

# THE CHURCH OF GOD IN THIS AGE

***ITS POWER*** and ***ITS POSITION***

**Ten stimulating and thought-provoking pastoral Studies centred entirely and firmly upon the Lord Jesus Christ. The teaching was given over two weeks to a local assembly for them to see with the eyes of the Holy Spirit what The Church is to God. Now, carefully edited into a readable book form from original live recordings, this Collection will be an invaluable aid for church leaders and all faithful teachers and students of the Word of God.**

## PREFACE

**This heart-stirring Series** on the true nature of The Church of our Lord Jesus Christ was given to an independent Assembly in Acton, West London, in 1974, by Pastor Norman B. Scutt. Born and raised by European parents in Calcutta, India, he came to Christ through the persevering witness of his wife, Rita. He attended a Bible Class run by two English women, Miss Wise and Miss White, who, in preparing young men for the ministry, laid the foundations within him of a sound and deep knowledge of Scripture, based upon the necessity for the shed Blood of Jesus Christ.

Coming to England with his family in the 1950s, after many preaching engagements around London, he was appointed to serve Christ as Pastor to a small Pentecostal fellowship by the clear direction of the Holy Spirit. He continued to serve the Lord in faithfully pouring out Holy Spirit-inspired teaching until his death in 1981.

His legacy is a band of pastors, elders, deacons and members of the Body of Christ, distributed in many other churches within and beyond London, committed to feeding Christ's lambs and sheep with "the finest of the wheat" as they serve Him until the end of this Age of Grace.

The revelations from the Scriptures came from him with hardly a pause of breath, let alone a full-stop to be discerned, as he focused his congregation on the Risen Crucified Christ. So the delightful task of the editor is to construct sentences for easy reading, yet retain the real joy in the heart of the teacher as he brings this most-needful, powerful Message of The Church of God In This Age.

Therefore there is much underlining of words and emboldening; also exclamation marks and the expressions of praise – "Hallelujah" – have been retained, all as a sincere attempt to convey the passion in the pastor's voice, as he sought to inspire his congregation to love, seek, and serve the Lord Jesus Christ more deeply.

Square brackets are also used frequently to enable the reader to locate additional references where Scriptures have been given in passing to build up a particular point or vision.

Again, as with all books published by **Bâsar Blessings**, the King James Authorized Version is used – without apology!

These books of pastoral meditations and teachings have been made possible by the faithful efforts of a small group from that original assembly now responsible for maintaining the recordings of our times of weekly and fortnightly retreat called "Seek Ye The Lord". Every word from the tapes have been faithfully written down, and then sensitively edited into the readable form you hold today.

To you, the reader then, comes our heart-felt desire that you would absorb these teachings with a humble, sincere and passionate heart to live them out by the Holy Spirit of God, the Comforter, occupying till He, the Head of the Church, His Body, comes in the air to collect His own. May God bless you in your determination to glorify God in your body and in your spirit as did the Son of God!

Finally, the plea to follow the example of the believers at Berea, "*they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so*" [Acts 17:11].

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# THE CHURCH OF GOD IN THIS AGE

## ITS POWER

### *Ephesians 1:15-23*

“Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, 16. Cease not to give thanks for you, making mentions of you in my prayers. 17. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. 18. The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know

what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19. And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, 20. Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, 21. Far above all principality,

and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22. And that put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, 23. Which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.”

**Daily Readings : *Isaiah 55:6-9; Hebrews 1:1-4; Isaiah 53:1-6; Revelation 21:22-27***

## DAY 1

### SCRIPTURES FOR THE DAY'S STUDY

1 Timothy 3:14 - 16	Isaiah 52:7 -15
Ephesians 1:15 - 23	John 20:11 - 31
1 Corinthians 15:1 - 8	1 Corinthians 15:12 - 28
Acts 2:22 - 36	2 Corinthians 15:12 -28
Acts 13:26 - 39	Philippians 3:15 - 21
John 19:28 - 37	Revelation 5:6 - 14

## Revelations from the Scriptures

### SENT BY CHRIST

***John 17:18*** “As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.”

## Belonging Only To God

**1 Timothy 3:14-16** "These things write I unto you – Paul could have said, 'by the Spirit of God' – that you mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." That is how God's Word describes you, for just as **God** is, so should be His Church. "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness – the mystery God is pleased to reveal to us – God was manifest in the flesh..." What "**God manifest in the flesh**" is, the Church of God is. We are seeing this Church, of this God.

In the Scriptures it is called "The Church". "Unto Him – that is, to God – be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" [Ephesians 3:21]. It is called **The Church** as it is neither a Jewish nor a Gentile church. 1 Corinthians 10:32 refers to the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God. That is how God finds the world of mankind...

**This Church**, The Church, is not the church of any land or nation. It is not a church of any denomination! Nor is it a mixture of all those churches, or of some of them. No! It is **THE Church**, to which the Lord Jesus Christ "adds daily such as should be saved", as we read in Acts 2:47. If Salvation is difficult to experience in your church, and souls are not being born-again, consider what type of church it is. Is it part of The Church, or is it just 'church'??

The Church is called also "*the Church of God*", because Jesus Christ is **God manifest in the flesh**, and now manifested **also in the Church**. Ephesians 3:10 says "...now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places – in this Age – might be known by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God". Not our wisdom, of scholars or theologians, but the wisdom of **GOD**.

It is called also "*the Church of the Living God*", because Jesus Christ is **alive** and active in every member of this Church, The Church of God, by His Eternal Word and by His Eternal Spirit. Every member of this Church, would be in God's sight, full of God's Word and of God's Spirit. How else? – for Christ Himself is alive in the same way as His Word is alive and His Spirit is alive...

This Church, is also called "*the House of God*" **and** "*the House of Christ*", for the Spirit of God and of Christ **dwells** in every member; actively energising each one with a **Vision of Jesus Christ**. The Holy Spirit also **energises** each member of **The Church**, with Christ's views and Christ's virtue.

Virtue isn't good points. His virtue is that Source of Power and Life released, without His intention at the time to heal, but when the woman touched His garment, He knew "*that virtue had gone out from Him*", Mark 5:24-34. That is resident in **God**, and is, as the Word reveals, resident in His Church.

It is called also "*the Church of the Firstborn*" as the members are those of God's own Personal Family – the Family which has the Risen Christ in His terribly disfigured human Body, as its **First** and most Senior Member. Christ was "*the Firstborn from the Dead*", Colossians 1:18.

This is a Family created out of Christ's own wounds leading up to Golgotha and His Death on the Cross, His own terrible suffering, His own lovely tender Humility; a Family whose members have their names written in Heaven in God's Family Register of new births, called "*the Lamb's Book of Life*" [Revelation 21:27]. By this we know that it is a properly regulated Family affair with God's Family Register known by the Title "*The Lamb's Book of Life*".

**The Lamb** made it possible for God to have this Family with the names written there – the Record in Heaven of this **Family and Church of the Firstborn**.

## As The Head, So The Body

It is called also "**The Body of Christ**". "And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead;" – all those points are in *Colossians 1:18*. All the members function in this world as Christ functions in Heaven – the Body as the Head; now in the present: "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers – who well know the functioning of the Head; His Power and His Authority better than us – *might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God*" – resident in Christ – "the church, Which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." *Ephesians 2:10 & 1:22-23*.

These verses remind us that this is God's View of The Church. It is up to us to **take all these points from God** and to see that we live up to **God's tremendous Vision of what we can do**.

The Purpose of meditating on these Scriptures is to seek **to understand the Power of the Church of God in this Age**; how to function here as Christ functions there, in complete control. *1 John 4:17* says "as **He** is, so are **we** in this world" and *Romans 6:11* says "dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God". In gathering the Scriptural Facts, we see **The Power in The Church**, "dead indeed to sin but alive unto God"; crucified to the world [*Galatians 6:14*], and constrained by the Love of Christ [*2 Corinthians 5:14*], for the Love of God squeezed out of Christ His last drop of Blood so that God could have the Family He wanted.

Then may it not be said of **The Church** that **it** is constrained by that same Love in the Saviour, Lord and Head; controlled by His Spirit, as He was controlled by the Spirit? – an actual physical control; conscious always of its longing and its readiness for That Resurrection Day!

In His agonies on the Cross, as the *Psalms* reveals, Christ always ended by speaking of That Eternal Day. He knew that He must be with God once more and forever. So that is The Church's Vision: Whatever it goes through, the trials, the sufferings, even from a special work for God; whatever the difficulties, obstacles, barriers it goes through, not around! – and in it all, **The Church** is very conscious of That Eternal Day, **The Day** the Church **knows** is coming, when the Body shall enter God's Home and be in Eternity with Christ in that Home He is preparing for God's Family. [*John 14:2-3*]

The world is hostile to Christ and to The Church, but we have a Home to go to some Day, which is lightened by the Glory of God and of which blazing, unspeakable Glory, the Lamb is the Light! That is what we must work for, live for and long for and look for by faith. The thought must keep us going here, doing the things that God, and not man, would have us to do. We must continue to seek for that Better Country, like those men of faith before the Cross, who were persuaded by God's Spirit that they were not suffering for God without having a better Place to go to. Oh, no! So they suffered cheerfully, preferring a Better Resurrection! [*Hebrews 11*]

## The Power of GOD Within

We shall look at the Church, under its various Scriptural titles – The Church, the Church of God, the Church of the Living God, the House of God, the House of Christ, the Church of the Firstborn, the Church which is His Body – this **Glorious Church** – with God's eyes, not with our own.

- We shall see "the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe" [*Ephesians 1:19*]. The Power **resident** in The Church of God is **exceeding great in God's opinion** (not man's). Believe what God says of The Church and see what you believed: the Power to live in this world **without sin**, as *Romans 6:14* says, "sin shall not have dominion over you".

The Church is not under the Law but under Grace. It demands **greater discipline, greater humility, greater holiness** – and gives **greater deliverance**, in the exceeding greatness of His Power in you who believe!

- We shall see also **its Power** to maintain its place at God's Right Hand, **in Christ**. As the Body, The Church has many members; each one should know these things and be in a place where the world recognises its conversation, its guidance and its Word comes from **Heaven** not from men. The world should recognise each member as part of The Church. The Authority of God that we long for is by believing and staying in the Position that God has placed us.
- We shall see too **its Power** to establish its superiority over all the power of Satan, over all the power of his unholy angels; demons, unclean spirits, as they are called. The Church does not quarrel with **men**; its first object of attack is sin and the powers of darkness.

The Church is an attacking, forceful Body. Christ was aggressive against sin. Holiness doesn't object to sin; it is more practical – it attacks and destroys it! Wherever evil, wicked things are, The Church is there destroying them. *“Now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places... – the demon hosts of Satan and his unclean angels – ...might be known by the church”* [Ephesians 3:10]. They know that this Power is **resident** in The Church.

So, is this Power manifested today?? It is the Church of **God**, the Church of **the Living God**, the Church of **the Firstborn**, the **House** of God, the **House** of Christ and **the Body** of Christ!! The Power **is** there; it's in the Holy Spirit; it's in the Word of God; it's in your faith in the Blood of the Cross – that unshakeable guarantee that *“the Blood shall be to you for a token...”* [Exodus 12:13]. The Blood of Christ **is** a token, and if God gives you a token, it's yours **for ever**; you'll never, never find it fail. However, if we fail it is because we don't believe, so we don't receive; we don't accept God's Word as it is given and spoken by the Spirit.

- We shall see too, in different ways, the exceeding greatness of the Power of The Church of God to overcome the world. The Church attacks its systems by its life and by its Word, which is **God's**. It does not subscribe to the world's ways, habits, and methods; it eschews them. It denies the world the pleasure of seeing it involved in its ways of living.

The Church's Power is demonstrable because it is Christ's Power. Jesus Christ overcame the world, not by killing or imprisoning men, but by destroying the basis of the power that holds men's system together. Well, we don't build again the things that we have destroyed, do we? (Galatians 2:18). If we are in The Church of **God** then we exercise that same resistless Power – invincible, irresistible – with the Word of God.

*“In the world you shall have tribulation, John 16:33 says, for that's the way the world is, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world”*. Do Christians not believe that?? Are they in **The Church**? Will they be there when the trumpet sounds? We must each decide, but the Power **is** there for anyone to take.

Let us look at **the Power of The Church: No other body or organisation**, no groups of demons or hosts of unclean spirits, living, has the Power that the Church has. Outside of **the Godhead**, the only Body that has Power to be reckoned with is **The Church**, the Church of God, the Church of Jesus Christ, which is His Body.

*'How marvellous, how wonderful, and our song shall ever be' !*

It is of **this** Church, His Church, His Body, that the Lord Jesus Christ prayed to His Father, "*as Thou hast sent Me into the world **even so** have I also sent them into the world*". The Subject for today is "**Sent By Christ**".

Remember these words from *John 17:18* – '**as** You have sent Me into the world, **even so**' – no less; in the same way as God sent Him, Christ declared, 'I have sent the Church into the world'!

These words should stand out loud and clear to us: AS ... EVEN SO... If we believed these things how many hours we would save planning, thinking, deciding how and where and when to serve God! All this Power is ours.

Everywhere on this earth that we put our feet we have God's Power there, in us, for us, with us, around us – **if** we are the personally supervised members of His Church. We may safely expect that what one member has from this amazing Christ, other members will too!

### **A Body Prepared**

When God the Father sent Jesus Christ into this world to die for our sins, He prepared for Him a **Special Body**. "*When He cometh into the world, He said, Sacrifice and offering Thou hast no pleasure, but a body hast Thou prepared Me*", *Hebrews 10:5*. It was a **sinless** Body, and in it Christ did all that God required of Him. He didn't ask for more health or strength, or years. In that prepared Body – He was made flesh, [*John 1:14, AV*] – He did what God required of Him as an ordinary Man of flesh and blood responsible to God.

#### **Four Things That God Required of Jesus Christ :**

**Firstly**, as an ordinary Man of flesh and blood responsible to God – God expected Him **to keep the Law...**

How could Christ have come in that Body and not keep the Law?! He had that Body of flesh and blood to **not** be above the Law! As an ordinary Man of flesh and blood, He was responsible to God. And The Church is just that – ordinary men and women – not all very intelligent, some are and most are not, but all of flesh and blood, subject to death, to temptation, to falling and to rising!

**Second**, He did all that God required of Him as **an ordinary Jew with certain special obligations to God...**

That was His 'religion', so to speak. The Jewish religion is not like other religions; it was directly the creation of God. All other religions are the creation of man – but we are to belong to The Church of the Living God, and our responsibilities are to that Church. That is our 'religion'; that's what we're in! So Christ, as an ordinary Man but with the Power of God resident in that Body, so the Church, like Him, has special obligations to God.

**Third**, He did all that God required of Him in that Body of flesh and blood as **the only One able to reveal God accurately to this world**.

And Jesus called us, called the Church, **The Church of God, His Church** which is His Body, "*the light of this world*"! – the only visible evidence of the Reality of the One True God. **This** is the Power that is at our disposal – to reveal God as Christ revealed God!

**Fourth**, God required of Him also, and He was obliged coming in that Body to submit to being **God's Perfect Sacrifice for the sins of all mankind**.

## As Christ Is So His Church

The Church, of course, is not able to and never would be the Perfect Sacrifice for the sins of all mankind, but it is to present its body, each member, as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is its reasonable service... [Romans 12:1] That could be a good description of Christ Himself as a Perfect Sacrifice, but that was His job, for only He could put away the sins of the whole world. We, however, can reveal that sin-putting-away life – that's the **living** sacrifice; the Church of God!

Under the old Law, the First Testament, God would not accept as an offering or a sacrifice – that is, submitted for any work He chose to do with it – a body that had **any blemish in it**. *Leviticus 22:25*, says, “*because their corruption was in them, and blemishes be in them: they shall not be accepted for you*”.

*vs21-25* “*whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein. 22. Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the LORD. 23. Either a bullock or a lamb that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer for a freewill offering; but for a vow it shall not be accepted. 24. Ye shall not offer unto the LORD that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut; neither shall ye make an offering thereof in your land. 25. Neither from a stranger's hand shall ye offer the bread of your God of any of these; because ...*”

And, **spiritually speaking**, according to 1 Corinthians 6:11, such were we – “*but ye are washed...* – how many Christians believe that? – *but ye are sanctified...* – cut off from all unholiness, all worldly living, all indecency, all evil – *but ye are justified ...*” – accepted as perfectly right in God's sight. Your body is accepted as perfectly whole in God's sight; not blind, or with scurvy; maimed, or halt – nothing of all that; no corruption. How? – “*in the name of our Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God*”.

It is false preaching and teaching to suggest that first we must **do** some work before we can become holy, to become approved of God. The Blood of Jesus Christ **has** put all men's sins away from before God; now all men are committed to Christ as they are His own personal possession, saved or unsaved, and they have to deal with Him. So God doesn't deal with us as sinful. But very often people are too carnal to accept that simple statement the Bible proclaims. How can I become holy like God by my own works? But here is the solution to all those who wonder at that and stumble - we are told, ‘we are washed; we are cleansed, **sanctified, justified**’. Paul added “*but*” – so it means that you are all these other things but **now** you are these things, “*in the Name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*”.

Peter, remember, said, “*Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things*” [1 Peter 1:18-19]. We have been redeemed from all the filth and corruption of mankind by the precious Blood of Christ – “*as of a lamb without blemish and without spot*”.

To do Christ's Work in Christ's Way according to Christ's Will **only**, the members of His Church need to have bodies like His: **always able and ready to do the work Christ requires**, just as His Body was always able and ready to do the work that God required. Members of the Body of Christ must see that they cannot serve God with carnality and worldliness in their lives. Some other god or a half-god, as part Satan and part like oneself, will be served; but it won't be **God**.

We cannot serve God while living like the world; indulging in what the world thinks is right. The Church is a **different** organism, born of **God**, by His Spirit and by His Word, which is entirely Divine in this world.

God accepts us as not contemplating sin as a possibility in our lives. For we are washed in the Blood of the Lamb, and sanctified by His Spirit, cut off from unholiness. *Hebrews 10:10* says, "by the which will we are sanctified (that is, **presented sinless** to God) by the offering of the body of Christ *once for all*".

The Scriptures tell us this in so many ways: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity" [*Psalm 32:1-2* for example]. What else can it mean but this? Like Christ, like His Church; like God, like His children.

**Look at it like this** : because of the poured out Blood of Christ at Calvary, because of His terribly wounded Body on God's Right Hand, **Christ**, the Scriptures show, looks upon the bodies of the members of His Church like His Body - **sinless**; that is, able always to do what Christ wants them to do. That is what a sinless person is! Our memories must not be long sin-wards but be completely new, directed towards God. If God can forget our sins, what are we doing with the memory of them?? We have been made **able to do whatever will please Him**.

