ when others taste of us.

Decreasing the Chocolate

The will is the key. But, what should we decide? We should decide to follow Christ. We should decide to walk after the Spirit.

Those are two good statements, but unless we know how to follow Jesus Christ and walk after the Spirit, those statements are mere religious clichés. This very practical question of how to walk with God is the reason the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. The Word that was God in the beginning was wrapped in the likeness of sinful flesh, to demonstrate that a man could resist the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and walk with God. Jesus Christ did it. He said only what the Father would say. He did only the works of the Father.

If Jesus Christ, who had the spirit of righteousness within Himself, could do it, then we, who are born again, can do it also. The key is our decision to hear and do the words of Jesus. What did Jesus say when He opened up His mouth and taught by the presentation of a new idea. We can only walk with God as we receive those new ideas of Jesus, even allow the Holy Spirit to make them a revelation to us.

The presentation of the Sermon on the Mount and the parables of Jesus in this book shows you how "down to earth" these teaching are. If you will hear and do these new ideas in your life, you will minimize the old man chocolate coating in your life.

Non-chocolate Emotions

The old-man chocolate emotions are mourning, fear, anger, hatred and other negative feelings. Let the Holy Spirit comfort your emotions as the Bible promised. Once they are comforted, determine to resist the opportunities to have negative emotions rise up within you. Keep that peace, joy, and love in your feelings. Yield to the qualities the Holy Spirit would install. They are the positive emotions of love, joy, peace, and trust. Decide to give place to those positive, new creature, non-chocolate emotions.

Non-Chocolate Intellect

Reduce the old-man chocolate intellect that produces pride and self centeredness. Get rid of that "I can do it myself, mother" attitude. You are not smart enough to stand alone without God. You will also find out you are not smart enough to stand alone without God's people. We must have God's help to make it in this life. We will also come to realize we cannot make it without the help of God's people. Do not allow pride or anti-meekness to reject God and God's people out of your life.

Put on Jesus' way of thinking. Eat the words of Jesus, and thereby receive the new ideas that Jesus taught. By these new ideas you will begin to think like Jesus. You will put on the mind of Christ. Proverbs 23:7 reads, "For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he..." Think in your heart like Jesus and be like Him.

As Jesus said only what the Father would say, likewise, you say only what Jesus would say. As Jesus would do the works of the Father, likewise, you do the works of Jesus.

By thinking, speaking, and doing according to the teachings, parables, and ministry of Jesus, you will minimize the old-man chocolate coating. You will also minimize the attention given the outward appearance, the sugar coating.

Easy Program!

From what has been presented in this book, some may conclude that it would be very easy to reduce the chocolate and sugar coatings on the seed-word peanut. However, as we examine the matter in depth, we realize that the body by itself cannot reduce the sugar coating. The body must submit to the soul-realm chocolate, for it is in the soul realm that decisions are made about what we eat, where we go, and how our body acts. For the body to look, eat and act like Jesus, our soul-realm must have knowledge of this. Knowledge is not enough, however. We must decide to act on that knowledge.

This sounds like an easy thing for our discipline to accomplish, but it is not always so.

What to Wear

Let's consider the simple case of what we wear. In some churches clothing is very important. Some believe that dress must be extremely modest. The ladies should wear long sleeves, long skirts, high necklines, and only navy blue or black. The men are to wear black with no neck ties. The reasoning is that we should not bring attention to our physical being, nor should we become competitive with our dress.

This sounds good. But I have found that the deliberate humility can be supported by a great pride. "I am more humble than you are." That is not humility, but pride. "My black coat is made of a finer weave than your black coat." "My black coat is tailor made." Obviously that is pride and competition. It is hardly ever spoken. Jesus said that thinking about it is a sin. It is religious flesh.

On the other hand, there are those who understand that the best clothing is the least noticed clothing. It is better to blend in with the crowd than to be over dressed or under dressed. (I am talking about quality of dress, not quantity. It is always better to have too many clothes on than too few, if we must make a choice.) Dress like the people you minister to, and your clothes will not draw attention.

(I must quickly add, there are some exceptions when special costumes can get people's attention in order to lead them to Jesus.)

Believe it or not, even this conservative idea of dressing like the people you minister to can become a source of pride. "I blend with others better than you do." "I have the wisdom to not stick out." "I wear color coordinated clothes that blend with my complexion and eye color." It is possible to have any of these attitudes. They must be avoided if we are going to stay humble.

More important than the clothes we wear is the attitude we have about what we wear. We can look just right, but be proud about it. We can look all wrong, yet have a humble heart. It is best to look just right and stay humble. As Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount, it all goes back to the motivation of the heart.

Over Weight?

Of course we could consider the case of body weight and what we eat. It is a much more complex example.

Presently Christians are giving much attention to their physical bodies, as is the world. People of the world are doing it to hang on to life and beauty. Christians may be doing it for the same reasons. Christians should take care of their bodies because they are the temple of the Holy Spirit. God deserves a good house to dwell in. Take care of it.

Once again pride is our greatest enemy. We smile and say we love one another, but inside we think, "I'm glad I'm not over weight like you are." The term "over weight" is simply a subtle substitute for FAT. We should lovingly realize that being fat or skinny may simply reflect a need. Jesus did not come to condemn the world, but to seek and save those who are lost. Those who are whole need no physician. If you are whole, become a physician who will meet the need, so people can come to a normal body weight.

How subtly we judge others by the outward appearance. Stop it! God looks beyond our faults and sees our needs. God looks beyond our bodies and sees our hearts. Be like God and do likewise.

Do not get proud about body-realm discipline. It may come easy to you. If it does, thank God. It may be hard for others. If so, pray for them, but do not judge them. Be merciful!

The Soul Realm

As judgment and pride are the great pitfalls in body-realm discipline, likewise in the soul realm. The whole issue, however, is amplified in the soul realm.

Emotions, intellect, and will are the soul-realm elements which we must submit to the spirit. The soul realm cannot reduce its own fleshly influence without judgment and pride rising up.

Emotions

If we have been raised by our parents to control our emotions, stability comes easy for us. Therefore, we may have no understanding or mercy for those who have emotional problems. Pride and judgment may creep into our hearts, rather than praise to God for the peace that we enjoy.

Intellect

If we have had the advantage of education, we may have a well developed intellect. Therefore we take an intellectual approach to reducing our worldly and fleshly intellect, and increasing our Biblical or religious intellect. This is certainly reflected in the present day emphasis on the teaching ministry. Intelligent people approach the Word of God intellectually and quickly begin to teach their new intellectual understanding. The Corinthian Christians were such. The result was division and sin among the Christians.

Intelligence cannot reduce the fleshly influence in our lives without our being greatly tempted to become proud of it. This becomes self-reliance with God pushed out of our lives, even though we are born again.

The Will

The influence of the will is in decision making and discipline. One experienced teacher once said, "You make decisions, then decisions make you." It is true. The decisions we make will govern our lives. If we have been raised by our parents to be disciplined, discipline may come easy to us. Therefore, it is easier to have a lack of understanding and mercy toward the undisciplined. We may be proud of our discipline. We tend to say, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me," with a great big I and a very small Christ. If that is true, self is on the lordship throne, and not Christ.

Paul's Expression

Paul expresses this problem of carnality in Romans, Chapter Seven, and verses fifteen through twenty-five. Read this passage. Paul basically says, "I do the things I do not want to do. The things I know are right, I do not do." Then he concludes, "Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" He quickly answers, "Jesus Christ, our Lord." He does not turn to discipline. He does not turn to the intellect. He does not turn to his emotions. Paul turns to Christ, Christ in him the hope of glory.

Trust in Christ

The only hope for any of us to reduce the old-man chocolate coating, without pride or judgment flooding in, is to turn to the Spirit for help and strength.

The only effective and fruitful way we can reduce the old man chocolate is to turn to the peanut. The only effective way to change the outward body realm appearance is for the body to yield to the soul realm. The only way to effectively change the soul realm fleshly old man, is for the soul to yield to the Spirit.