To be sinful means that I do not want to please God; and if I don't want to please God, I am sinning - because God is ever right, ever loving, ever gracious. There is no good reason not to please God.

As Christ said, "I do always those things that please Him" [*John 8:29*] for He came in that Body to do what pleased God, so He accepts me like that - always ready to please Him, that is, **to do as He says!** What I think of sin is not valid, or what I think will please Him; it's what **Christ** thinks of sin and what **Christ knows** will please Him - so He tells me what He likes and does not like, in and through His Word. What immense Power is in the Church when it is like that! Christ's Power is limitless, and He could have shown us amazing things, but it was only exercised and concentrated on **dying**.

He died **once**, and by the Spirit we can witness more amazing things - men and women, in their ordinary bodies, exact spiritual replicas of that Storehouse of Power which is Jesus Christ! The new body is because this body can't live there physically, but the inner man is able to live with God. The Word and the Spirit and the Blood bear witness to that, says *1 John 5:8*.

'Doing no sin' [*1 Peter 2:22*]; 'knowing no sin' [*2 Corinthians 5:21*]; 'being tempted, yet without sin' [*Hebrews 4:15*]; 'having no sin' [*1 John 3:5*] can be gathered into one statement: "I do always those things which please Him (Christ)" [*John 8:29b*]. It doesn't mean doing actual works all the time, but if your spirit is tempted to provocation, or to step out of the range of humility, this is what you say, "I do always those things which please Him [Christ]".

If we say that the Power of God is limitless, that makes us limitless in our activities for Him. If He gives us that same limitless Power which is in Him, then the same performance is expected by God ... and by His opponents! Satan and his unholy angels are God's eternal opponents and they expect to see us manifest that Power as they expect it from the Head. They know the Power resident in the Church, by the Holy Ghost, by this Word, because of the shed Blood of the Cross... more than us.

This then is The Church; the mystery that was "hid from ages and from generations - by **God** - but now is made manifest to His saints" [*Colossians 1:26*]. There is no prophecy whatsoever relating to this Church Age. From the time Christ died even and throughout those years since until Christ will come for His Church, it is a **dateless mystery** in the Scriptures - but it is **now** revealed.

God manifest in His Church – this is the mystery, that flowed out of Paul as the Holy Spirit gave it to him [Colossians 1:26-27 & Romans 16:25-26]. “Great is the mystery of godliness” [1 Timothy 3:16]. We cannot really fathom God; His Spirit cannot give us everything of God because we are limited in human bodies. With regards to Christ in a human Body, He did only **that which was asked of Him by God**, and He was deliberately limited in order to die as a Sacrifice. Even in our human bodies, however, the Power we can exercise **is** limitless. Jesus said, “Greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father” [John 14:12].

All the years that God has left this world to proceed along the course dictated by Him, the Church of Jesus Christ with all the resident Power of God in it to work His Work is setting the pace. “The mystery hid ... but now is made manifest to His saints.”

Know that we are a people like Jesus Christ, with bodies as holy as His, as able as His to overcome sin. He overcame sin in that sinless Body, being no less exempt, no less required to do it than we are. Sin made its inroads right into the very centre of God’s Family circle, polluting His first children. But we have a Power greater than all the powers of sin – God’s Power, resident in a body of flesh and blood, as the Scripture says: “**Christ in you, the hope of glory**” [Colossians 1:27].

People should be able to recognise that in each member of The Church there is resident a **Hope** which touches them as different: Hope in their sickness, diseases, sin, and wretchedness; in their ignorance, darkness, strivings, and in their lustings, their murderings and killings...

HOPE comes **in** when the Church is present. We must view it like that. Our constant reaction should be, ‘What does Christ want me to do?’ ‘How must I please Him?’ Our circumstances are of the least importance. Then the Ministry that The Church has will be seen! In pleasing **Christ**, you’ll be enormously busy, and enormously successful – according to God’s reckoning.

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me”, said Paul [Philippians 4:13]. Do we believe it?! What we believe, we **do**; and **are**; and **say** ... “All things” means that for any obstacle you can name, the Church should say, ‘There is the obstacle, but I have the Answer **in Christ** – God resident **in** me by His Word and by His Spirit – and I will call upon the Answer to do the Work, meet the need, resolve the problem, destroy the opposition, and bring healing and health.’

It’s the Passion of God, isn’t it?! This extraordinary Person, Jesus Christ, symbolises God’s Passion; He’s full of the Passion of God to Love **and** the Passion to Hate; hating things that are wrong with all the Power within Him, and loving with all the Power within Him! Both go together. One can see in ordinary people, those who don’t hate much, don’t love much – they can’t; and those who don’t love much, don’t hate much either. But from God’s point of view, **Christ is His Passion** – a Great and Positive Person, positively loving and positively hating, and doing what He knows to do about it. Christ expresses what God really is.

“I can, says the Church, this Church, **The** Church, the Church of **God**, the Church of The Living God, the House of God, the House of Christ, the Church of the Firstborn, the Church which is the Body of Christ, do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me”.

We can also add Romans 8:35-37, where Paul speaks of the Church as “more than conquerors”, and that he is fully persuaded that **nothing** from his formidable list of possible opposition “shall separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, my Lord”. “**Nothing**” – the opposition matters not, it just thinks differently – he said. Doesn’t that speak of Power?...

Everything is hurled at you to separate you from that Love. The world and the whole demon host is against you **and** that Love. Sin has permeated everything – Creation, including the ways of animals – but in actual fact the opposition is NIL, because of this statement of *Romans 8:38-39*, “*nothing shall...*”

### **Following In His Steps**

In the days of the Early Church, the Jewish Council of high priests, chief priests, elders and scribes, looked at Peter and John: the confrontation between the Church and the Jew was there. They saw in the Church’s actions and behaviour, their looks and speech, what? – JESUS! They saw in those two men the sinless holiness, the innocence of their **Adversary**, the Man they hated and executed.

Down the years, where members of the Church went, the opposition melted. Only man’s **unbelief** stops God; and it’s not opposition, because Christ came to save man. The Church doesn’t fight with unbelieving men. Its duty, its passion, is to bring them out of unbelief, extricating it from them, with the weapons of its warfare which “*are not carnal but mighty through God*” [2 Corinthians 10:3-4]. They saw in Peter and John the sinlessness of the Holy One; the holiness of Christ, and they “*took know-ledge of them, that they had been with Jesus*” [Acts 4:13].

Carnal thinking people see only in their boldness the power to work miracles and healings, and go after all these things. But when the Trumpet sounds, what then – where is the **holiness**? where is this limitless Power **to love Christ** – and therefore to love men in the right way? Where will all that be...?

“*Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular*”, says 1 Corinthians 12:27. It is stated; it is not suggested. The Holy Spirit is not vague in saying that we are **particular members** of this Body, if we believe all that we read of this Church; that we are able to do whatever Christ wants done, in these bodies. If this is so, then, whatever Christ wants done the Body, the members, the Body does. The only way to live is in the Body – there are many ways to live outside the Body!

We don’t need another form of body; to say, ‘Lord, God, if you gave me more strength, more ability, more brains...’ – that’s all of Satan. Christ brought us out of that. Say, ‘Lord, tell me what to do, and by Your Grace and Power through the Blood of Your Son, I’ll do it’. **That** is the language of Victory and Power; that’s the talk that God finds good – and it works! Oh, it does work! – and the results will be amazing! For the Church which is His Body is “*the fulness of Him that filleth all in all*” [Ephesians 1:22-23].

Everything that God **is** and **has** and **does** is resident in Christ, and that is The Church. What is resident in Christ is resident in The Church because the Holy Spirit brings it all down. If all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ bodily, then what is His Church if not of **the same kind**?!

Yes, exactly the same. **As God sent Christ into this world in a Body prepared**, fitted, for the Work He wanted done, **so Christ has sent the Church into the world in bodies prepared**, fitted to do the work Christ wants done. We must remember this and give ourselves time to recall the Scriptures which show us these things.

Paul said, ‘Don’t seek to change the state that you’re called in – say, that’s enough [1 Corinthians 7:17-24]. ‘If You’ve called me like that, I can do whatever You want.’ That’s the force of that Word: what state, position, life you are called in, that is the best ever in which you can serve the Living God.

Christ didn't ask for any other form of treatment. His Body was an ordinary Body, humanly speaking, with Blood in it, suffering pain and death, and all the different sufferings that this world brings; loneliness, sorrow, grief, hurt, wretchedness too – as one can read of it all in the *Psalms*.

The *Psalms* are the Book of a Man who suffered terribly. He is Special because of His terrible suffering, and it was terrible suffering for a Special Reason – to put away the sin of the whole world. But we too have a body, prepared and fitted by God. All that was necessary in order for a body to serve GOD was **sinlessness**. That's all! Do you know that?!...

I don't require terrific physical strength, or be anything except be without sin. I am just right for God. What we look like physically doesn't matter to God; it's what we **are**. If you are without sin, that's all that God wants. Our size and shape matters to men, but not to God – it's what potential we have, whether we are able to respond to the High Calling that He has for us **in Christ**. Age doesn't matter. Background, class, colour, language, race – “*out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation*” [Revelation 5:9] – Christ is making His Church; there is no barrier to Him. We must not look to God with naked, wicked unbelief, or look on each other like men. If we look on ourselves as God looks on us, we will be able to say, ‘Lord, tell me, and I'll do it’, and He will, because He believes what we say when we take the Scriptures seriously...

**Romans 12:1** “...present your bodies a living sacrifice...” It simply means a body prepared; fitted. All we needed has been done by God in cleansing us from our sin, and accepting us as guiltless and, holy in His sight. **We are fully qualified to serve God!** We cannot qualify ourselves to serve God. God did just what was essential and adequate to fit us to do what He wants done; otherwise He would have done more other than cleanse us by the Blood of the Cross.

“My Grace is sufficient for thee”, the Lord told Paul, and so he could go out and do it! [2 Corinthians 12:9] ‘You may have all the thorns from Satan that I allow, but My Grace covers you.’ Paul didn't mind then if the thorn indicated that he was empowered by Christ. He didn't have this good vision before, apparently, but he got it that time! “*Most gladly therefore*”, he said, ‘would I be like this, for now I know that the Power of Christ rests upon me’. Without the Power of Christ he knew he couldn't function as a Christian, as an Apostle, as a member of The Church of God.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” [Romans 12:1]. “**Present your bodies**” – that is, hold them ready, prepared at all times to do what pleases Christ; what Christ calls us to do. “**Present your bodies a living sacrifice**” – the implication is that our bodies **are able** to be presented, ‘held ready’ to be used by God. I merely have to hold my body ready for God to use.

“**Present**” means to bring to someone's notice, and keep it there. So we are to hold our bodies in readiness for God, for Christ, to say, ‘Do this’, ‘Don't do that’, ‘Go here’, ‘Go there’, ‘Live like this’, ‘Speak like this’, ‘Don't speak’, ‘You mustn't do this’, ‘You shall do that’, ‘You must be filled with this’, ‘You mustn't be filled with that’...

Hold, present, your bodies, prepared, fitted, as God has prepared and fitted you. We must hold a body prepared to do what God wants, saying, ‘Here it is, when and where and how You want it’. It's what pleases Christ; what Christ calls you to do. The call of Christ **must**, if answered by me, produce **God's holiness in action**. Then people will know that God is somewhere around, to be located in you! They must believe, or make a choice – the result of a response to the Call of God.

Christ never asks us to do anything indeterminate or indefinite. Holiness is **Positive** in its line of thought, action, or speech. The more positive we speak on these Scriptures the more we will believe them, and the more we believe them, the more authoritative we will become. It is not our word, it is God's Word. We cannot produce such holy thoughts or speak in such a holy way, except God tells us what to say.

*"Present your bodies a living sacrifice"* – as available to God at all times, to live that Holiness out. Why want to escape the Call of Christ, saying, 'I'm too tired'; 'Now is not the time'; 'I'm too busy'? Our bodies are prepared by **God**, fitted by Him to do the work of Christ; so they can't be too tired, or too busy, or too pre-occupied, or wear out, can they?! We can go on and on until God knows we have done enough in the world, and then He will take us away. That really is the way to look at it! It is not for us to decide how strong or how weak we are; how old or how young we are. A young person cannot do anything more for God than an older person can, or vice versa – it's what God asks us to do, and if you do it, you are doing it **the best** you could ever do. Each one has his own Call from God. Each Call comes differently; but only I can do what God asks me to do.

We are responsible to Christ to hold our bodies ready for His request or Call. *"Present your bodies ... holy..."* as Christ's Body is holy. It's that simple! We cannot present them with worldliness in them, with carnal thinking, with compromise, with the goods and the love of the things in this world. One could not serve God like that as the Body would not be a **living sacrifice**, it would not be ready, fitted, for God's qualifications of cleansing and sanctification and justification would have been rejected. He has said, 'You are washed, you are sanctified, you are justified', but if we are not ready to do what Christ asks, then we are rejecting those qualifications.

When He comes to us and finds us worldly or carnal or pre-occupied with our own desires, we will be rejecting His qualifying, washing us in the Blood, sanctifying us, separating us by the Spirit, justifying us in the Name of His Son who sits on His Right Hand and says, 'That one is right, I died for him, for her'. He accepts everyone like that. We **must** accept that Qualification of God's – *"acceptable unto God"* – satisfied as well as pleasing to God.

We should never look upon ourselves any more like human beings; never look with men's eyes at other men, but have what the Church is said to have: *"dove's eyes"* [Song of Songs 1:15; Matthew 3:16] – the eyes like the Holy Ghost's; looking for where **Christ can be found**; looking for where **God's Word can be found**.

Noah sent the dove out of the ark and it looked for dry land on which to rest... and the Holy Ghost as (in the manner of) a dove descended upon Christ [Genesis 8:8-12, Matthew 3:16]. If we see by the eyes of the Holy Spirit we will see things differently – with pure eyes. That is the spiritual meaning. A dove obviously doesn't have pure eyes but the Holy Spirit resting on Christ in the manner of a dove has pure eyes. We are to look at ourselves like that. It's not self-respect I need, it is **Christ-respect for myself**.

Then I can look upon others differently also, with those undefiled, pure, clean eyes, with what is in me; with what God expects from me now that He has put my sin away.

**This** is the Vision for The Church. *"Holy, acceptable unto God"* – satisfied, pleasing, to God, just as all Christ's activities on earth always were pleasing to God.

**Ephesians 5:1-2** *"Be ye followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour."* Sin is a **stench** in God's nostrils.

The Church is the fragrance on this earth that keeps God in contact with mankind – just as Christ was. “A sweet-smelling savour”, “which is your reasonable service”, says *Ephesians* and *Romans*. All it means is, that is the only course of action expected of The Church of God.

**John 15:18-25** “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you... How many of us really feel the hatred of this world, or do we seek to be popular and well-liked? Well, are we to present our bodies a living sacrifice to God, or are we to please people – however close? ... If you were of the world, the world would love his own – like goes to like, so Jesus said that – but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” We must not be mournful about that!

### Good Advice for Young People!

Unpopularity with their friends is hard to bear at first sight, but they should think about it through the Scriptures, and ask, ‘What am I? Why do they dislike me? Because I belong to Christ! Well, I will belong, I do belong to Christ – they’ll have to go on disliking me if they dislike Christ!’ That should be the argument; and the more they know that, the more they will be able to get other young people converted. But how is the world to know that they love Christ when they do what the world does? No one can live those two lives – not as a member of The Church; it just doesn’t work.

There is hatred and there’s Love, and the two systems are totally opposed to each other. Christ and Satan are in eternal conflict, and mankind is the battleground. Love versus hate. Love will win, but it is up to our young people to choose which they would rather have to govern their lives. When the world does what the god of this world tells it, it shows the filthy hatred of Satan for Jesus Christ.

**v19b** “But I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” They must be glad of that. When they experience that hatred through being a Christian, they must not say, ‘Where have I failed?’ and go to their Christian parents saying, ‘I’ve had a miserable day’ – they haven’t! Not in God’s sight!

We are to work with God; think with God; walk with God – that’s our duty, the Bible says [*Micah 6:8*] and *John 15:20*, “Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you;” – like calls unto like. In Christ’s opinion, the world will see the Church differently; different in its way of working, in its way of looking, dressing, believing, walking, thinking, eating, drinking, talking ...

There is no other way for the Church. “If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you”. Isn’t that marvellous!!

Actually, He has tied us to His Life. He’s involved Himself with us and said in other words, ‘What you are to them, I am to them’, and, in effect, ‘If they don’t like Me, they won’t like you because we’re the same’. If two of us speak the same word to persuade an unbeliever to turn to Christ, the second will have no more success than the first because the same Message has been rejected from both of us.

And Jesus Christ is associating us with **Him** by these Scriptures! Isn’t it better to be associated with Him than to have ungodly people tell us we are nice to know? We have to go the Way of the Cross, and be what Christ would have us to be.

Satan is very clever in that he knows how to appeal to our flesh. But if we proceed as Christ proceeded we will see if the person is coming to Christ or not, and the local church won’t have doubtful conversions.

Rather, they will come in **knowing** they have to change, that they should follow Christ in that same way, and be like Christ in the same kind of Body, the same kind of functioning...

*vs21-22 "But all these things will they do unto you for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin..."*

The people we speak to are immediately convicted of something wrong. That is why The Church is here as the Light – God in this world! ...*but now they have no cloak for their sin*" – for God has spoken, and the sin exposed.

*vs23-24 "He that hateth Me hateth My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father."*

Jesus Christ expects us to be like Him, like His Father, as He said these words.

He links us up with Him and with His Father, and He said that's how the world will treat you. If they treat God that way – the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that is, the One responsible for sending Someone to save me from my sins – they will treat you just like that.

*v20b "If they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also" – 'If they keep God's Words they will keep Mine'.*

He's put us all together in a wonderful Family! – thinking, saying, hoping, believing, the same things and living the same way!!

*vs25-26 "But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated Me without a cause. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me:" –*

that is, 'He shall reveal in your lives why you have been fitted out to do this Work; why your body is a prepared vessel to receive My Word and My Spirit and My Commands, and My Orders and My Commissions, and why you can do them!' This is The Power we are to see functioning in the Church – in practice, not theory!

*v27 "And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."*

(end of morning session)

(afternoon session)

### **Prepared To Please Christ**

**Romans 12:1-2** *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."*

This is The Church of God. That is what we are to see – **its Power in This Age**.

That Power is **in** us and operative through us now! **This** is the Day of Salvation, and the Church which is His Body is here today to perform those things that its Head wants done. *"Greater works than these",* He said, *"shall he [that believeth on Me] do"* [John 14:12] – and you shall see them done. It is **now** that we must operate as the Body is to the Head.