As we yield the soul to the Spirit, we must trust that God will fulfill His Word of promise. This trust is called faith. Faith is not a trust that we can do it by calling on untapped soul-realm resources. This again is centered only in the soul realm. Faith is trusting that God will fulfill His promise when it is impossible for even untapped soul-realm talents to do it.

This is illustrated so clearly to us in the story of Ishmael and Isaac, Galatians, Chapter Four. Abraham tried to help God fulfill His promise by bearing a child by Hagar. Hagar's child, Ishmael, was of the flesh and brought no glory to God. It was Isaac, the child of promise, brought into the world by 90 year-old, barren Sarah who brought glory to God.

Faith is trusting that God will do the impossible.

The only way to walk after the Spirit is to walk in faith. Trust that the Spirit will love the unlovely through you. Trust that the Spirit will teach the unteachable through you. Trust that the Spirit will guide the rebellious ones through you. Trust the Spirit to provide for the poor through you.

God is looking for just one thing in His people: availability. Make your spirit available to the Lord. Be born again and baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Make your soul-realm available to God; take on His compassion, understanding, and faithfulness.

Make your body available to the Lord. Do the works that you see Jesus do.

In yielding to the Spirit of God you will maximize the spirit-peanut, you will minimize the old-man chocolate coating. Your sugar coating will never be a problem. People will want to eat of you as Jesus had them eat of Him. People are hungry for the spirit-peanut (which is in you). The world is hungry for The Truth, The Word, Jesus Christ, and The Seed which multiplies through you.

Chapter 16

RELEASING THE SPIRIT

The purpose for this entire book is found in this last chapter for your life to be a living testimony in "Releasing the Spirit."

In the beginning >t52God said. God set His ideas into existence by the words He spoke.

God spoke to His prophets in time past by His own voice and by His Spirit. Those prophets were inspired and recorded these inspirations in the Bible.

Through Moses, God sent the law. The law reflected God's desire for His creation, but gave man no power to live God's way.

Then the Word that was God in the beginning became flesh and dwelt among us.

Jesus was sent for two purposes. He came to prove that men could once again walk with God. He came not to destroy the law, but to produce what the law defined, as He walked by the Spirit. Secondly, He came that through His death and resurrection, His life might be multiplied in those who believe in Him. He was the Living Word.

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Now we who are flesh are becoming Word to dwell among all of God's creation. Now we are the Living Word as Christ lives through us.

We have considered how to maximize the Word-Spirit in us and walk after the Spirit. We have considered the need to minimize the flesh.

Now we will briefly address ourselves to releasing the Spirit.

Only The Spirit

Now that we are flesh becoming Word, it is our opportunity to multiply the Seed-Word by what we speak and how we live. It takes both. We cannot talk like Jesus and live like the devil and be fruitful for God. We cannot talk like the devil and live like Jesus and be fruitful for God. We must talk and live like Jesus. We must be hearers, speakers, and doers of the Word. This is being the Living Word.

We must remember this. Whatever we speak or do, we impart a portion of ourselves. We impart the spirit-peanut. We also impart the soul-realm chocolate coating. What we are will reproduce after our likeness. If our likeness is God's likeness, we reproduce after God's image. If our likeness is the old man, we will reproduce after the old man.

How to Release the Spirit

We reproduce by the words that we speak. Jesus reproduced Himself in us by the word of God which He

spoke. We are born again of the incorruptible seed the Word of God. We will reproduce in others by speaking the Word of God into their hearts. Is it a pure Seed-Word from God, or is it covered with a thick layer of the old-man chocolate?

I once experienced a Bible teacher who taught on the subject of love. For some reason he was not reaping the results of love. He was talking about love, but enmity, strife and division were the result. I pondered that. "God, your Word will not return void," I thought. Why was love not returning. Then the Lord opened my eyes. The beloved brother who was speaking about love was filled with bitterness and scars from disappointment in the ministry. He was speaking about love, but he was imparting the bitterness of his own peanut spirit. The word that was returning to him was the word character of bitterness. He was not speaking love. He was speaking about love in bitterness.

We cannot do this and be effective ministers of reconciliation. If we are to be effective reproducers in the kingdom of God, we must minister the spirit to others. It is only the Spirit of God that can change lives.

The words which we speak must be spirit words if they are to reproduce after the likeness of God. Words that we read aloud from the Bible or from a written sermon will not touch another heart, unless we have lived the words we are reading. Only words which have become a revelation to us will produce revelation to others.

Words that we have memorized, Bible verses and quotations from others, will not touch others hearts unless we have lived those words ourselves. Only words spoken out of spirit revelation will bring spirit revelation to others.

Words that we have lived, scriptures which are real to us, sayings that were born in our hearts by the Holy Spirit will reproduce spirit and revelation in others.

A Choice

When we are in a place of public ministry, what we call platform ministry, we have a choice.

We can minister something that we have ministered before. We can determine what we are going to say long before that hour we speak. We can write it all down and simply read it. We can make an outline with key scriptures that we can read. Thereby, we are assured that we will "touch all the bases" and say what we want to say.

It is good to do these things if we are writing down or making an outline of something that the Holy Spirit has made real to us in time past. If we are going to minister life, we must be willing to abandon the prepared material and follow the particular direction that the Holy Spirit may give at the last minute, or even while you are ministering.

This willingness requires a sensitivity or yieldedness to the Holy Spirit which may be quenched by your intellectual concentration. If you give too much attention to your notes, you cannot give attention to the Holy Spirit. If you are the least bit insecure about your material, you may especially be dependent upon your prepared material. You cannot depend on prepared material and depend on the Holy Spirit at the same time. No man can serve two masters, Jesus said.

I do not mean that you cannot use notes and be anointed at the same time. You can trust the Holy Spirit while your notes are guiding your mind if you are willing each moment to forget the notes and move with the Holy Spirit.

The alternative to prepared material when ministering from the platform is this. As you step to the platform, cry out to God, "God, if you do not speak to your people, they will not be spoken to." "God, use my mouth, my tongue, my mind, and most of all, use my heart as instruments of the Holy Spirit."

With this attitude, we also approach the ministry with an awesome reverent respect for God and His Word. We should be vitally aware that unless the Holy Spirit inspires and anoints, our words will be empty in the people's ears. On the other hand, we trust confidently that as we open our mouth, the Holy Spirit will fill it.

What, if any, preparation can be given to this latter attitude of ministry? No last minute sermon writing or frantic note taking, or hectic scripture referencing will prepare one for such ministry. On the other hand, your entire life has been preparation for that few minutes of opportunity to minister to people. You stand before God's people who are discouraged, sick, poor, oppressed, and defeated. You stand as an open vessel. You are confident that the Holy Spirit will meet their needs, if you can just release the Holy Spirit to them. In order to release the Spirit, your natural man must be totally yielded to the Holy Spirit.

At that moment, you must be dead to pride. You must be dead to popularity. You must be dead to being unique or special. At the same time, you must be willing to come alive in Christ. You must be alive with compassion. You must be alive with love. You must be alive with comfort.

You must be alive with authority. At that moment you allow Christ to live as big in you as He ever has before.

As you begin to speak, you realize the words which bring life and the words which minister death. As you speak, you begin to recognize that you are speaking by the Holy Ghost, or you are speaking words born of the carnal man.

Speak by the Spirit

The great question is this. Is there any conscious or deliberate thing we can do to yield to the Spirit and speak spirit words?

The first thing is to know what the Holy Spirit wants to say to those particular people at that time. This depends on the needs of the people. For example, we may be ministering in a family seminar. Our natural mind would lead us to minister on the father's role, or the mother's role, or the children's role in the family. However, the Holy Spirit may want us to minister on repentance, hunger for God, or world missions. To follow the Holy Spirit, we ask His help to minister in love, so as not to offend the seminar organizers. At the same time we ask help of the Holy Spirit to weave repentance into the family theme, so that people see we are not in rebellion.

God is so gracious to direct us to minister in wisdom so that His words will find their place in the hearts of the people with love.

When we speak what God wants said, we are assured of His blessing on our ministry.