Paul was beseeching the Church, desperate that it should function as its Head functions. That was Paul's responsibility from the Head, as part of the Body, to get the Body to function as it should. "*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God*", he said, because that is the only way we can expect to operate – by the mercies of God who has washed us in the Blood of the Cross.

We are sanctified by the Holy Spirit, cut off from the nature and the forces and the motives that govern this world. "*...ye are washed ... ye are sanctified ... ye are justified...*" In God's sight we are **right**; we are treated as being right, as he treats the Head. It wouldn't be logical otherwise ...

**Remember:** God treats us as He treats Christ – right, that is, willing to do whatever God asks because it is right. Don't take up a lesser position, because that means you are outside the Church altogether. So members of the Church hold their bodies ready, prepared at all times to do what pleases Christ; holy as Christ's Body is holy. "*...holy...*" because God says "*be ye holy; for I am holy*" [1 Peter 1:16]. "*Acceptable*", satisfying, as well as pleasing to God. My life hid in Christ is pleasing to God, as *Colossians 3:1-3* reveals.

We must not underestimate and despise the Work of God in our life. The Blood of the Cross means to you that you **are** acceptable to God.

**Then we are not to live as though we can do what we please.** Someone acceptable to God does what pleases Christ and is more than ever disciplined in being acceptable, satisfying, pleasing, to God, just as Christ's activities on earth always were – the savour of a sweet smell.

The stench of sin and corruption is not found where the Church is operating or present. There, in Christ, was a sweet savour of an obedient Life. Glorious, isn't it, to belong to the Church of Jesus Christ? That is what attracts people to Christ, that fragrance. Even if they do not come themselves to obey God, they appreciate and benefit from the fragrance of that obedient life. That is your reasonable service, and is really the only course of action expected of the Church of God.

That is what Jesus said in *John 15:18-25*, 'If they hate you it's only because they hate Me, so The Church is just like Me to the world. They hated My Father. If they hate Me, they must hate My Father'. The Church is just like Christ, who is just like His Father. It is only sensible, isn't it? He said to the Jews, *John 8:44*, "*Ye are of your father the devil*", because they did the things of the devil. If you do the things of God, God is your Father, because it is on the basis of a Family relationship, born of **Love**. *John 14:23*, "*If a man love Me, he will keep My words*"...

**Romans 12:2** "*Be not conformed to this world:...*" Our conduct, behaviour, life and speech as members of The Church must testify to **the Reality of the Person of Christ**. The only sign that we are not con-formed to this world is when we are like Christ, for He is not of this world, as He said in *John 8:23*.

He said also that His own were not of this world [*John 15:19*]. He didn't speak the language of this world, so they hated Him, for they were rightly aware of their wrong. The world is wrong, and when we speak of Christ and they feel wrong, that's good! 'Repent', we can say, 'for the Kingdom of God is near you'!

The conduct, behaviour, life, reactions and speech of The Church must testify to **the Reality of the Presence of the Person of Christ in His wounded Body on God's Right Hand in Heaven**.

The Church here must, by its speech, behaviour, conduct, reactions, make people conscious that such a Person, a Man who was crucified in this world, is there at God's Right Hand controlling, governing, ordering all things, to suit God's Plans.

If we testified to that today we would be able to change many things in the course of this world by our faith in Christ to do it when we ask Him. All the situations arising today may be taken to the Head over all things, for Him to control those things. The Church, His Body, is inseparable from Christ. We can refer a matter to Him and say, 'Look at what is going on' and things get changed, for we are talking to the Lord from Heaven, the God of Glory, and the King of Glory.

The Church must then testify to the Terror coming to ungodly people by the sudden Return of Jesus Christ. Our conduct, behaviour, life, and speech must testify to those who will not repent and who live in this world and love it - for there is a certain Terror of the Coming of that Person Jesus Christ.

For an unbeliever that marred Face will be a **very terrible, horrifying sight**. We are to testify to that by our life of holiness, and being not conformed to the world, but introduce the Systems of **that** Kingdom. Those who don't know God and don't obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ are to be told how to live according to **that** Kingdom, according to that Man's ideas of Life.

Christ did that on this earth as He testified to God's Presence in Heaven. Even in the miracle of feeding people with cooked fish and bread, He acknowledged that God had permitted Him to do that by offering Him thanks! He always presented God as Someone real, governing, controlling everything. Like Christ, so His Church; and He told men to repent, because of the unavoidable, inevitable Terror of Judgment.

Today, when Christians speak about Judgment, people claiming to be in the Church themselves are terrified. That is not a proper state of affairs! It is the Church that is to reveal the Terror of that Judgment - how? - by revealing in their lives, not only by their words, that the Holiness that is in Christ is a Must, or else there is the Judgment. *v2 "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."*

### **Having The Same Mind As CHRIST**

*Ephesians 1:23* The "Church - of God - which is His Body", must have the Mind of Christ Jesus; not like His Mind, but exactly the same type of Mind, thinking like Christ, having the same attitude to things, as the Head of the Body! It is, again, only sensible that the Head and the Body are the same!

That is the Mind that allowed the Word of God to form all His decisions. That is important. Such a mind immediately absorbs God's Word, and simultaneously by absorbing it accepts that Word as forming its decisions. The Church of God works that way. The Word of God must decide for me.

*"The Son of man goeth as it is written of Him" - to decide for Him [Matthew 26:24]. 'Nevertheless even though all things are possible unto You', He said to God, 'not My will, but Yours be done' [from Mark 14:36]. "*I do always those things which please Him...*" [John 8:29] - exactly what God decided; what the Word said, Christ did.*

The Will of God is His Word. We only have to open up the Scriptures to know God's Will; where to go, what to do, and why to do it.

Jesus Christ didn't go beyond that Word; He didn't seek another experience. He left His experience of Glory behind and lived only by this Word, nothing else; no more than you or I are expected to. *v2 "...transformed by the renewing of your mind..."* Then having made up His Mind, God's Word showed Him how to do it. One would not get God's leading on something, and then come to someone for advice as to how to do it. It is in God's Word how to do what God wants us to do – and by His Spirit we see it there.

*Philippians 2:7* puts it this way of Him, He "*made Himself of no reputation*" – completely submitted to that Word. God, by His Spirit, was controlling Christ through His Word. That is the Mind of Jesus; that is the mind of His Church. He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him all the characteristics of a Servant. Our minds must absorb that fact and say, 'I am a servant of God'.

Peter and the other Apostles said to the early Church, "*It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word*" [Acts 6:1-4].

The more you preach, the more obedient you must be. You don't serve God just by preaching; you have to do what His Word says. Serving someone is obeying what you're told to do. Preaching is part of it – and there, too, you must preach only what He asks you to preach, the way He wants it preached, and when He wants it preached. The characteristics of a servant are as in *Isaiah 42:1*. 'A bond-slave', Paul said, as one who has made himself a slave to God.

'Washed in the Blood' [Revelation 1:5]; 'Sanctified by the Spirit' [Romans 15:16]; 'Justified in the name of the Lord Jesus' [1 Corinthians 6:11] – that is the mind that the Church has; **completely subject to the Word of God**, and completely available to do as a servant exactly what Christ wants done. The Church has that characteristic. People must see in us those whose only concern is to do what Christ wants done. If Christ's Will is not expressed in any matter, the Church has no interest in that at all, except to refute it and demand that Christ be obeyed.

Then, after that, [Philippians 2:8] we read that Christ "*humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*". – "*... transformed by the renewing of your mind...*" The Cross was not Christ's duty. When I present my body a living sacrifice, it is only "*reasonable*" in the context of my being a part of the Body of an Extraordinary Person called Jesus Christ, who went beyond the Law and beyond His obligation and duty, and became the "*Lamb as it had been slain*" [Revelation 5:6].

He called Himself "*a worm*" [Psalm 22:6] – that is the Mind of the Church. The mind that doesn't say 'That is my duty, I do not do more than that'; 'That isn't my duty, I don't do that'. The mind of the Church is one which is as limitless as Christ's. Whatever Christ wants done, that mind absorbs it as able to be done.

'Nothing', we say, 'is too hard for the Lord' [from *Genesis 18:14*, "*Is any thing too hard for the Lord?*"]. Do we ever think to apply it to the Church? What should be too hard for the Church which is His Body? So we are to refute those unholy suggestions: 'That is too hard for me; that is too much; I cannot take it'. We must repent of such blasphemy, for that is saying that the Church is not a real possibility, or that one does not belong to it. If something cannot be done by the Church, then either the person saying that is not a member of the Church or the Church is not true. But now we see that the Church is His Body. "*I can do all things through Christ*" – through the Head – "*which strengtheneth me*" [Philippians 4:13].

His Power and Authority has never left the Church. It will never leave it. It will still have it in Eternity; and here we **do** have it...

*Philippians 2:8* "...He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind", says Romans 12:2. As Christ decided and made up His Mind in favour of God's Word, so does the Church which is His Body.

We must make up our mind, and not leave the Word of God unanswered. Christ's Mind was saturated with the Word of God which operated in Him by making up His Mind. It formed His decisions and gave Him the guidelines which He followed. Lines marked out strictly by the Word of God. "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto eternal life, and few there be that find it" [Matthew 7:13-14]. The restrictions of a holy life - the life of eternity in this world - are tiresome to carnally thinking people; but that is the only way Heaven operates - along a very narrow line.

The path is circumscribed by the Word of God, and the gate is "strait" - restricted, and that restriction cannot be removed; the gates cannot be enlarged, the opening is 'thus and thus it shall be' - and that is the way we go into Eternal Life, by that Word of God. So the Church makes up its mind in favour of God's Word - of Christ's Word to it - and accepts and concedes to Christ's wishes for it.

*John 14:21-27* "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..."

It is a personal matter; not a general system. The Church does not live by a system as the world does, where every man follows his own way until a stronger man imposes a system of rule. But Christ's order of things is **personal**. It is a relationship of **Love**, and the Love of God produces the highest form of discipline in the life; without the indulgence of the flesh - only the liberty of **the Holy Spirit**.

We are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds - the kind of mind that **loves** to be governed by the Word of God. It was **Love** that kept Christ on Calvary's Cross. If He hadn't loved God's Word that was guiding Him, He couldn't have agreed with the position He was in, because it was not right for Him to die from a moral point of view. But He loved to do what God said. And we must love God's Word. We must taste it and enjoy it, drink it, and eat it. We must live with it, laugh with it and delight in it. It must be our meat and drink, our food, our reading matter, our thinking. It must fill **our whole life**. "If a man love Me, he will keep My words"[ v23].

v26 "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." The Holy Spirit will give me the Word of God in such a way that I will love His Word as much as Christ does. Christ loved to hear God speaking to Him and He loved to be able to do what that speaking God confided to Him. And so The Church is that way; and the Comforter - that is His Name! - tells it these things.

You get a revelation in the heart from the Living God. As we read the Word of God Christ gives us the revelation that shows us what God's Word means. It reveals the beauty of God; how satisfying He is - and then we love His Word. You will want it in your heart and ears and life and before your eyes, and in your whole being!!

v27 "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

There is no fear in the Church – the fear of failure; the fear that I can't do what God asks me to do. There is a saying, 'There's no such word as 'can't'!! Well, the Scriptures bear that out! "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The Church is the arm of the Lord at the moment here. It is the Body of Christ; the activity of Jesus Christ in this world.

The Holy Ghost doesn't just talk and give us revelations; He is the energy, and as He looks to you to carry it out, He gives you all the Power of the Godhead to do it. The Power is in the Church by the Holy Spirit. There must be a receptacle for all that Power!

*"that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" [Romans 12:2b].*

Every living member of The Church proves to the world and to each other that the Will of God is for all men, by what it is and by what it does. For Christ submitted Himself to the Will of God. His poured out Blood was so that men may learn through Him as Christ Crucified that **they are clean from all sin** in God's sin-hating sight! The Church, clean from sin, proves that God's Will is a good Will.

*Hebrews 10:15-17* "... I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more", (*vs16b-17*).

The Church proves the Will of God to be good. God puts His laws into **cleansed hearts**, and writes them into **transformed, renewed minds**. The mind absorbs what it hears, and the Church's hearing is attuned to hear God's Voice **first**.

### **Repentance Is Having The Life of Christ**

The sounds it hears from God are then put into its life and so proves to the world that the Will of God is good. That means that all men can know, through the Church, that God is dealing with them as though they had done nothing wrong. The one thing God asks for is **repentance**. The whole weight of it is on this one action. 'Get Christ into your life; repent of not having that Life.' No-one can list their sins. No one should bewail all their shortcomings, one would never stop, there are too many. Our whole life was a total loss ...

So God's Word, God's Will, is good for mankind. The preaching of the Early Church was only Victory. They called men out of their loss into **gain**; out of a habit of defeat into a life of **victory**. Two different things altogether!! Then the proof of what they preached was in their living. They knew there was total Victory – not an up and down affair.

**This** is what the Church is, and what we are seeing here is to put our lives into this Church. Of God it says in *Psalm 103:10*, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities". It is no good preaching repentance and Christ to those who talk about their sins. They must be shown that the Blood of Christ has blotted all that filth out of God's sight, and He doesn't want to know all their filth, but He does want their repentance. They are to take Christ as their Life...

We must not hesitate to say, 'You need to repent'. No one won a soul to Christ by kindness. If that soul is doing evil, he must repent and turn away from everything. It doesn't matter to you what he does, you just want him to know Christ! There is no other Message. That is the Mind of Jesus Christ; that is the Heart of God coming through that Mind – and the Church has it. If we know that the world and wickedness is wrong, and that it is unnecessary since Jesus died, we must say so.

When we deal with backsliders or those who have gone cold, it is the same Principle – they **must** repent. There is no excuse for backsliding except that they do not want Christ. Backsliding means a need for repentance.

Evil and wickedness comes because Christ is not there; but The Church proves that we can live without evil and wickedness and anything wrong, because we have **Christ**.

God does not expect men through the Cross of Christ, to come to Him with a guilty conscience; to come into His sin-hating Presence. The Church shows that God expects men to come in **clean**, not carrying all their filthy sins into His Presence; not for them to expect to be talked and argued and reasoned into His Kingdom. There is no reason with sin; it is venomous and vile, and a fatal killer.

The world doesn't think that repentance is reasonable, but that is what God expects! For the Church it is a "*reasonable service*" to present itself to God; body, mouth, tongue and all that one is in order to tell others these things. The Church does God's work; Christ's work. Did not Christ call people to repentance? Then they must hear the same sounds today and take knowledge that the Church has come from Jesus.

The Church of God can persuade men powerfully by saying, 'God's Will for you is **repentance**'. Sin is blind, we cannot reason it; it is **insane**, foolishness.

When I ask a man to repent, I am really telling him to have a clean mind. Repentance means: **start using it**; start living a clean life, with a clean heart. It is nothing to do with being sorry for what they have done; they must turn to Christ's way and away from their own ways. "*That ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*" [Romans 12:2] The Church proves that God's Will for the world to repent is **most** acceptable, for these following reasons :

Maybe the modern church keeps men from repentance by not preaching God's Word as it should be preached. Acceptance of God's Will is repentance. **That** is what has brought every member of the Church of God to **the Peace of God**.

The Church of God is always distinguished from every other group or body of individuals by the Peace of God that reigns in the life of the Church communally and in the lives of the members of the Church. In **The Church of God** there is no bickering, and quarrelling, divisions and strife, envy and malice - it has the Mind of Christ; the Heart of God to-wards people. It hates sin, and its humility is evident to all the world.

- **Repentance brings peace** - God's peace - to the **heart**; not because a man is clean himself, but he is starting to exercise the Life that God has given him already, before he repented in Jesus Christ.

Repentance really means starting to live the Life of Jesus Christ which hung on a Cross - **that** type of Life: peace to the heart; no lusts lurking there. The lusts of the flesh are very troubling lusts. They drive people, force them, compel them, and then reject them at the end...

- **Repentance brings peace** to the **soul**, where the will is, where the capacity to make decisions remains. The potential is there in the soul: 'Shall I, or shall I not?' Jesus Christ was troubled in His Soul and said, "*Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt*" [Matthew 26:39]. Once He had established whose Will would predominate, His Soul left His trouble. Conflicts in the human heart arise from the fact that there is no peace in the soul.

The world knows its decisions are wrong but they do not either know or want the Mind of Jesus Christ. But the Church has it and communicates this Hope to a hopeless world - Peace to the soul, no conflict with Christ there...

- **Repentance brings peace to the mind.** There will be no fear for the future there. How many thousands of people call themselves members of the Body of Jesus Christ and are troubled in their mind?? They are anxious and troubled about many things, like the Marthas of this world – men or women, it doesn't matter.

The name Martha is used because of the example she provided of a troubled mind; a mind not at peace with God; an unrepentant mind, with something not repented of in it. So this refers to the whole person. "*Repent ye, and believe the gospel*" [Mark 1:15] means that a mind would cease to be troubled. The Church has this peaceable Mind of Christ – His humble Mind, which is quite satisfied to do what He is told to do by God.

- **Repentance brings peace to the body.** It needs peace; it needs the harmony of a heart at peace, a soul at peace and a mind at peace with God.

The body is subjected to tremendous strain through the tensions of the conflicts of the heart lusting after things, of the mind anxious and of the soul not knowing what to decide, and deciding wrong things. The body suffers, and tensions mount up in the bodies of people through lack of repentance. The church today doesn't require men to repent and see to it that they do, because it does not know what repentance is. This is a sad state of affairs. But The Church knows that one must repent, and all will fall into place...

As you start to operate the Life of Christ – which repentance is – then comes the Peace of God. The Church will see in its converts the peace to the heart, to the soul, to the mind, and to the body. There are many people to whom one could say, 'You ought to start all over again. Repent and be truly born again, and then you will find the Loveliness of Christ filling your life.'

We want these things, don't we, and we must go for them. So many are just like the world that they really feel they are doing the Work of God when they talk nicely to people just to please them and think they are doing them good. That is really a terrible blasphemy to the Name of Jesus Christ, is it not? How can a person be saved, how can a person have peace, if they do not repent?

When the body is at peace, healing comes. If the body responds always to God, there is a confidence knowing that God and Jesus Christ hate sickness, and there is all this Power resident in The Church. To say, 'You have the Power', is the Language of Heaven, and things are seen as Heaven sees them.

"*There is no peace ... to the wicked*", says Isaiah 57:21 – obviously! The wicked are those who do not find God or God's Will as acceptable through Christ. Peace begins when it is acceptable. When a person is not at peace, then at some point the Will of God is not acceptable.

We should recognise that for ourselves. The Church knows these things. "*Great peace have they that love Thy law...* – as it is in Christ. There is the difference in a Life. How is that peace possible without repentance, without a love for God's Law? Repentance gives us a good flying start into Eternity through the Blood of the Cross, by the Will of God, in that powerful Name of Jesus Christ, and through His absolutely irresistible Word!!

That is how the Early Church preached – ... *and nothing shall by any means offend them*" [Psalm 119:165] – **nothing** – shall cause the Church to stumble, to turn away from God's Word, God's Love, God's Son and God's Spirit. Who are those who have this great Peace? those who love God's holy Law – the Church of the Firstborn; that Family of God.

## The Call To Repentance

**Romans 4:6-8** *“Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works...”*

This is how we call men to repentance – **without works**. God is imputing **righteousness** through the Blood of Jesus Christ. What a Power! The Church must know it or it couldn't preach this kind of Word saying:

v7 *“... Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.”* The Early Church went out and told people to repent, because they knew they could. We can only repent because God has cleared the sin out of the way – and The Church knows that. It doesn't deal with sin; it deals with the sinners. It destroys sickness; it drives out devils. God has **no dealings with my past life**, but tells me to repent, saying, *“Blessed are whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.”*

v8 *“Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”* That means every one, any one, of course! *“God ... now commandeth all men every where to repent”* [Acts 17:30] so every one, everywhere, is **blessed**. The Lord will not impute sin to them.

That is the holy Covenant between God and His Son. The Blood of Jesus Christ has been poured out so that God can declare, through this living Body, the Church, that men must repent as God does not impute sin to them any longer. He is not, therefore, accusing them of sin; He is not charging them with being sinners!

Do we ever say that to people? That is the Message of the Cross – God calling men to follow His Son and not to start listing their sins and trying to put them away by themselves. This is the Victory. We want to see people repenting, not arguing about it, but finishing with their old life, every part of it.

*“Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”* The Lord will not – not you or I – **the Lord!** So, really, it is a very blasphemous thing to not talk about repentance. The only way out for a man whom **God** has blessed is repentance, or **a fearful judgment will come upon him**.

It would mean that he doesn't want that freedom from the sin which the Lord does not impute to him. He wants to live in opposition to Jesus Christ. He wants to do wrong things, to follow his own way. So **the Judgment is a fearful Judgment to come**, and Christ is the Judge. That marred Face will be the most terrifying sight that wilful, sinful, Christ-rejecting men will ever have seen when it comes to them.

**Romans 12:2** *“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”*

So also the Church proves to the world – through Christ Crucified – that God's Word for all men is **perfect**. This is how it is perfect : Christ Crucified is ready to receive any man as though **that man wants to please Him**. That is for all men - as though they want to please Him – just as though they did already.

In John's Gospel, Jesus is reported as saying, *“Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out”* [6:37b]. Many people come to Christ whether they want to follow Him or not; He has a tremendous fascination.

The Word of God does fascinate many people, and many come to our churches, but not all accept Christ. However, what Jesus said is, *“Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out”*.

We have to be shown that Christ is ready to receive us **through His own shed Blood on God's agreement**, expressly stating **as ready to please Him**. Twenty years of going to church may pass before someone comes to Christ, and Christ is ready and willing to receive him or her **as ready to please Him** – but they must be told that. They must be shown that this is what repentance is.

The Church preaches, teaches and proves that by its Life and Ministry Christ is ready to receive any person as willing to live the type of **peaceable, forgiving** and **obedient** Life that Christ revealed on the Cross.

**Luke 23:39-43**     *“And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.”*

Christ received him immediately. What an amazing fact!! That is the perfect Will of God revealed in that **v43**.

The world must know God's Will is perfect, so that if they reject it, they have had their chance. The thief who did not repent had his chance. He had seen that same Life hanging on the Cross, but he did not approve of it. He didn't like it, but this thief did; he thought that was all that mattered to him, and he wanted to live with Him.

As soon as a man is prepared to accept that God's Will is perfect, that God's Will assures him that he can live that sort of Life, then he is able to repent. So the thief was the first to say it! *“And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom”*.

If we preach Christ Crucified to people they see that they can come to God easily by repentance.

Christ Crucified is also willing to receive **any one** who will wait and watch for Him to come some Day.

*“Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation”* says Hebrews 9:27-28. It is a **whole life**, not a church meeting or a Bible Study!

*“Without sin”* simply means that Christ will come with only a welcome from God to live with Him for ever in a new physical body that has never known the horrors of sin.

**Seek the Lord today** and hear Him speaking by His Spirit through His Word!

## DAY 2

**Daily Readings : Isaiah 55:6-9; Hebrews 1:1-4; Isaiah 53:1-6; Revelation 21:22-27**

### SCRIPTURES FOR THE DAY'S STUDY

Revelation 22:16-17	John 3:1-8
1 Timothy 3:14-16	1 Corinthians 2:9-16
Ephesians 1:15-23	6:19-20
Romans 6:1-23	John 2:18-22
8:1-27	2 Corinthians 5:21
Galatians 3:1-14	1 Peter 2:22
5:16-26	Hebrews 4:15
Ephesians 4:1-6	Isaiah 52:14
:29-32	

### Revelations from the Scriptures

### SINGLED OUT BY THE SPIRIT

*1 Corinthians 3:16-17* "Know ye not that the temple of God, him shall God destroy, ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye of God dwelleth in you? 17. If any man defile are."

#### The Church As The Temple of GOD

We are to behold the Church of GOD in this Age through the eyes of the Holy Ghost; to understand its Power to overcome and destroy the things that God hates: sin, sickness, and all such things.

Then we will know what is the **breadth**, and **length**, and **depth**, and **height** of this Divine Ability, Authority and Assurance that we possess in and through Christ - and then, in comprehending this, be "*filled with all the fulness of God*" (*Ephesians 3:18-19*).

*"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy which temple ye are".*

As we go through these wonderful **heart-cleansing, mind-illuminating, body-healing** Scriptures, which, says *2 Timothy 3:15*, only are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, we will see clearly what God's Temple is to **God**. Let us remember at all times what it really means to be in **the Church of God**:

The Church of **God**, the House of **God**, the Church of **the Living God**, the House of **Christ**, the Church of **the Firstborn**, the Body of **Christ Crucified** is what it is called variously in God's Word by the Spirit of God. It is therefore that Church that has no sin, does not know sin, is without sin, though tempted, and, although living in this world as ordinary men and women, does **not** sin deliberately or wilfully. **That** is the Church of God, the Body of Christ.

If a Christian claiming to be Baptized with the Holy Ghost lives a life like any other human being, it is confusing and difficult to understand because the Spirit of God within is **holy**. In claiming to be 'Pentecostal', by that Scriptural experience, he or she should be **holy** as **God** is holy. That is why it is so important to understand this Scripture of *1 Corinthians 3:16-17* - "know ye not...."

Remember, then **know**, that if we are in the Church of **God**, we must accept the Divine responsibilities involved in being the Temple of God, as well as the **privilege** and the **power** of being called "*the temple of God*". "*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you - in you; God's Temple! That is what the Temple is for; for God to dwell in - for the temple of God is holy - because God is holy - which temple ye are*".

**The Temple of God** is the place where **God** may be found; no-one else, but God, at **all** times, and at **any** time. That is over all the best description of the Temple of God: the place where God, not another, may be found at any time and at all times.

**Psalm 11:4**      "*The LORD is in His holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven: His eyes behold, His eyelids try, the children of men.*"

You will notice throughout these revelations from God's holy Word that men of God know always where to find God; where to contact God. There is nothing vague about their search or their knowledge of where to contact God or where to find God.

**Psalm 18:6**      "*In My distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto My God: He heard My voice out of His temple, and My cry came before Him, even into His ears.*"

He [Christ, from Hell] knew exactly where to locate God. The Temple of **God** is the place where **God**, quite rightly, may be found - only God - and where God may be contacted. Where men want to contact some other person they do not go to God's Temple.

To contact the Living Eternal God, God's people, God's servants, **must** direct their cries, their prayers and their voices to where **God** is known to be found. "... and in His temple doth every one speak of His Glory", *Psalm 29:9*. We must know who God is where He is; what kind of a Person He is.

This is why Jesus came. He put our sin away so that our eyes are open to see Him and feel Him in all His Fullness, not in a limited way at all.

God is not some vague unknown substance floating about in space! He is **locatable**, to be found in a **particular Place**. All Scripture shows that men of God knew where God is, what He is, and where He is to be found. They knew what to say and what not to say. They knew if they went there carrying their sins and trying to deceive themselves they got nowhere.

They knew that they cried out to God when they wanted God, and when they were backsliding and not wanting God, they never got anywhere near to that Place; they directed their voices elsewhere. They knew where God was to be found, for He is **not** floating about in space.

The Church of God must know all about God – as much as the Holy Spirit moves upon us. The Church of God **must** know that God is not wandering about somewhere in the Universe as though He had no home to go to, and no-one to live with – that is what Satan does... Satan is a displaced person, spiritually speaking, out of Heaven, not really controlling the earth, nowhere to live, wandering about, getting hold of people and deceiving them. The tragic case of a lost soul – until finally located in the Lake of Fire. **Our God is not like that!** He is in His Temple in Heaven, His Home.

*Psalm 48:9* “We have thought of Thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of Thy temple.”

The Speaker is addressing God, telling Him that we have been thinking about Him. ‘We have been thinking about Your Mercies, Grace and Love in **Eternity**. We know where God is.’ Today **we** must go out positive about our God. People are very confused by those Christians not able to show them the True Light; who God is; where He is, and what He looks like. We must show this of Christ, and then of God.

When the prophet Isaiah was in a desperately grave spiritual crisis in his life and ministry, the Holy Spirit opened his eyes **to see beyond the things of his world**. That is the Place we must look. Everywhere we look here will only show us discouragement, so the Spirit of God must lift our eyes to the **Christ**, where He is now. If Christ were here, the Spirit couldn’t lift up our eyes! But **now** He is able to lift up our eyes to where God is to be found.

Not only was Isaiah’s attention directed out of his presence circumstances, but his gaze was focused spiritually – onto the Temple of God – to behold the Eternal Christ, the King of Glory (*Isaiah 6:1*). His was a depressed outlook at the time, so the Holy Spirit took his gaze **upwards**.

If you want God, the Spirit of God will show you **God**, but if you are looking for relief amongst people and places and things, you will get no relief. If you want **God**, you will get the people, the places and the things, with sorrows, but you will have your gaze taken **upwards**.

All Isaiah could see was **Christ!** Yes, he saw the seraphim, but in the centre foreground of his Vision was the Christ of God. But the prophet felt unclean, as indeed he must do... Let the Spirit of God lift your sights up to where God is, to where you can see Christ by His Spirit!

Yes, Isaiah felt unclean, unholy, for he said, “*Woe is me! for I am undone: because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts*” – and he had seen Him in His Temple!

Centuries later, John, one of the Apostles of the Lamb – the same King of Isaiah’s vision – quoted *Isaiah* and wrote : “*These things saith Esaias when he saw His glory and spake of Him*”, *John 12:37-41*. He spoke of **the Christ**, then on the earth, looking like an ordinary man!

Always God can be located; or He is not the True God. **Idols** cannot be located; they do not speak, nor answer, nor respond, nor meet any need, so heathens do not know where their god is. There are heathen in every land with idols in their hearts, their homes, and in their lives, and not finding the solution because they do not look for the True God through Jesus Christ.

He is True because He is identifiable; He is **locatable**; He is **seeable** and **contactable** by the Spirit – and one day we shall see Him as He is! This is how the Church of God has to be.

## The Place Where GOD May Be Found

**Jonah** the prophet, finding himself in the belly of a whale for his disobedience to God's call, directs his gaze, even in his disobedience, to where he knew he had to go. He was deliberately not going to Nineveh where God had told him to go. He knew what he was doing – he hadn't disobeyed a call from Nineveh – it was God whom he had disobeyed.

He ran away from God, and found himself finally in the whale's belly. But from there he directed his desperate plea to God in **His Holy Temple** *Jonah 2:1-7*. In his dire extremity down in the whale's belly, he cried out to God ...(*vs1-4*)

*"Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and He heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and Thou heardest my voice. For Thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all Thy billows and Thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of Thy sight; yet I will look again toward Thy holy temple."*

– That was his terrible state, but still he knew where God was to be found.

*Jonah 2:7*      *"My prayer came in unto Thee, into Thine holy temple."*

The Temple of **God** is where **God** may be found; no one else. Jonah did not expect to find anyone else in the Temple. Do we?? The Church of God is the Temple of God!

The prophet **Habakkuk** waited on the Word of the LORD to renew his vision when his faith in God had lapsed. He had looked at everything else – and when we keep looking at everything else, our faith must go down and down and down also. Jonah looked at what he knew about the Ninevites and said, 'That's not the place for me!' But God said 'Go there', and Jonah's faith, for a while, went with his vision...

What we look at must inspire us if we keep looking long enough. Let us say to our souls, 'Look to your God'; then we will understand a little more about being the Temple of God. Like many of us, with Jonah and Isaiah, Habakkuk waited for the Word of the Lord to put him right. We renew our faith in God by the kind of hearing that is quickened by the Word of God; but he still knew where the Lord was to be found. He was really rebuked by God...

*Habakkuk 2:20*      *"But the LORD is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him".*

He could have added, 'including me', but he listened to what God had to say... Habakkuk knew where God was, but now his faith had been renewed; his mind had been cleansed, his heart strengthened to turn back to God. So he said, *"Let all the earth keep silence before Him"*.

Holiness is what God is! It is not vague or uncertain, and it is not evasive. Many Christians are all those things but not God. He is always **locatable**. If God wanted to tell you what He was doing He would give you a definite answer!

Christ said before Caiaphas, 'Why ask Me? I have spoken it out. Everybody knows what I have said. I am no criminal to explain My actions. You don't have to have an explanation. Everyone can tell you what I have said,' [based on *John 18:20-23*]. God is as transparent as that. *"God is light and in Him is no darkness at all"* says *1 John 1:5*. We need to be filled with God's Spirit. We need to **know** that we are the Temple of God, for instance, when there are things that cannot be said openly. God will give wisdom at those times, so that the clear Word of God will still be heard; nothing evasive, indistinct, uncertain, confusing or vague.

**Those** things are nothing to do with the Church of **God**. The trumpet must give a clear sound, otherwise how is one to know which way to go? [based on *1 Corinthians 14:8*] We are the lights in this world and be how God is – not vague, uncertain or evasive.

By His Spirit, then, men have known always where to contact God. We ourselves must be clear in our lives, actions, activities; all must be clear. That doesn't mean we advertise ourselves, but when people want to know where to find us, what to say to us, what we think about their lives, we must give them clarity; they must see no darkness, no uncertainty. "*God is light, and in Him is no darkness*".

When we deal with sinners, it is the same. We must have compassion, but in Bible terms it means determination; **God's** determination to meet the need. Christ counted the Cost, and paid the Price, and met the need and will always – **that** is compassion! It is not sympathizing with people, and not really making the case clear; not showing them how they may be saved or how they may be lost, whichever is to be shown them...

By the Spirit of God, we know where to contact God at any and all time. "*For thus saith the*

*Isaiah 57:15*      "*High and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy – specific state ments – I dwell in the high and holy place – God locates Himself quite simply, and then adds – with Him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*"

The whole Gospel is in that: where God lives and why Christ, God's Equal, came down to mix with us.

*Psalms 123:1*      "*Unto Thee lift I up Mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens.*"

– straight to the place where God is. There was nothing vague about the Cry, not because the Soul [Christ] had all the knowledge but because God has made it clear and plain where He may be found.

*Psalms 113:5*      "*Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high.*"

What a knowledge of God!

*1 Kings 8:26-52* This was an earthly Temple made by Solomon, but Solomon directed his prayer to the Heavens, where God is, and said, 'You said, "*My name shall be there*" [v29]. So please direct Your attention to that place, so that when I pray there You will hear and there You will do'.

Solomon had to pray in a special direction and so will you and I. God inhabits His holy Temple; there He may be contacted, so He said, "*My name shall be there*" and Solomon expected to contact God by His Spirit there in the Temple he had built. God was contactable there and spoke to His people until the Temple was defiled and they made it a mud heap of man's ways.

### **The Church of GOD, The Witness of God**

This same God of Glory has never left Himself without a Witness in this earth. That is important. A Witness is a Place where God may be found. It is a Place where men may contact God at any time, at all times. That is the Witness. God hasn't fixed times to meet people; no special session to give to us, so it is true to say that a Witness is a Place where you may contact God at all times and at any time that you may wish to contact Him.

In the desert of the Sinai peninsula, described by Moses in *Deuteronomy 1:19 & 32:10* as “that great and terrible howling wilderness”, where God kept them for forty years “to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments or no” [*Deuteronomy 8:2*] the Israelites were able to find God!

They were always able to contact Him through their God-appointed priests, in a **definite place**, known as the Tabernacle of Witness. **It witnessed that God was available to be contacted by His people**. It was a Witness to His Glory, to His Presence and to His Power, over and over again in that great howling wilderness, and that terrible desert. The Tabernacle of Witness: a Place where God was truly to be found; truly contacted.

*Acts 7:44; Exodus 25:22* “There I will meet with thee – in that Tabernacle of Witness – from above the mercy seat”. It is all specifically stated. God is not vague or evasive or uncertain. **God is not everywhere**. He is where you may locate Him, always. If and when we do locate Him where He may be found, we will find practical answers from God.

*“And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.”*

Afterwards, King David desired to build for God a place for Him to dwell in. David knew by the Spirit that God doesn’t float around. God lives somewhere. God has a Home. If you are accustomed to living in a house, shouldn’t God be?? People of no fixed address are not generally thought highly of. Why? – They are not locatable. But we can find God at a fixed address whenever we want to! With our heart and our life we can always know that, but be sure that though He lives in that Place, He knows exactly what we all do! By His Spirit He makes His contact. By His Spirit we touch the heart of the Living God and the Power of His holy Arm in Jesus Christ...

So David desired to build a place for God to dwell in amongst His people. But it was Solomon his son who built Him a Temple in Jerusalem, under God’s instruction. That was called The House of the LORD, the Temple, built in Jerusalem by Solomon for the True God.

A little more than 800 years after Solomon had built this first Temple of God, that same God – the same LORD of Glory now “manifest in the flesh” to die for the sins of the whole world Jesus Christ – entered the third of these Temples. This one was built to replace the first and second both destroyed at different times in savage fighting and furious assaults on that land and on that people.

But He found there those that sold oxen, sheep and doves, and changers of money sitting. He made a scourge (a whip) of small cords and drove them all out of the Temple, together with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers’ money, overthrowing the tables, and commanding that the doves be taken out. He said to them, “Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves” [*Mark 11:17; John 2:14-16; Matthew 21:12-15; Luke 19:45-46*].