The second thing we remember as we speak the mind of God is, "KISS it." That means: Keep It Simple Stupid. Keep the number of words you speak to a minimum. Use short words and short sentences. God is love, God loves you. Jesus died for you. Jesus loves you. Jesus lives in you. You are beautiful. You are of great value to God. God wants to bless you. God wants to heal you. God wants to prosper you. You are God's child. This is what Jesus did as He spoke the "Beatitudes." If your sentences are long and complicated with many clauses of explanation, the intellect of the people will be so busy unraveling the sentence, that their minds will stop the message before it gets to their spirit. (This sentence was a good example.) Speak simple things the mind does not have to wrestle with. This is what Jesus did through the parables. He simplified the Truth.

The next important idea when ministering is to speak out of revelation. If you do not have specific revelation from the Holy Spirit, then speak out of a revelation which the Holy Spirit has given you in time past. If something is not real to you, you cannot make it real to God's people. I can speak about Heaven from what I read in the Bible about Heaven. But if I had died, gone to Heaven, and was raised from the dead, I could speak of that reality and speak Heaven into the hearts of God's people.

There is no guarantee, however, that speaking about a revelation will release the Spirit of that revelation. Did you notice the word, "about" in the last sentence? It is one thing to speak about revelation; it is another thing to speak revelation. It is one thing to speak about love; it is another thing to speak love. When we speak love, the spirit of love finds His way into the hearts of God's people. They receive love, and they will love in return.

But you can speak about love, you can speak about how to love, and if you are harboring hatred in your heart, hatred will find its way into the hearts of God's people.

You speak revelation by keeping that revelation nurtured in your heart. You guard your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. The same elements that effect your receiving and keeping revelation are much the same elements that effect your imparting that revelation to someone else.

Releasing Revelation by Words

We release the reality of any revelation by expressing the light of revelation with words. These words need to reflect the enlightenment and image that came into the heart when we received the revelation. If the revelation brought enlightenment about the great love of God, then words about faith will not release the revelation. I know that sounds rather elementary. It should not have to be said. But it is not so simple and clear in the practical application.

The problem in selecting the right words to express the enlightenment lies in identifying the character of the revelation. The light of revelation does not always come to us with a big label on it saying, love, faith, repentance, righteousness, freedom, discipline, etc. Sometimes we must ask God to help us put words on our revelation. Once we have attached the proper words to a revelation, and then use those words to minister that revelation to others. You see, words are spirit carriers (John 6:63), and revelation is spirit light.

If we change the words of a revelation, we impart a spirit that is somewhat different than the spirit light revelation we received.

Release Revelation by Emotions

Not only should we use the proper words to release revelation, but we should speak them with the proper emotional attitude. To do this, we must recall our emotional response to the revelation when we received it. If you broke and wept tears of joy when the revelation light came to you, then yield your heart to that same emotional attitude as you speak the words of revelation. Whatever your emotional response was when receiving must also be the emotional attitude of release. It could be joy, freedom, authority, strength, or any number of emotional attitudes. Remember how you felt, and yield to that same feeling as you speak.

This is a very important factor for the release of revelation. It is the very reason that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. The law, the written Word, has no emotion. It has no life in it. Emotional content is necessary to have a Living Word. Jesus wept. I believe Jesus rejoiced, although we have no direct record of it. Certainly Jesus had righteous indignation or anger as He cleaned out the temple. Of course, Jesus gave peace, comfort, and love. The Word that became flesh expressed Himself with emotional content. Now, as flesh that is becoming Word, we need to express ourselves with emotional content.

The emotion we display must be consistent with the words we speak. We should not speak love with harsh, angry emotion. We speak of love with quiet emotions and a caring attitude. We should not speak of authority with

an attitude of insecurity and listlessness. Authority should be spoken with confidence and boldness of attitude.

From this analysis alone, you could conclude that I am just talking about drama. No, not drama but life. Drama is man's attempt to portray or communicate something that is not necessarily real and personal to the actor, although professional actors do give themselves over to the personality of the character they are portraying. Ministry is giving ourselves over to the personality of Christ. We portray Christ not in order to make Christ real to others when He is not real to us. We give ourselves over to Christ to make Christ real to others BECAUSE He is real to us. There is a great difference between drama and ministry. Drama is to entertain through deception. Ministry is to give life through the reality and truth of Christ.