God hates sin, so Jesus Christ got rid of everything that was offensive. He drove them all out of the Temple, but even in His righteous Wrath He was gentle concerning the doves...

*“Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer but you have made it a den of thieves.”* – “Thieves”: those who are always wanting something; coveting. They were not thieves in the selling of these things, but they had no business to be there. That was where **God** was to be met. If I know **God** I shouldn’t want another thing. **God** will add to us if we seek His Kingdom.

Christ said in *Matthew 6:32-34* that the Father will give us everything else, but that we must seek His Kingdom for the things we need and desire, and we will have them ... and so many, many, times so many of us have found that even a desire we have not expressed, suddenly this God of all Grace hears our heart!

[Mark 11:17 etc] *“Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations, the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves”.*

[1 Corinthians 3:16-17] *“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”*

**The Temple of GOD** – the place where **God** has put His Holy Name; the place where men may expect to contact **God** for healing, and for deliverance.

The Temple of God is the place where devils and all unclean spirits may expect God to confront them – no one else. That place is **holy**, and must not be used for any purpose **other** than those stated by **GOD** in His Written Word. *Matthew's* account of that incident where Christ drove everything and everyone out of the Temple, records that afterwards the children went into it and cried, *“Hosanna to the Son of David”*. There was healing there, praise and worship, because God was able to move and work. He cannot work with uncleanness; He is not used to that, He is **holy**.

The fact that Christ was living amongst sinful men did not mean that He became like them. He was communicating His holiness to others – and right in the midst of all that vileness in men, unclean spirits were saying, ‘We know who you are, the Holy One of God’. And so He was: **God**, holy, unchangeable ... and this Temple of God, the one we’ve just read about, was polluted by His people, not by unbelievers, but by His people. Unbelievers were used by God to destroy His Temple, His holy Temple, polluted by His own people. Isn’t that sad?

It was utterly levelled to the ground by the Roman General Titus, years later [AD70] fulfilling the terrible words of their outraged God. He had said to His disciples *“There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down”* [Matthew 24:2].

When the Jews asked Christ for proof of His Divine Authority for violently ending all their activities in that Temple of God, He answered, *“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up”* [John 2:18-19].

The Jews thought He referred to the Temple out of which He had just thrown them, but the Holy Spirit records, *“But He spake of the temple of His Body”*, v21 – that Body in which there was **no sin**, which knew no sin, which did no sin, which was tempted in all points like as we are, yet was **without** sin. [2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22]. **That Body** demonstrated His hatred of sin in those terrible marks He had accepted from the wounding, the bruising, the beatings, the scourging and the nailing to a Cross.

When He was raised from the dead in that same terribly wounded Body, then His disciples recalled what He had said to them: *“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up”*. They saw His Body that had been wounded to destruction through crucifixion, and realised He was calling His own Body the Temple of God, now raised up!

His Body was now of flesh and bones, without any Blood. A Body with a Face disfigured more than any man. A Body with a Figure, a Form marred more than any other human being. He was calling Place where Satan is destroyed on contact. If we really want sin to be destroyed we must contact God in His Temple.

He called His Body the Temple of God; the Place where sin is destroyed on contact or approach; where men may find God, and in finding **God** find **peace**, and **eternal love**, and **eternal life**, and the **glorious eternal holy light** of God. A place where devils find only judgment, and a Power and Authority they are unable to cope with, and must submit to, for the Word comes out of the Temple!

So Christ calls His Body this Temple. Therefore, what the Lord Jesus is in **Heaven**, the Church, which is His Body is on **the earth** – the Temple of God where **God** is to be found, “for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are”.

We are seeing the Power of God **resident** in His Church. We don't have to go outwards. The Church is the Temple of God. “Where two or three are gathered together in My name...” (Matthew 18:20) that is where God has put His Name, where two or three people are calling out in faith, gathered together in that faith, with the complete and utter certainty that **God** is controlling them.

Demons, unclean spirits and sicknesses cannot live in that Temple, they must go out. But if we don't believe that, then they won't. It is Faith. Faith is **knowing**, not feeling good or bad; not emotions. Faith in **God** cannot be destroyed.

**The Church of God is the living symbol of Christ on this earth.** It is not a dead symbol. “Present your bodies a living sacrifice” Romans 12:1 says, for God is to do with **Life**. Death comes out of sin, we know from Romans 6:23, so the Church here, which is the Body of Christ, is what God is There – the Temple of God, where only God may be found.

The Church of God is a Body of people in which every member is “fitly framed together” by that common hatred of sin [Ephesians 2:19-22]. God's temple, on approach, should be seen to contain nothing wrong. Churches today, the people, not buildings, should take up this position, or they will be like that Temple that became a den of thieves, polluted, paying God no attention at all.

“Fitly framed together” [v21] means to be joined in a proper way; the way God would join a church together, by a common hatred of sin, a common ability to overcome all sin, even as Jesus overcame. It is for all, for if one member suffers, all suffer. So the Church of God is a Body of people who insist on God healing, saying, ‘We are Your Temple; we must be cleaned up’. We must go out whole and demand deliverance on behalf of souls in darkness, for the Temple of God is holy, and God is seen in it, God's Light.

There is no mixture of light and darkness. If the Church is not well, then there is confusion. If the Church is not receiving what it should, how can people see the Light that is **God**? The Holy Spirit would have us to see that when one sees **God**, no-one else is seen.

We are to be encouraged by this Message, to take it from God, and say, ‘I will do that’, for God has called us to do that. “But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” [1 Corinthians 6:11]. Who is going to say, ‘No’, if I believe that! So, with that common ability to overcome all sin, even as Jesus overcame, that Body “growth unto an holy temple in the Lord” [continuing Ephesians 2:21].

**Only** the Body of Christ on earth is the Temple of God. There is no other Temple, “which temple ye are”; the place which **God** inhabits by His Spirit. God's Word is beautiful, it heals, it cleans up, and opens our eyes and not only ours but as we are the Tabernacle of Witness, others will know that the Word of God is beautiful and lovely. They will say, ‘It is clean; it delivers; I see it's delivered you’.

## The Church of God Filled With The Spirit of God

The Holy Spirit does **not** reside in buildings, but **people**. When you sense the presence of the Spirit of God somewhere, know that He is in you! The Church of God is the Temple of God! People ask, or are asked, 'Have you spoken in other tongues?' Let us get the Vision of God. 'Are you filled with the Holy Spirit?' is a better question, for then the person will speak with other tongues. I will speak the language of God if I am inhabited by God.

The important thing is to be **inhabited**. If I am inhabited by the Holy Spirit, then the King is in residence - as someone rightly said! God has finished with inhabiting buildings; He has His Church.

When the Lord Jesus Christ poured out all His Blood on a Cross at Golgotha, and bowed His head and expired, *Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38 and Luke 23:45* record that the veil of the temple in Jerusalem was rent in two by God, (who can doubt it!) from the top to the bottom, so that **it ceased to serve as a veil**. There was no more need for that Temple. **GOD had finished** with using Tabernacles and Temples in this world as places in which men may contact Him and come to **Him**.

*Acts 7:48*            "Howbeit, the Most High dwelleth **not** in temples made with hands."

The Church of God, His Body, is **now** the Temple of **God here in this world** - the place where **God** may always be found. Praise God that we live in the Church Age! It is the greatest Age until Jesus comes. It is the Age of Revelation, the Age when the Resurrected God poured out His Spirit upon all flesh; the Age in which men can see God clearly by His Spirit. We can **know** God, **experience** God, **meet** God, **realise** God, and then recognise that some day that same God is coming. He did all this for us! Isn't it Wonderful!! The same God who spoke to Isaiah and Solomon appeared on earth and insisted that the Temple of God is a holy place, meant for prayer to God...

If God does not dwell in Temples made with hands, He does dwell in Temples made without hands. That is the greater meaning of "*the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands*", that He dwells in us. We must be positive and expect to be the Temple of God, filled with His Holy Spirit, and acting as the Temple of God is meant to act.

People come into church buildings and sit quietly hoping to find peace from all the pressures of this life, and still have hearts full of sin. But there is no building for them to be saved and washed in the Blood and sanctified by the Spirit and caught away to Glory. That Power is resident in the Church - "*ye are the temple of God*". God will look after His Temple; He warns people not to tamper with His Temple, saying, "*if any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy*" [1 Corinthians 3:16-17].

"Dwelleth" means occupies, resides in. God is resident in His Temple - "*which dwelleth in you*". It is the glorious Present; **the Finished Work**, "*know ye not that ye are the temple of God*". When born-again people believe they are the Temple of God they will be Baptised with the Holy Ghost, and He will be dwelling, residing in them, occupying them, and they will speak with other tongues.

God is more concerned than we are that His Temple should not be polluted, but have God dwelling in it. It is a home for God until He takes us Home! We are what Christ was here. He is the Temple of the Living God, and we are the Temple of the Living God as we are the Body of Jesus Christ. The Temple of God must be inhabited by God. Christ must be our passion; enthroned in our hearts.

How else can it be known that you are God's Temple? The Spirit is only concerned with showing us Jesus Christ; His loveliness, so that we may be filled with that Passion. How are we to be known as the Temple of God if God is not in residence?

To speak of the Temple of God means that God is expected to be seen. Even a wicked person knows when God is speaking; and if he doesn't want God, he will move on to some polluted temple. When God occupies, takes up residence, in His Temple, there is room for no one, nothing else!

*Exodus 40:17-38* tells of the Tabernacle of Witness; *v29* – it was a witness to the congregation; *v34* – when God was in residence no-one else was able to enter the Tabernacle, not even Moses, *v35*, “*the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle*”.

When men of God pray to God they have no thought of anyone or anything else. No one can do for us what God does. When we spend time alone in prayer we should realise what it means – Moses had to withdraw because **God** had taken possession.

This Tabernacle was made by the children of Israel under God's directions to Moses, and all the things they had for it was only because of God's Grace. They took from the Egyptians things to eat, to wear, to keep them going, but also the gold, silver and jewels that were used in the building of the Tabernacle of Witness. It was all God's Grace – so we should see by this how much He wants to inhabit His Temple and also, how outraged Christ was to see His people's behaviour in a Temple dedicated to God...

That is what we are all here for; for God to be in residence. No priest, no sin, no sinner could enter. Even Moses a great prophet, God's servant, had to stay out when God came into the Tabernacle.

What Power, what Authority was there, in a place made with hands! And our bodies, susceptible to disease and sin, but washed by the Blood of Christ, **are now the Temple of God!** What Power! So when we kneel before God, we should **know** that God is in residence.

In this modern age there is so much distraction; people, places, things – all legitimate things, duties, chores, personal requirements. But we must preserve God's Temple for God, and not forget it is **His**.

*2 Chronicles 5:1-14, 6:1-42, 7:1-4* - The record of that building of Solomon's Temple and his prayer and the Glory of the LORD filling the House afterwards. Applying this to our lives, there are times when we need to know when to stop praying and to hear God talking to us. Perhaps God is just waiting till we come to the end of ourselves before He starts to bless us!

The Glory of the LORD filled the House and the priests could not enter [*v14*]. If God is not going to share His Temple with other people, do we think He will share His Temple which we are with devils? The LORD's House was filled with the Glory of the LORD!

In this busy age we need to give time to our God to hear His voice. The measure He would bless us and empower us is up to where we limit Him. He wants us; to talk to us, to love and care for us. To be prayerful is to be alert to His voice, and stop so that **He** can fill His Temple. God does not interrupt; He is courteous and humble. He listens carefully to see how He can help, then, He will begin to speak – when 'he' will listen, or 'she' is not so full of her own glory...

The children of Israel were not qualified to enter the Temple but they saw God's Glory.

People should know that we are separated from them. They should be aware of **God's** Presence – the contact of Holiness – and know that it is God, even though they may not like it.

The people could see clearly, both with Moses and the Tabernacle of Witness and with Solomon's Temple, that nothing was 'manufactured'. Under Moses and Aaron, they saw **the Glory of the LORD** filling the Tabernacle, and after Solomon's prayer they bowed themselves to the ground, when **the fire came down from Heaven** and **the LORD's Glory filled the Temple**. They praised the LORD saying, "*for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever*"; no one else, and no one else's.

(end of morning session)

(afternoon session)

### **God Dwells In His Temple**

The Church of God then, is the Temple of God : "*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy*". The Church is **Christ's own possession**. "*For the temple of God is holy – we can expect where God dwells to be holy – which temple ye are*", (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).

When Solomon's Temple was complete, the singers praised the LORD, saying, "*...for His mercy endureth for ever*". God's mercy in God's Temple – "*which temple ye are*"! "*The house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD*" – only **God's Glory** will fill **God's House [v14]**. [We are recapping on these passages of 2 *Chronicles* 5:1-14; 6:1-42 and 7:1-4]

If we listen to God's Word by the Spirit, the speaker and our surroundings are lost to us; God's Word will be drenching us with its power and persuasion, filling us, His Temple, with His Glory. Solomon vowed obedience to God, beseeching Him that as they directed their cry to the Place where God said He would meet with them that His eyes and ears would be open to their prayer.

No man's voice was heard when Solomon finished his prayer – God was filling His Temple, 7:1. If we could resist the devil's persuasion not to be alone with God, He could speak to us.

In place of the old Temple, I am the Temple; in place of Solomon praying, I am praying – then when I am finished, God will talk with me, and fill His Temple with His Glory, and do what He wanted to do...

The priests could not enter into the House of the LORD, because the Glory of the LORD had **filled** the LORD's House, 7:2. The children of Israel bowed down and worshipped and praised the LORD, saying, "*For He is good*", 7:3. If we truly live as the Temple of God, filled with the Spirit of God, all we say and do will attract people to Christ. If it concentrates them on us and our ministry, we are failing in some way. They should see **God in residence in the Temple of God**, and know **He** is speaking to them.

Even explaining to them that we are not God draws attention to ourselves! We must speak as from God, and they must hear as from God. Much of our preaching and speaking is of a personal nature, but the Temple, "*which temple ye are*", is **God's** Witness. It is marvellous that a human being can be the dwelling place of the Holy Ghost! But He will speak only of **Christ**, and not about us. We do a disservice to God in residence if, even with good intentions, we speak of ourselves.

The Church of God represents **God**, not man. The local church represents **Christ**, literally, as we are the Temples of God. God's ministers, those He has set in the Church, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, are to teach the people in the Church that they are witnesses of **Christ** and unto **Christ**. Those outside can then expect to find some reference to God; some thought, some sign of God's Presence – not in the building, but **in us**.

Then, as with Solomon's Temple, (2 Chronicles) 7:3-4, the people will acknowledge that 'God is here' as they bow their proud hearts and stiff necks, accepting the Christ speaking from out of His Temple. When He takes up residence in His Temple there is no room for anyone or anything else. God is in His House! He has every right to be there!

**1 Corinthians 6:19**      *"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the **Holy Ghost** which is in you, which ye have of **God**, and ye are not your own?"*

Paul was outraged that the Corinthians associated the Temple of God with temples not of God. Any house belongs to its owner, not to someone else! The owner says what shall be done with the house.

'You are not your own', v19, *"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God – who is your Own, since He bought you with His Blood – in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's".*

It is not enough to say, 'I have spoken with other tongues', and just to dwell on that experience. A member of the Church of God should have no other spirit in residence to make use of God's temple.

**Romans 8:9**      *"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of **God** dwell in you."*

The Temple of God must be occupied by God. Are we afraid to face up to the tremendous scope of God's Grace that calls us 'the Temple of God'? But if we do accept that we are His Temple, we must then accept God's way of thinking; God's way of operating in the Temple.

*"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."*

This Scripture has been used to say that if people are not Baptised with the Holy Ghost they are in that category of not being filled with the Spirit, speaking in other tongues. But this is nothing to do with speaking in other tongues. 'Have I got God's Spirit or any other spirit?' is what each one of us must decide.

Yes, there is nothing better to encourage someone to be filled with the Holy Ghost and speak with other tongues, but that person must understand from us that it means to speak with God's language out of God's Temple; to become His Temple and to concede to God's Position. *"Ye are washed ... ye are sanctified ... ye are justified", v11.*

Everyone should speak with other tongues because we are all supposed to be God's Temple!

*"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."*

How can God share His Temple with another spirit? That is blasphemous, indecent, unholy; not to be thought about, at least not by God. That is why Ezekiel [10:18] says that the Glory of the LORD departed from the House. Other spirits had come in and God would not share His Temple with them.

He had come to the Temple to take His people away from being guided by other spirits, so how could He, a holy, definite God, not vague, not evasive, make us see Light, if He was not Himself Light?

He is not being dictatorial when He says, 'It's only Me you are to deal with'. It is His plain, merciful sense not to allow me to talk with Him and then to talk with other spirits; for how could I know who is God? Anybody or anything could deceive me then...

We are really helpless without God. We must depend more upon God; be more dependent on His Spirit. We must seek Him often **on our own**. Then God can speak to us; tell us what He thinks of us, what He wants of us.

But He cannot do that when we are in other people's company. We would find it a source of real blessing if we took the opportunity God gave us to seek Him on our own, and let Him speak. It is not an experience in the flesh - which would be monotonous, considering it only as a narrow way, every day the same, enclosed in four wall - but it would be **GOD** talking to us!

A very meek and humble Person is Christ! He isn't rowdy. He is gentle, lowly, and not the kind to push Himself in where a lot of other people are holding our attention. No, He waits until we are alone and when we have finished speaking, and He has listened carefully to every word and knows how to meet our need, then He begins to speak to us - who are His Temple in which He dwells.

*"Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."* How can Christ know we are His Temple if we are not filled with His Spirit? He only knows it by the Spirit's contact, who makes groanings for the one so filled with things beyond human comprehension to say to this holy Christ and takes it up to Him. That is how Christ knows that is His Temple; He knows the Mind of the Spirit.

How will devils and diseases know I am their master if my body is not filled with the Spirit of Christ? We are Baptised with the Holy Ghost to be what God wants: His dwelling place. Christ's physical Body, in Heaven, is the Temple of God, and His Church, still on earth, God's Temple here.

How will the world know we are the Church, the Temple of God, if they do not see us filled with God's Holy Spirit? When we gather together there should be no behaviour that is a detriment to people saying, 'God was in that place' - in us, not the building...

When the Early Church met together, they didn't ask God to fill them with the Holy Spirit. God has already given His Spirit. Christ poured out His Blood that we may have the Spirit. They asked for the freedom, the confidence, **to speak God's Word**, and for Him to do the rest.

He would do the healings, the signs and wonders, the casting out of devils. God showed He was in residence when the place shook. That was all they wanted; to be of use to Him, to speak His words. That is all we need to pray - a simple prayer, and let God do what only He can do. Everything must respond to the authoritative spoken Word of God when it comes out of the Temple.

How will we know we are members of the Body of Christ if the Holy Spirit is not filling us to exercise dominion over all these things? That is what we are to be filled with the Holy Ghost for. We will know when we are filled with the Holy Ghost, because we won't entertain doubts, fears, anxieties and dubious things.

We will see there is no encouragement in disasters and failures, so we will not see them, for we are the Temple of God, exercising the Authority of God; His dominion over failure, rebellion, disease, defeat and death, and all the many dangers, troubles and forces at work.

We may not know about them, but the Holy Spirit **resident in us** knows, and He will deal with it through us as we exercise the spoken Word of authority, for He knows very well what He is dealing with. He is warring against the flesh, the demons, devils, and their principalities and powers, and gives them no quarter through us. Therefore, knowing we are the Temple of God which is holy, we will see ourselves exercising this dominion over all the power of the enemy.

**Romans 8:10**      *“And if Christ be in you, that is, if His Spirit resides in, occupies, fills you, then the body is dead because of sin”.*

You will be unresponsive to sin and will have no dealings with any other spirit, for that would bring in sin. All other spirits have evil in them. Only God’s **Holy** Spirit has no sin, and there is only One Holy Spirit. Praise God for that!

*“...but the Spirit – the Holy Spirit in the Church, the Body of Christ – is life because of righteousness”. That is, the Holy Spirit dwelling in us keeps us, as God’s Temple, **free of all other spirits**, all other desires, all other thoughts, attitudes, and activities other than **Christ’s** desires, Christ’s thoughts, Christ’s attitudes, Christ’s activities. *“The Spirit is life because of righteousness”.**

The Spirit in us proves that we have the Righteousness of Christ, because He deals with these other spirits. He keeps them out, these other desires, other thoughts, other attitudes and activities other than Christ’s. The temple of **God** is holy as Christ is holy – ‘which temple you are’.

### **Nothing In Common With The Flesh**

**2 Corinthians 6:14**      *“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?”*

‘Do not endeavour to join the Spirit of Truth in you to the spirit of error. Do not allow other views, other attitudes, to enter your mind’, Paul was saying. We should not spend lots of time discussing people’s wrongs and errors. The Spirit of God does not have time to discuss error; wrong thinking, which all comes from wrong spirits. Discussion is not needed, but **destruction**, discharging them from the bodies they infest. ‘Don’t entertain the spirit of error with the Spirit of Truth’, Paul said.

God’s Spirit shows us how to live and how to destroy evil. He does not elaborate on the evil because the evil was in you and me. We should know only too well what evil is, it is in our human nature; it still is – *“that which is born of the flesh is flesh”*, said Christ to Nicodemus [John 3:6]. It will never be anything else; it will not become spiritual, so what import is it that **God** should dwell upon the flesh? The Holy Spirit dwells on **Christ**; what Christ is; what Christ talks about; what Christ does...

Surely these Scriptures instruct us not to read about or have dealings with all the errors of different erroneous sects, cults and the occult. We are to cast them out. Jesus used just one word to a demon, *“Go”*. There is no conversation with evil, but evil spirits want to be talked about; Satan wants to be discussed! Remember that our mind is **a holy mind**; it is the Mind of Jesus Christ [1 Corinthians 2:16]. Our body is a **holy body**; it belongs to God, not to us.

Isn't that marvellous?! It has been bought with a price; the property is **God's**. We should be glad about that – He will keep it going while we spend our time seeking His Kingdom, using His Power and Authority in us to demolish and destroy Satanic opposition [1 *Corinthians* 7:23].

God will keep us going on working day and night for Him if it's for Him. He doesn't wear people out – He is Eternal Life! When it is our time to go God will take us, faithfully and graciously, and until then we are God's Temple filled with God's Eternal, exhaustless Spirit, with limitless Power. The Spirit of God is used to Eternity, as Christ is. We have Another Comforter as Christ had here!

So, [back to 2 *Corinthians* 6:14] 'Do not try to join the Spirit of truth in you with the spirit of error' – it just does not work. "*For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other...*" [Galatians 5:17]. There is no meeting ground; no place they can meet.

*v14b* "For what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness?";

'For what fellowship has the Spirit of Life in you with the spirit of disobedience?' **None.**

The answer to the following questions taken from 2 *Corinthians* 6 is '**NONE**'!

*v14c* "And what communion hath light with darkness?"; 'and what communion has the Spirit of Holiness in you with the spirit of uncleanness? – **None!**

*v15a* "And what concord hath Christ with Belial?"; 'and what concord – what peace – can there be between the Spirit of God in you and Satan? – **None.**

*v15b* "or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?"; 'or what part has the Spirit of Grace in you with the spirit of unbelief? – **None.**

The Spirit of Grace is directly opposed to unbelief; it challenges unbelief; confronts it and insists that **Grace** is the only way a man can live with God.

*v16a* "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?";

'And what agreement can the Holy Spirit of Promise in you have with the spirit of devils'?

The Spirit of Promise shows us our Eternal Future. The spirit of devils blinds us to our Future, committing us to the lusts of the flesh and the bondage and the chains of this world.

What concord, peace, can there be between the Spirit of God in you and Satan?

There is only one End to the whole History of God and Satan – Satan's final doom in the Lake of Fire. Until then, as a dispossessed person, he wanders about, homeless; a hunted spiritual fugitive, seeking men who will give him power over them because they will not stay in the position which God gave them.

We are not to take the lesser way. If God says I can do that now, I must do that now, because God said. If God said for us to do a thing we must never not do it. We cannot **not** be a doer of what God says if we believe that He told us.

Christ would answer '**None**' to those questions.

Where can the Spirit of Grace, the Spirit of Promise in us come together with the spirit of unbelief, of devils? Devils are liars, deceivers, whose head is Satan, the liar from the beginning [John 8:44]. They attract us and divert us with the flesh – and people, places, things and circumstances in our lives take possession of us, and the demons come in finally and operate.

The Lord told the parable [Matthew 12:43-45 & Luke 11:24-26] of the unclean spirit going out of a man and seeking rest and finding none; dispossessed creatures. God controls them, and now by His Church He exercises dominion over them – God the Father made Christ to be “over all things to the church, Which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all” [Ephesians 1:22-23].

Everyone, even an unclean spirit, wants rest, and a home – but he finds none. He can only enter where he is permitted. He comes back to the place he left, thinking it is his home, and he finds it clean, but no one occupying it.

**God’s Temple must be occupied by God;** in full residence, taking up His place there – and not temporarily either!... It is forever, until we get to Christ. How many lives are swept and garnished and made ready for God, but God is not allowed in? God is kept out by something or other... Oh! what a fatal position to be in. You and I are not to be like that!

We have the Spirit of God! We are in the Church of Jesus Christ! We ought to be the residents of the Most High by His Spirit! ‘What agreement can the Holy Spirit of Promise in you have with the spirit of devils?’ – **NONE**.

**2 Corinthians 6:13-18** *“Now for a recompence in the same, (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also enlarged. 14. Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15. And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16. And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 17. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, 18. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”*

## DAY 3

**Daily Readings : Isaiah 55:6-9; Hebrews 1:1-4; Isaiah 53:1-6; Revelation 21:22-27**

### SCRIPTURES FOR THE DAY'S STUDY

Isaiah 52:13 - 53:6	Hebrews 13:9-21
1 Timothy 3:14-16	Hebrews 9:1-28
Ephesians 1:15-23	Hebrews 10:1-25
Ephesians 2:8-18	Revelation 22:16-17
Romans 5:1-11	Revelation 1:4-6

## Revelations from the Scriptures

### SELECTED BY GOD

**1 Corinthians 1:26-29** *“For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27. 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; 28. And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29. That no flesh should glory in His presence.”*

#### Called Because of Christ Crucified

We are again looking by God's Spirit at His Word, and seeing what **The Church of God** is – who The Church of God is, in This Age – its Power, your Power if you are a member of This Church. We are seeing God's Method of selecting members of This Church of His Family.

**Ephesians 1:3-4** *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 4. According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.”*

God has not called you into the Church, His Family, according to **who you are**, nor according to **what you have done**, nor **where you come from**, nor **who you live with**, or **what you can do**.

**1 Corinthians 1:26-29** *“For you see your calling, brethren... We should see immediately that we study **God's Method** for choosing members for The Church and for His Family, that it is **not** according to the world that the choice is made. “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world.”*

He doesn't choose a foolish person, but the qualities that the world considers of no account, ineffectual. Christ does not want a foolish person as a member of His Body. Being physically or mentally weak does not qualify you for God's Family; it is what the world considers weak, unavailing.

The choice goes on : God has chosen the *“base things of the world”*, the things which the world finds undesirable – not what you find undesirable – but what is uninviting to the world, to its systems, its successes, and its source of power, popularity, glory and honour.

**These** are the things God chooses; things which do not look very promising to the world, for its purposes. God and the world think in entirely opposite ways. *“God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty”* – to the world. The things – the qualities, the potential, the activities, the talents – which the world has no use for, are those most likely to be used by **God**, because they are despised and unwanted by the world.

This is a picture of Jesus Christ. He was not considered wise by the world’s standards – and when the officers sent to arrest Him said, *“Never man spake like this Man”*, the Pharisees rejected that, suggesting they were also deceived (*John 7:45-47*). They thought His methods were ineffectual for the running of the world. He was considered weak.

Judas betrayed Him because he thought He wasn’t doing things that His position could afford to do; the Power He was exercising to give life and health to people was not being utilised to profit. This was the world’s view of Him; weak, ineffectual, unavailing, undesirable, base – an uninviting Person. He didn’t look all comfortable, dressed properly for every season of the year! He gave the appearance that He didn’t have a lot of this world’s care and attention.

*“Things which are despised”* – unwanted, disliked, things you really do not want. Jesus said you can’t serve two masters; you will either love the one or despise the other, or hate the one and cling to the other. Those are the characteristics of people’s responses to what they see.

Then God has chosen, *“yea,”* wrote Paul, *“and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are”* - things which are established, recognised in the world as important, vital, special, necessary, to keep it going. The things that are not necessary to the world; not looked for, unrecognised – these God **has** chosen.

We should not strive to get recognition from the world, or expect its respect; nor complain about any bad treatment. That means we expect better treatment, greater recognition of who we are. Jesus Christ received rudeness, discourtesy, neglect, and, finally, with pressure mounting, hate, dislike, fermenting against Him, personal affliction and agony, unspeakable humiliation, and death.

We should believe *1 Corinthians 1*, and never complain about any treatment or circumstance in our life! *“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise”*. He will do the confounding if He finds someone like that. The *“weak”* things, the *“base”* things that the world looks upon as such, *“and things which are despised”* and *“things which are not”* do not exist for them, though they are there. Do we pass people by, only being interested in them for some information we may need? Or do we look upon people as God looks on them, with concern that they should be saved from their sin?

*v26 “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:”*. Some wise, some mighty, some noble, but when they were called, in answering the Call, they left behind their wisdom, and their might, and their nobility. It went into oblivion in an eternal past, blotted out by the Blood of Jesus Christ, and they proceeded to walk with God. They took His Wisdom and His Might and His Nobility, which is lasting. We must see it as so.

**This call of GOD came to you only because of the Cross of CHRIST** – for no other reason.

In the passage 1 Corinthians 1:20-25, vs23-24 say, "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

If we can accept that, and not be persuaded by Satan that we are of those whom God should call, then we will be in the position of accepting His Call. Otherwise, if we remembered what we were or what we are, God's servants and His children generally would not be able to do what God wants done, which is to preach **Christ Crucified**. If God remembered what you are and what you were, so would the world! How could you preach a Holy God if your unholiness was still remembered? Or how could you preach **Christ Crucified** if your pride was remembered?

v26 "For ye see your calling, brethren" – the Way God has called you, through **Christ Crucified**.

vs20-24, "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21. For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. 22. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: 23. But we preach **Christ crucified**, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24. But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

Many Christians today are like those Jews of that day; looking for signs of proof that God is working. But Jesus said then that it is an evil and adulterous generation that seek for a sign. They were to get no sign except that of the prophet Jonas, who was three days and nights in the whale's belly; for so would the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth, *Matthew 12:39-40; Luke 11:29*.

**Christ Crucified** is the only sign that should satisfy us that God is working mightily on our behalf. This will prove to us that we are not still reckoning ourselves to be wise, and mighty, and honourable, and much to be thought about, but that all we need is **Christ Crucified, the Power of GOD**. Otherwise, Christ Crucified becomes a stumbling stone, which He did to the Jews who always looked for signs of God's care. When we are in that habit, we never get right with God.

They went through the Red Sea, and then they murmured; they had water out of a rock, and then they said, "Can God furnish [provide] a table in the wilderness?" [*Psalm 78:19*] and so on and on until God left them to rot; to die in the wilderness – not because He couldn't keep them, but they couldn't really live with God. They murmured their life out. Everything was not enough for them.

This is the state of mind of someone to whom **Christ Crucified** is not the Sufficient Evidence that God cares for me; that God loves me; that God has made ample provision for my present and my Future. My past He has removed completely! The Proof, the Evidence, of God's Power that we preach, said Paul, is Christ Crucified. So to attempt to justify a success or a failure, misery or prosperity, is really seeking to by-pass the Cross, which was for our justification.

If as Christians we come upon hard times, we should still rejoice. **Christ Crucified** is still the Sign of God's good pleasure towards us. God looks on us favourably through the Cross, not because we get a good job, and have enough to keep ourselves going, and have comforts and secure futures in this world! – not at all. That Man on God's Right Hand is sufficient to make any heart rejoice under all circumstances!

So Jesus said, "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with ... the cares of this life..." [Luke 21:34].

Then Christ Crucified is the Answer – the **Wisdom** of God. Oh, what matchless Wisdom!

"There is no searching of His understanding" [Romans 11:33; Isaiah 40:28] – for He has the Right Answer for everything; every difficulty listed by man or God! God can supply the Answer for every one; the ones you know and the ones you don't – which exceed the ones we know, I'm sure!! We're not expected to know all the difficulties, trials and problems...

Christ Crucified is the Sign, the Answer!

Christ Crucified is the Answer from God for every problem, need and question for all who choose to accept that Answer. The Banner over us is Love that stretches over all the earth! [Songs 2:4] We must be good evidence of that Love, when things go well or when they don't.

Satan said to God, 'Take away Job's prosperity and then see; take away his health, and then see...' Satan is relentless to expose, if he can, our weaknesses; intent on showing God we don't care for Him, and showing us that God is not to be trusted. He succeeded with Adam, but, Praise God, the Second and Last Adam, arrived with a new form of Weapon – Oh, Hallelujah – **God's Love in Action**; Humility; Meekness.

"I am a worm", He said, [Psalm 22:6]. So different was He from all the other Adams; so different from us. He was only content to do God's Will, and He bore no grudge; there was no resentment, no complaint. What a lovely, wonderful Life; and He went to the Cross, taking a man into Eternity! Amidst cursing, blasphemy, hate, venom, reviling, He had that tranquillity and lack of complaint about anything done to Him that He could say, 'Yes, you can come with Me right now into Eternity'!

That is the Answer we need today – Christ Crucified!

"For you see your calling, brethren" – as we seek to realise in our lives the Power of the God-head resident in His Church, that Church "*which is His (Christ's) Body*" – we shall see clearly :

1. **The Way we have been called into the Church of God.** This is very important. Many of us will accept membership of God's Church without realising it is the Church of **God**, the Body of **Christ**, and that membership of such a Body involves of necessity adherence to the Conditions – the Way we have been called into the Church.
2. **The Work that alone made this call to us from God possible.** God could never have called us unless this Work had been done. There can be no truck [exchange] between holiness and unholy-ness; no relationship between God and me, except that Work was done. The only connection with God without that Work was the Final Sentence of Eternity, or a living Death.
3. **The woeful condition of those who reject the way God calls them.** The Way of God is important. It is different from my way; it will never be like man's way – mankind who refuses the Work which enabled God to call us; who resist Christ's claims on God for His Church. They do not accept the Work. They see no reason for it, so they refuse and deny what Christ claims through His Blood for His Church from God. They deny its validity, because it is foolishness to this world; not its idea of an answer!

The Way We Have Been Called By God

**1 John 3:1**      *"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not".*

The Call is from **God**. The Church of God is a Divine Creation, a Divine Organisation, with its Headquarters in Heaven – right on God's Right Hand. We should be called the children of God with the Love of the Father bestowed upon us!

That is God's Call, to call us His sons and daughters – officially when we accept that our whole life is dead, unresponsive to sin, and that Christ is now our life. We are to accept that literally, not as religious jargon, or scriptural phraseology.

A son or a daughter to God must expect **special attention** from a proper Father; and expect training from Him, to check and to chasten – which is a form of training. I must expect Him to want to control my life to show me what is best for me.

*"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."*

God manifestly called us to be only what we were **not** originally! – neither by nature; nor by our own physical, mental or moral desires. No one desired to be a child of God. Our physical lives shrink from that; our mental faculties can't take it in, and our moral desires are far from wanting a relationship with God – especially one of being His child, where morally we are obligated to obey our parents. No, I have not become a child of God because I was one originally, or because I wanted to be, nor by the decisions and deliberations of men – that is entirely **not** possible to God!

**John 1:12-13**      *"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power (or Authority; the right, or privilege) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: Which were born, not of blood (nature), nor of the will of the flesh (physical desires), nor of the will of man (determination), but of God."*

Born of God – by God's Desires, and Determination, and by what God had done. It's that wonderful! Not by what you wanted to be; only God can call you to become His child.

*"Selected By God"* is the subject for today, and this is God's Way of selecting us. We should repent if we said, 'That is a lovely soul, and would make a good Christian'. Only the Loveliness of Jesus Christ will make any one a good Christian. There is no loveliness in any one of us, in God's eyes, until Christ comes into that life. We must make up our minds about that, and be born of **God**.

That is what *John 3:3* says, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God". God has not called the sweet people of the world; He has called the weak, the foolish, the base, the despised and the things that are nought.

We can accept Divine precepts but then continue to live in the natural. We must be born of God – there is no other process; no other Sign but **Christ Crucified**. If someone seeks an answer, or a sign, He is the only Answer, the only Sign.

Only God can call you to become His child because of these three reasons :

- 1. By nature you are a child of wrath.** Your nature classifies you as being suited only to an ever-lasting life in the Lake of Fire. My nature is the object of God's Wrath, deserving only God's Judgment.

You must detest your self, and seek methodically to destroy, crucify, it. The Cross was a methodical slow destruction of a human life, in much affliction, so painful, that the life would want to die. So we should crucify the flesh, so it will want to die and get out of our way!

In that great Cry of *Psalm 51:5*, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did My mother conceive Me”, the Speaker [Christ] declares there is nothing in man that can produce any good; it could only come from His God.