Without this emotional recall and yieldedness, we only talk about a revelation. If we are to impart the revelation to others, we must express the words wrapped in emotional content. By doing so, we open our own hearts and minister a portion of ourselves by releasing revelation light to God's people.

The Anointing

The release of the spirit and revelation with God's manifest blessing on the ministry is called the anointing.

To so many, the anointing is a mystery. There should be no mystery to it. It is simply God confirming the ministry by the manifest presence of the Holy Spirit upon the ministry.

However, many confuse talent with anointing. This should not be. Talent is of self. Anointing is of the Holy Spirit. Talent is drama. It attempts to produce an effect that will stir a response from the mind or emotions of people. This is called entertainment. The anointing abides within, we read in First John 2:27, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you...." It is the Holy Spirit.

How often I have observed people with little or no talent minister with the anointing, especially with music. A person may play with their guitar out of tune, skipping beats and singing flat. Yet they open their mouth with a humble heart of trust and the Christ of God comes forth. They are anointed.

I have also heard highly talented saints minister with technical perfection under the anointing of God. How beautiful and blessed it is. One is tempted to compare anointed talent with anointed non-talent and say that talent with anointing is better. If both are truly anointed, you will never think to make the comparison because you have been touched by God from both. One touch from God, one touch of love will wipe away judgment from our hearts.

If you have never heard an untalented person minister under the anointing, you may tend to confuse talent with the anointing. Ask the Lord to help you know the difference. Talent stirs your mind and emotion. It may cause you to cry or laugh and shout. Anointing stirs your spirit and should leave you in the presence of God. Talent will stir up applause. Anointing will cause you to fall on your face before God and enjoy His presence.

What is Anointing?

To directly define anointing is difficult. We find some help in Exodus, Chapter Thirty, verses twenty-three through twenty-five, where we find the recipe for the anointing oil.

"Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty shekels, and of cassia five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil olive an hin: and thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, and ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil."

Let us examine the meaning of these spices, that we might understand the elements of the Holy Spirit anointing.

MYRRH

Hebrew *moe*
English distilling in drops

Hebrew *marar*
English trickle, grieved, vex

SWEET CINNAMON

Hebrew *quinamown*
English erect, upright rolls

CALAMUS

Hebrew *calamus*
English stem, beam, rod

Hebrew *kawnaw*

English own, teach, keep cattle, erect, create, procure, redeem

CASSIA

Hebrew *kiddaw*

English bark in shriveled rolls

Hebrew *kawdad*

English bow or stoop

OLIVE OIL

Hebrew *shehmen* oil

English richness, anointing

Hebrew *shawman*

English to shine oily, glossy

From the *myrrh* we see tears and grief that produces compassion and comfort toward those with troubles.

From the cinnamon we find the uprightness of knowing who we are in Christ.

From the *calamus* beam or rod we find several elements. The Hebrew root, *kawnaw* is also the root word for Canaan land, or promised land. The Hebrew word for rod has several applications:

It is used for a walking stick.

It is used for correction.

It is used for a shepherds crook.

It is used as a scepter of authority.

So we find the elements of help, correction, safety, salvation, and authority in the one element of the anointing oil.

In *cassia* we find humility and reverent worship in the idea of bowing or stooping.

Finally in the olive oil we find gloss, shine, or joy. Olive oil was used as a healing ointment. It was applied cosmetically to the hair and face. It was burned in lamps for light. The image in the olive oil is apparent.

All of the listed elements were crushed together and mixed with the olive oil to produce the anointing oil.

The anointing abides within you. Release it with compassion, comfort, confidence, contriteness, and the attitude of calling on Christ.

Conclusion

In the beginning God said.

The Word of the Lord came to the prophets.

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

We are born again of the incorruptible seed, the Word of God.

We are living epistles read of all men.

You are flesh becoming Word to dwell among them.

You are the LIVING WORD!