Then *Ephesians 2:1-3* speaks that to the Church, saying, “You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience ... that’s the world; now to us ... Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh – no one came any other way; we were all in sin, the children of wrath, fulfilling the desires of the flesh – and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” ‘You He has quickened who were a child of wrath.’

2. **By your moral, mental, and physical desires, you are a child of disobedience**, that is, a child of this world, living entirely opposite to God’s wishes and God’s Way. As we have just read, “in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air – the god of this world – the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” So we show which Authority, which Power, is working in us – the spirit of disobedience, or the Spirit of Truth, by how we respond to this Call.

“For you see your calling, brethren” – God wants us to see it almost literally, not just to understand, perceive it, but see in a great and mighty Vision, the Way we are Called; the Way God presents His Call to us.

A “child of disobedience” to God is one who **rejects God’s Word** as it is written as unnecessary for his obedience. One part of God’s Word rejected is rejection of all of it, in God’s view. How is it possible to have ‘fellowship’ – a close common bond – with those who do not accept all that the Scriptures say?

We are not to condemn to God’s Judgment those who take out sections of the Scriptures – let them answer to God – but in agreeing to have God’s Fellowship with them, we would be saying that they have a right to take only part of God’s Word.

A child of disobedience disobeys **God**, and, at what point he disobeys God is not necessary to examine, for it is rejecting **Christ Crucified**. To reject God’s Word is to reject Christ Crucified.

Writing by the Holy Ghost, **James** said, “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” The askers had no intention of doing what God says, even with what they asked from God. “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?” (*James 4:3-4*).

**Paul** speaks of many who are enemies of the Cross of Christ, summing it up by saying, “they are those that mind earthly things” [*Philippians 3:18-19*] Minding earthly things is to be God’s enemy, because Christ Crucified liberates me from earthly things and makes me at once a partaker of the Divine eternal inheritance of the saints in light... [*Colossians 1:12*]. Every disobedience is a con-frontation with the Crucified Christ, as it is displaying disobedience of God’s Word.

So **John**, writing by the Spirit, said, *"I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."* [1 John 2:14-15]

2 Chronicles 25:2 shows us that it is possible to do what is "right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart". There is some love, some desire, which, in the case of Lot's wife, cost her her Salvation. Her looking back with some desire for her home or whatever she regretted leaving behind in that dreadful city, led to her destruction. It was already aflame with God's terrible judgments upon it, and she was being rescued by angels, yet she looked back...

Jesus said, "Remember Lot's wife" – remember, no doubt, her desires that led to her destruction [Luke 17:32]. What are the desires within us? If we have answered God's Call, our only desire should be Christ Crucified; to please Him and to live with Him. By the world's standards, this is not a wise thing to follow Christ, because you don't seem to benefit yourself at all, as they would say. It's not a very strong position in the world to take up; Christ Crucified.

All the time you spend being humble, and meek, and lowly, and allowing men to tread over your life as they please, and saying, 'God will look after me' – that's not very strong to the world! It's not very positive at all – but that's the way to go!

### 3. **By the decisions you naturally make in your daily life you are a child of the devil.**

We follow his dictates rather than God's naturally. **John 8:41-47** gives a clear picture of a child of the devil: *"Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to Him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love Me"*. In not loving Him, they were doing the deeds of their father the devil.

The argument goes on to its conclusion: Not to love Christ is to be found in the devil's family, according to Jesus Christ. *"If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do ye not understand My speech? even because ye cannot hear My Word."* This is another characteristic of the devil's family – an inability to hear God's Word as from God.

If we listen to God's Word, but pay no attention to it we are the devil's children, for he particularly instructs and coaches his children to pay little heed to the Word of God.

It started in Eden: 'you don't really have to take notice of all that God said. Did He really say that? – you won't die!' And down the ages has come that same attack, a confrontation with God's Word, and an encouragement to reject it as untrue.

**vs 43-44** *"Why do ye not understand My speech? even because ye cannot hear My Word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it"*.

He is the originator of the liar. When one believes that God's Word cannot work in certain situations, which is a common form of lie, then one is really becoming a member of Satan's family. That is how he trains his children, that what God says cannot apply to every part of a Christian life. But God's Word is Life. We must live it out every day.

Christians in business, for example, should deal with their associates on that footing, or close down, because if they cannot or will not fit God's Word into every part of their lives, but only when it's convenient, they may as well be termed a child of the devil.

*vs44b-46 "When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe Me not. Which of you convinceth Me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe Me?"*

So, we are not God's children by our nature, by our mental, moral and physical desires, and by the decisions we make.

*Ephesians 2:4-10 "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, – that is how we are called, by Christ Crucified! – Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus ... v10. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*

Every Christian is a Work of God. A work of Grace means a Work of God, literally. A Work of God: a new heart; a new mind – so new desires, new principles, new ways of living and walking and working. **CHRIST CRUCIFIED is the way God calls you into His holy Family – there is no other way.**

*Ephesians 5:1-2 "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;" How? What is the inducement? What is the attraction? "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour."*

Because of Christ Crucified, God believes you **can** answer His call; you **can** accept His invitation; you **can** come the Way He has presented His Call. **God has given you** the Spirit of power, the Spirit of love and the Spirit of a sound mind [2 Timothy 1:7-13]

We must observe then that **we never had power** until God gave it to us as His children. We never had love that God could accept or commend or pass on the Judgment Day except He gave it. And above all, we did not have a sound mind until God gave us a sound mind.

**This is a revelation of what we were and what we are in God!** "*Ye must be born again*" [John 3:7] – and accept that as true. The Power, the ability, to live an Eternal Life down here, a proper life – the only life that is decent in God's sight; the Life we have seen hanging on a Cross, Love, a sound mind...

*2 Timothy 1:8-10 "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."*

*v12 "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."*

The Christian is not ashamed of his Christian life, of his God, of his Christ, of God's Word, of the Holy Spirit. He's not ashamed that he is born again, and Baptised with the Holy Ghost. He is not ashamed to be found speaking with other tongues, praying and preaching and ministering. He is not ashamed to be found living a holy life, rejecting the things of this world. He is not ashamed to be thought foolish, unworldly and silly, despised and rejected.

**He is not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ!** That is the mark of the Christian! He is only ashamed when he sees the sin and disgrace of the world. But he is no longer ashamed – he's a child of God!

*"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord"* – that is, to support that kind of Life. But we encourage ambition in this world, and worldly desires. We encourage our children to go for success and material gain and advantage, and say it is all for God's work. Oh! the subtlety of Satan! 'I am not ashamed of the Gospel', we can say.

We cannot force our children to go God's Way, but we need not be ashamed of the Gospel, but often we go other people's way as we are ashamed. Timothy had Paul, who was so convinced that was the only Life, that he said, *v6, "Stir up the gift of God ... of power"* – the ability to live as God lives, revealing the characteristics of God, proclaimed in Christ on the Cross. *"... and of love..."*, that pure Love which does not speak for advantage, or act for any gain, but purely what Christ wants achieved in a man's life.

Compromise is another worldly word, a human word for the opposite of the Biblical *"be not ashamed"*. The child of God **can** live, **can** answer God's Call the Way God has presented it.

**1 Peter 2:1-10** says,

*"Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2. As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: 3. If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. 4. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, 5. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable*

*to God by Jesus Christ. 6. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. 7. Unto you therefore which believe He is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, 8. And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being*

*disobedient: whereunto they were also appointed. 9. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light: 10. Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."*

The life of the child of God is based on that Fact, and reveals that Fact, that to him **Christ Crucified is precious**. It is made clear to everyone – He is precious. *"Unto you therefore which believe He is precious"*, *v7a*, and notice the opposite, *v7b*: *"but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner..."*

So if Christ is precious to you then you are of all people most obedient. Your obedience or your indifference to the Word of God reveals how precious Christ is to you – according to the Scriptures!

That was the whole subject of the content of Peter's charge against the Sanhedrin: 'This is the Stone. You have rejected this Stone, but God has taken this Stone and made it the Head of the corner' (*Acts 4:10-12*). 'So what shall I do?' Peter could have added, 'Shall I accept your view and reject this Stone, or shall I take God's view?'

God has shown me who this Stone is, and now to me He is precious’.

So after all his tumultuous career preaching Christ Crucified down the years, Peter in his old age, just before his death, wrote these epistles, and then he was able to say,

[v7] *“Unto you that believe He is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.”*

If Christ is precious to you, you will always be sounding His praises! Our conversation is in Heaven. *“...that ye should shew forth the praises of Him”* – that’s why Peter said, *“a chosen generation”*.

We are called to make Him precious to us. We are called to show forth His praises – the praises of Him *“who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light”*. Only He could do it.

**Christ Crucified is God’s Way of Calling.** It’s the Way that God has presented His Call – a very gracious Way, a very proper Way. There’s no talk of sin; there’s talk of a **Saviour**. That is why it is an attractive Way. That is why we are urged to *“go into all the world”*, to everybody who is not of Christ, not necessarily to different countries, but to all who do not know Christ.

They may say they don’t want to know who He is, but *“unto you that believe He is precious”*, so we go out to tell them these precious things about the One who is precious to us.

After all, it attracted you! And we are no different to the people still crying in this world for something other than God. For no one wants God until they see who He really is. The God we thought we followed was the God of our fathers – the *“vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers”* [1 Peter 1:18] and we talk a lot about our fathers, our religion, our background, but we have been called out of that. We left it, because we found **Him** who is precious... That is what it means.

So we found that lovely Way when we were told our sins had been put away, and we can be clean – how marvellous that was!!

We came to see that He is precious, and we began to *“shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness”* – because we didn’t see the Light. We were **called out** of one place of darkness into another Place of Light.

We didn’t just come out of it – we couldn’t do that. Satan says to people, ‘Did God say...?’, so they think they are still in the chains of their prison – we all did.

But there are no chains, and the prison door is **open**, and when we hear God telling us to get up and walk out into the Light, we know it is God telling us!! God deals with us simply, and it is as simple as that if one wants to deal with God. The darkness goes forever!!

*“For ye see your calling, brethren”* – **the Way** you have been Called by God. It is a glorious Way, a loving Way, that God has presented His Call to us. Glorious because, according to the Scriptures, it lights up Christ Crucified, through whom God calls us.

**2 Corinthians 4:3-6**     *"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: – those who don't believe, who don't see Christ Crucified lighted up by the Call of God – 4. In whom the god of this world hath blinded – not seeing Christ Crucified lighted up by the Call of God – the minds of them which believe not... – in their minds, that part of you that absorbs the Message, so they don't absorb the Message of what Christ is like – ... lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 5. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. 6. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."*

Through seeing Christ Crucified lit up by God's Spirit in God's Word, you see your Calling. You can say, 'Ah, yes, **now** I know why God is prepared to accept me as His child'. May God use us by His Spirit to light up that Word that others may say, 'That's right, I can be called a child of God'.

Though men say, 'Who told you I need to repent. I live a good life; I've not done any one any harm', they will say those things, they don't know anything else. But when they see this Person lit up, then they realise that they never were good, never like God, and never will be – and realise there is a Call to be His child now, and then they will cling to Christ.

The more we see that God called us through Christ Crucified, the more we will cling to Christ – that should be so. But if I didn't think to accept God as my Father with my sins blotted out by Christ my Saviour, and because of what Christ looks like, and what He is to God, then I would be inclined to leave Christ out of my life a lot, especially having said I am a Christian and persuaded myself that I am a child of God and therefore entitled to the Church's consideration of me to include me as a member of God's Family...

There is a spurious type of Christianity. It is without repentance. The moment we see that God has called us, then we ought to repent of not having accepted His Call before, or of not having seen Jesus Christ like that before, and of living a life without all that Glory in it, and perhaps in many cases, of pretending that we were God's child.

**1 Peter 5:1-5**     *"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3. Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. 4. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. 5. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."*

'You see the Way you're called, brethren.' You see that's the Way you came, and that's the Way you'll stay – and you will cling to Christ the more...

**vs6-11**     *"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: – like He did Christ – 7. Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you. – as He did for Christ – 8. Be sober, be vigilant; for your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9. Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. 10. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. 11. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."*

Reading this passage together with *Galatians 6:12-16*, we should understand that as soon as we see Christ lit up by the Word of God through the Spirit, then we see the sense of God – the Way God has called us, and seeing that Way, we cling to Christ.

Acceptance of Christ means clinging to Christ. Clinging to Christ means a real emphasis in one's life of an understanding of what the Cross means. Unless we understand what the Cross means we cannot really preach the Gospel. The Gospel is the Cross, and unless we cling to Christ, how can we understand what Christ Crucified really means??

**Galatians 6:12-16**      *"As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; – because they are not clinging to Christ. Christ Crucified is not the way they were called – only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. 13. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. 14. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. 15. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. 16. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."*

**For you see the Way you have been called by God.** It is a **Living Way**. It is a **loving Way**; a **glorious Way**, that God has presented His Call to you.

(end of morning session)

(afternoon session)

### **The Work That Made The Call From God Possible**

**1 Corinthians 1:26-29** The Way you have been called by God is a Living Way, because it deals only with Life, not with death. God doesn't call you to remember your guilt – you remember how you were! He calls you a certain Way; He presents His Call that way – the Way of Christ Crucified; Christ Crucified being the Way that God calls you to Himself. It has only to do with **Life**.

**John 14:1**      *"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me."*

In the Call from God, the Way that God calls you, it means you are called to a complete Faith in Christ. Many people speak of 'God'. All nations have their own names for 'God', but there is only one Name for this Person through whom you are called – **Jesus Christ**. All nations call Him that, adapted to their particular language, of course.

**He** said, *"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me"*. It is faith in Christ that shows that you answer God's Call. You cannot answer God's Call any other way. Remember that when you are calling people to repent, you are calling them into the Church of God. You are calling them to have an unconditional Faith in Jesus Christ.

When Christ told His disciples, marvelling when the fig tree withered at His Word, *"Have faith in God"*, He meant Himself, because God in Heaven had permitted that. Everything He did was according to God's Word, and also, He is God manifest in the flesh.

So He meant that all you think and believe about God, that is Me, so have faith in Me. We cannot answer God's Call unless our faith is entirely placed on who Christ is, where He is at this moment, and what He looks like. That is the sum total of our faith. He is the Cause for you to believe anything about God, and He is the Finisher of it [*Hebrews 12:2*].

He will prove, confirm, to you that all you believed was really right after all – “above all that we ask or think”, quoting *Ephesians 3:20* as the language of this Faith.

So then, because of this Call, God is confident that any man can live an Eternal Life here, based entirely on Christ Crucified. If Christians has established this Fact, we would be clearer on these issues facing us. If you were to ask, ‘What is your church?’, and I said, ‘The Church of Christ Crucified’, that would be the way God would think of it. It is a pity we think in terms of being in a Pentecostal church, or a Baptist or Methodist church, etc. We should be able to say, ‘My religion is Christ Crucified; that is my Life; my Way of living, my Way of thinking. That is the Way I came and that is the Way I will go back to God’ ...

*Ephesians 4:1-24*      “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called...”.

“Vocation” is simply your **calling** – it is your way of life, which is Christ Crucified. It is the Way you go; the Way you came – the only Way that is known to you in Christ.

*v13*              “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

Every member of the Church together should show the perfection of Christ. That is what the Church of God is formed for – every member united together; each member a part of the whole perfect picture.

*v14*              “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.”

Every member of the Church should be a part of the complete picture of the Crucified Christ as He is at God’s right hand. Christ Crucified is your Vocation. It is not to have a work to be part of your life, ministering to a church, evangelising a certain area, but to have **Christ Crucified as your Vocation**.

*Ephesians 4* shows in detail that we have to walk Christ Crucified, talk Christ Crucified, think Christ Crucified, live Christ Crucified – for He is your Calling, your Vocation, your life. Jesus Christ said “*I am the Way*”. That is literally true, so we have to reach a stage **here**, not in Heaven, where we really are a complete Body, “*fitly joined together*”, *v16*, making “*increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love*”.

*v20*              “But ye have not so learned Christ.”

Christ is my **Lesson**; the Subject of my study. I don’t study the Bible, I study Christ. If we say we are studying the Word of God, we should mean that we are studying Jesus Christ, and that we read the Scriptures, not to retain or gather information about Creation, or the story of the Jews, or the history of the Early Church, but to study Jesus Christ. Perhaps that is a good way to advertise our meetings by saying, ‘We study Jesus Christ’. That would arrest the attention of some people, surely!

*vs21-24*      “The truth is in Jesus”.

He is a New Man – the First Perfect Man that God set His eyes upon; not just made sinless, as was Adam, but because He **stayed** sinless - and that is how we have to go; we have to go on staying sinless, as Christ Crucified. The next passage shows the same Call lit up :

*Romans 8:28-39 "to them who are the called according to His purpose."*

What is His Purpose? It is revealed in **v29**, *"For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren."*

So you see your Calling – you see **Him** who **is** your Calling. Be specific with people. It is so exciting when souls see clearly what you see. Often it is frustrating when one can't communicate sufficiently well what God is trying to do in another's heart. Let us understand our Position by His Spirit as we meditate on the immense Power we have in preaching Christ Crucified, the Calling of a man.

Is there really any purpose in advising and distributing our children into different professions? There is only one Profession, one Calling – Christ Crucified. He is our testimony, our witness, and our conversation in Heaven. He is sufficient.

*vs32-34 "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?...It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."*

In every aspect of your life Christ Crucified is the Guideline, Standard, and Road by which we walk, the Light by which we advise and help others along the way.

**v35** *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"* The Love of God is found in Christ, so Paul says that first.

**v36** *"As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter"*, because Christ is our Calling, our Profession, our Trade, our Ministry, our Life. Many people enter what is called 'the ministry' and they accept salaries; go to a job, like we do. But the 'Ministry' is this: it is your life. God will look after you, but you don't preach Christ for money, or because He is a sort of career; you preach Christ because He is your **Life**. There is no other Life, no other Calling.

**v37** *"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."*

As we have read often in **1 Corinthians 1:26-29**, *"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27. 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; 28. And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29. That **no flesh should glory in His presence.**"*

No flesh should be able to glory in His Presence if we know that we are ineffectual in the world, unavailing, and undesirable to the world, uninviting, unwanted and disliked by the world, because we have that which wants God, and we respond to His Call in Christ!

Not because you are an unpleasant person, but that you are unrecognised and unlooked for by the world, then that is true – no flesh **shall** glory in His Presence! Only the Blood of Christ poured out on a Cross at Calvary made it possible for God to **call** you out of your sins and yourself and out of Satan's chains, and into His own Holy Family!!

**Revelation 1: 5b-6** *"Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood. 6. And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."*

**Nothing else** could persuade God to call a sinner into His Family. May it really sink into our hearts! As a human being of flesh and blood, we have **nothing** to attract God to us. The Attraction is **There** on God's Right Hand, not in us. We must get our priorities right! It is only the Crucified Christ who makes the Call of God possible.

**Romans 5:6-7** *"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die..."* Paul says that as a possibility, but neither of these cases was true; neither example fits our case. We are neither righteous nor good...

v8 *"But God commendeth His love toward us",* so that wiped out all the logic that someone would dare to die for the righteous person. God didn't do it for a righteous or a good person, but for **Christ's sake**. It says, *"God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."*

vs9-10 *"Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."*

God cannot be gracious toward me without the pouring out of Christ's Blood for my sin. It is an impossibility. We are never due anything from God, but, because of the poured out Blood of Christ on Calvary's tree, we **may** expect anything good from God at any time, and any where.

**Ephesians 1:5** *"Having predestined us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."*

It was His good pleasure that Christ should first put away all sin. It delighted God's heart. He took no pleasure in those multitudes of sacrifices, but **this** gave Him pleasure because then He was genuinely free to call sinful men into His Family.

v6 *"To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved."* Through no other way are we accepted, but in the Beloved.

v7 *"In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."*

**"In Whom"** - so then only because of the Fact of the Blood poured out can a Christian truly say, *"the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"* [John 1:17] and [v16] *"of His fulness have all we received"*.

That is the Way God called you; the Way that Grace came - the Way of the poured out Blood. This is our Message. Only this Grace of God, the results of the Blood of Christ poured out for our sins, can enable us to live a life in readiness at all times to hear that Shout from Heaven, the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God! Only because the Blood of Christ was poured out can we fulfil God's Call, and **be ready for that Final physical Call from Heaven**.

**Titus 2:11-12** *"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men ... The appearance of Christ Crucified into this world, that is, to die on the Cross, is God's Call, God's Message to us today. Christ Crucified is God's Cry to you ... Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."*

Because that Blood was poured out for the sin of every one of us, God is a God of Peace for every one of us. He is a God who now directs all His Blessings deliberately upon each one of us personally.

**Hebrews 13: 20-21**      *“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”* This is a **peaceable Call**. God has called us to be perfect.

The Work of Christ was to pour out all His Blood on a Cross at Golgotha. That Work does several things for us. **Because of that Work of Christ in the pouring out His Blood :**

**1. God has been able to bring you into close, constant and continuous contact with Himself.**

*Ephesians 2:19 & 12-13* says, “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;” and *vs 12-13*, “at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13. But now in Christ Jesus ye who some times were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” Something must attract both us and God. There is nothing attractive in us, so what attracts God? – the Blood of Christ.

The Death of Christ makes it an attractive proposition for God to have me in His Family. It is **intended** to be a humbling thought!

**2. God is able to take you into His service.** How many realise that?! Whatever our experience as Christians, if we really knew the Holiness of God, we would not go about waiting for God to call us! We might even seek to avoid it as many of God’s servants in the Old Testament did! They even objected, as did Moses and Jeremiah. Jonah did as well, but he was disobedient. They didn’t object because they didn’t want to serve God, but they thought they couldn’t meet His demands, knowing they were quite different from men’s demands. When God said to Moses, ‘Go and tell them that I sent you’, he said, ‘I don’t know You; tell me what to say’. He was utterly helpless. Jeremiah said, ‘I am just a child’, and God said, ‘Don’t say that, My Word is in your mouth’. In each case, men of God who know God realise that it is only by His Grace that they can answer the Call, not by any strivings or inclinations or urgings in their own souls.

Nobody is urged to serve God. When the Call comes, the believer just does it. He or she may not even know they are answering God’s Call, but something inside says, ‘Well, I have got to do that’ – and it is done, without a fanfare of trumpets or a great farewell meeting!! Elijah suddenly appeared on the scene, and all we know of his background is that he was an inhabitant of Gilead and a Tishbite [1 Kings 17:1]. A man with such a mighty ministry, but that is all God said of him, because it doesn’t matter what we are, it is what God’s Grace is prepared to make of us – God’s willingness, through the Blood of His Son, to use us as He thinks is expedient and suitable to His purpose for the Salvation of souls.

**Hebrews 9: 13-14**      *“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”* A man answering

God’s Call knows one thing: that God is **Holy**, and there is no other way of answering the Call than in a **holy way**. Other things **must** go; the world must become like a dead corpse, crucified, and we must be crucified to the world.

We cannot just follow our ordinary worldly life and be answering God's Call.

*"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"* So when God calls you, He calls you through **Christ Crucified** – and without any special gloss about it, you start to do what you are told – **the crucified way**.

3. God can expect you to answer His Call, and come out of your sin, your self, and the world. You cannot be the same person if you have answered God's Call; something different has happened.

*Hebrews 13:10-12* "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle."

Our Altar is in **Heaven**. We do not serve an earthly religion or religious body. We serve Heaven. *"For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate."* You see your Calling, don't you?! God has not chosen the things that men would choose to follow. He has chosen Christ Crucified.

*vs13-14* "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." Someone who has answered the Call of God has no thought of reward, of getting some gain from it. It is not a work; it is a **Call to a Life**. That is the Life, seeking no city here but **the City to come**. We answer God's Call here, and we will answer Christ's Call there, when He calls you Home! **That will be the Final physical Call.**

4. God is certain that we can live like He lives! Are you certain?!

*1 Peter 1:17-19* "And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: 18. Forasmuch as ye know that **ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;** 19. But **with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.**"

5. There is no family, no community, race, nationality, which will not have someone saved; someone who has answered the Call to live with God and with Christ for ever and ever. The Call of God is to all people. Not many are chosen, because not many answer the Call. The Way you are called is the Way that you have to go.

*Revelation 5: 9-10* "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10. And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

### **The Woeful Condition of Those Who Reject The Way God Calls Them**

*"For ye see your calling, brethren."* You are called through Christ Crucified. You are called through the Blood poured out. There is no hope, no way of escape from a living death in the Lake of Fire for those who reject this Call. We are all called – **every one of us is called**, and not according to our idea of 'a call'. We must see what God is trying to get across to us – we are **all** called to follow Christ in this life, and to follow Him into That Life. It is all on the same basis – *"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus"* [Hebrews 10:19].

There may be those who want to accept the Call of Christ Crucified another way – to escape the punishment for their sins, but not for their life. Well, for those who reject Christ Crucified, who is their Saviour, their Call, their Vocation, their Way of living and thinking, **there is no hope of Eternal Life with God.**

There is **no hope of the Spirit** for those also who reject God's assurance that they can live holy lives on this earth because of the poured out Blood of Christ on a Cross at Calvary. Many today say they are Christians but they reject a narrow walk. They reject in principle the restrictions – which, of course, are God's restrictions, not yours – and find them not acceptable. So there is no escape either for them.

*Hebrews 10:26-27*      *“For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins – the Call came that way. God calls you because Christ was crucified, and that is God's Call to you – But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries” – the adversaries to the Cross.*

They are enemies of the Cross of Christ, because they know the Way they were called and reject it. The world is full of such people, saying they are Christians, even saying they are Baptised with the Holy Ghost, and living worldly lives – in other words, they reject the Call: rejecting the Way it came, and the Call itself.

*vs28-29*      *“He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God...”*. Moses' law broken meant physical death, but the sorer punishment is Eternal.

Now it is not Moses, it is **God** we are up against. It is the Blood of Christ that is in question – “...hath trodden under foot the Son of God” – that is, rejecting the Way God calls you. ‘I was called in a more tolerant way’, they would say. In your lives, in your homes, in your habits, and in your daily living, is that so? Are you treading under foot the Son of God?

Christ Crucified presents us with nothing else. God's only way to attract us to answer His Call is **Christ Crucified**. What are we using to attract people? What are we using to attract ourselves to continue living a Christian life, or are we rather saying, ‘That's out; away with all these ties, commitments and accumulation of things I've built up in this life’ – and being free of it all ...“the abundance of the things which he possesses” [Luke 12:15].

Perhaps you tithe, but if you say that everything is God's, how is He to know that, if it's still yours? How can I reserve to myself the right to dispose of God's property? “... hath trodden under foot the Son of God...” One doesn't have to say, ‘I can't stand Christ Crucified’, but if one knows that is the Way we are called, then He is trodden under foot inasmuch as He is not sufficient for that one as an Answer from God.

In other words, they come to God as long as they can be provided for outside of Christ Crucified – and that is not the Way of the Cross. “...and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified...” – cut off from all other things; as you are when you are called by God.

Those who know God are in no hurry to accept God's Call. Those who don't know Him and want to appear religious are looking for some calling from God. They never find it and always end up doing what they think is God's Call because they haven't realised that **God is holy** and He can only call us His Way, which is a holy Way – Christ Crucified – and in going that Way everything else must go.

We must understand we are not at liberty to go like that and be like that and not listen to God's Call.

*"...who hath trodden under foot the Son of God and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing..."* – unable to live a spiritual life, with the excuse that it is not necessary to be so narrow minded; unable to resist the world's methods of preaching and advertisements and proclamations and witnessing.

All the time Christians are getting other Christians to become more worldly, but how can these things be mixed together? Christ Crucified is entirely separate; the Call of God very different. *"The blood of the covenant wherewith **he** was sanctified"* – that is me, not Christ!

Christ poured out His Blood to sanctify me, and make me so that God would expect of me only what God is used to. I am sanctified so that God can count on me to go Christ's Way. But if I go some other way and say that I am going to God that way, then I am counting 'the blood of the covenant, with which I was sanctified, an unholy thing' *"...and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"* The condemnation goes on...

If the Crucified Christ is despised; if the Principle of the Call is rejected, it follows that the Practice of it is also rejected, and won't mean a lot either. One would say, 'O yes, the Blood of Christ cleanses me from all sin' and then lives an unconsecrated, unsanctified, life. The Blood of the Covenant has made it impossible for a Christian to live other than a holy life, without rejecting his Christian faith.

Then there is the Power of the Spirit - *"...and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"* The Power of the Spirit is only available for crucifixion! How about that?! That is all He controlled Christ for, **to die** – and we are to die to the flesh, and we can only do that by the Spirit. *"...if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live"*, says Romans 8:13b.

To do despite to the Holy Spirit of Grace means to pour contempt on all the Holy Ghost's leadings and control.

**vs30-31** *"For we know Him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge His people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."* For you see the Way you have been called by God, to enter into His Family, The Church. The Way is Christ Crucified. We are called to a life which is Christ Crucified – the Way of the poured out Blood.

Our response to this Call from God would decide where we would be found when Christ comes to judge the world.

**Revelation 17: 12-14** *"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. 13. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. 14. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and **they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.**"*

These verses show the position and the place where **they who answered this Call** will be found. They were called at some time. They are 'the called', meaning, they answered the Call; *"called, and chosen"* – they answered the Call. Christ was God's Chosen One because He answered the Call. How could they call Him Chosen if He didn't come? God chose Him to come and die. If He hadn't come, how could He be Chosen? *"They that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful."* Blessed be God!

**There** they are, the Church of **God** – **The** Church, the Church of **the Living God**, the House of **God**, the House of **Christ**, the Church of **the Firstborn**, the **Body** of Christ, the **Temple** of God!

They entered upon the Call **gladly**. They didn't say, as in the parable of *Matthew 21:28-31*, 'Yes', and not go; they said, 'Yes', and they came and were faithful; **staying in the Calling**.

Their consciences were purged from dead works; they served the Living God. They were still serving Him; they had come back to earth with Him!

It is not really difficult to answer this Call. It is only a question of whether we believe that is the Way we are called. It is not difficult to step into the Vocation.

It is only a case of whether we believe that Christ Crucified **is** our Vocation – or whether we believe there is a more liberal kind of service. But this way, as we have seen, is not according to the Scriptures.

Let us not reject God's Call but make something of it in our every day lives!

## DAY 4

Daily Readings : *Isaiah 55:6-9; Hebrews 1:1-4; Isaiah 53:1-6; Revelation 21:22-27*

### SCRIPTURES FOR THE DAY'S STUDY

Jude 14-25

## Revelations from the Scriptures

## SERVING GOD BY HIS SPIRIT

*Revelation 2:7, 11,17,29; 3:6,13,22* "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

### Hearing What The Spirit Says To The Church

You **cannot** hear God or Christ speaking to you now unless you are responding only to the movings and the promptings of the Spirit of God.

*Revelation 2:7* says, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" - **no one else but He**. We must give our whole attention as the Church of God, The Church, the Church of the Living God, the Church of the Firstborn, the House of God, the House of Christ, the Body of Christ! As **that** Church we may only communicate to and we can only hear God **by His Spirit**.

"*It is the Spirit that quickeneth...*" Jesus said [*John 6:63*] - not our imaginations or our Christian desires; not our born-again longings - but it is **the Spirit** that quickens, meaning, He reveals Christ through God's Word.

No one else can do that; no one else has been committed to do that. The Spirit of God is commissioned for that Task. As the Church is commissioned to tell of the Gospel of Christ's Salvation, so the Holy Spirit is commissioned to show the Church how to tell it, by the simple revelation of Jesus Christ. "...*the flesh profiteth nothing*", the Lord added, because listening to and giving out the Word of God by our inclinations, according to our views and prejudices or slant can produce only **death**.

The flesh reveals only the failure of men, the sin of man, which is not God's business at all to reveal. The Spirit of God has come to reveal to the Church **the one thing** that the Church has to reveal - **Christ Crucified**, the Power and the Wisdom of God.

"*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*" The Spirit speaks to the Church, and the Church speaks to the world by that same Spirit. It is beneficial to the Church to hear what the Spirit says, because then the Church is granted the opportunity to take it in to their own lives, and to practice it, and to have it working inside them. Then when they give it out it is given out with conviction that that is what the Spirit is saying.

If your heart really is longing after God – as only your heart can; the mind cannot, as the mind takes in what God says and communicates the revelation to the heart which does all the longing, loving, and living – if your heart is reaching up to Jesus Christ on God’s Right Hand, then you will hear the Spirit of God speaking to you for God reveals **only** by His Spirit, by no other means and to no other creature. The Spirit of God speaks to a Church consisting of men, women, boys and girls. “*Ye are washed ... ye are sanctified ... ye are justified*” to this end: to hear what **the Spirit** says to the Church.

*Psalm 95:7-8* with *Hebrews 3:7-8* says, “*as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear His voice, Harden not your hearts...*” Understand that before the Spirit speaks to the Church, the flesh, the human nature in its members, will struggle with the Divine Nature to be rid of the Spirit’s Message.

**The instinctive reaction of the flesh is to harden the heart**, to close its hearing, receiving, organs to the Spirit speaking, for what the Spirit says is detrimental to the flesh. It tears the fleshly idols apart, causing them to topple – and that is **war** with the flesh. So this is a necessary instruction, “*Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye (that is, God’s people) will hear His voice, harden not your hearts...)*” “*For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh*” [Galatians 5:17].

The **heart** then, not the senses, is what the Holy Ghost aims to stir with His voice, to quicken with His language which God uses carefully to meet every need. It is not haphazard. He aims to touch the heart of the listener when He speaks with His Word. His objective is to reveal Christ Crucified – **Who He is, where He is** at this moment, and **what He looks like**. This is the Gospel, and within three general Answers generated by these Questions, the Holy Spirit covers the whole range of man’s sin and Salvation. The Church goes out with the Message as they hear it by the Spirit.

On that first day ever that the Church of God began to unleash the Power of God at Pentecost as recorded in *Acts 2*, the crowd of Jews hearing what Peter said, were pricked in their heart because the Spirit of God went for the heart. Peter by the Spirit wasn’t appealing to their intelligence. We cannot take God’s Word in with our intelligence, but Christians do try to. It must come into our heart, which is that part of the human being which tries to keep away from all outside contact. “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked*”, says *Jeremiah 17:9*. Instinctively a man covers his heart’s feelings up. So the Spirit goes for the heart, because God’s Word is the only Message that will heal a human heart, and deliver it from its filth and vileness and replace it with a new one!

That Word pricked them in their heart. There was nothing humanly intelligent about his Message. It purely stated, in short, **who** Christ was, **what** had happened to Him, **where** He is now, and **what** He looks like. They demanded, “*Men and brethren what shall we do?*” The Spirit could have added, ‘to get right with God’, for that is why they were stirred, moved and prompted by the Spirit of God to get right with God. Again the Word of the Holy Ghost came to them “*Repent...*” which is a Divine Word. Only God can ask me to repent, as only God can offer me the Truth, which is, that **Christ has already put my sins away** – so I have every reason to repent, and no excuse at all not to.

Humanly, no one has the right and no grounds to ask another man to repent, but by God’s Spirit Peter said, ‘Repent; that is what you must do. In other words, receive this Word as from God and start building your lives on this Word, leaving all other words out of your life as guidance for the Future’. “*Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*” What does that all mean? **Repent** means get ready to serve Christ by His Spirit. Many do not repent, and serve Christ in the flesh, through an organization, according to human rules and regulations.

We can only serve the Risen Christ, God manifest in the flesh, by His Spirit. If I speak by the Spirit and tell a man to repent, I will look upon him as one whose life will develop into being given over to Christ by His Spirit; one who will speak the same Message to others, who will come out of everything, shaking off the imaginary shackles and chains binding him in a prison that is not blocked! All is open to us if God has called us out.

There is no excuse to hesitate, or say I cannot do it, once we hear God's Message of Christ by His Spirit. God would never ask us to do anything if we could not do it. The Spirit speaks, but when Christians put obstacles in the way of themselves and others doing what they know God wants, then they deny that the Spirit has spoken the Truth and limit the Spirit of God. *"To day if ye will hear His voice, Harden not your hearts - ("As the Holy Ghost saith.").*

Remember, there is nothing that can excuse an avoidance of obedience to the Word of God by the Spirit of God - no obligations, no duties. Nothing should stop us taking God at His Word. *"To day if ye will hear His voice, Harden not your hearts."* It is the Spirit's whole attitude to instinctively warn us against our own flesh, which is the only force that attempts to harden a heart against the voice of the Spirit - not against another voice. There are many voices in this world, but when the Spirit speaks, the flesh tends to make excuses. We must recognise that, and say, 'No, **God** has spoken to me'.

*"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."* That was Christ's personal Word to each of those seven churches. Christ spoke to John, and John wrote to the churches, but it was the Spirit speaking that Message to every listening heart in each church. How else then will you serve **God**? It is God that the Church serves, the Church of the Living God; The Church. To God there is only that **one Church** - and we will see more and more the wonder of it, and what a wonderful thing it really is, even perhaps far removed from your anointed revelation so far! We are asked to come into **that Church**, and stay in it. What a lovely invitation!! How holy is our God!

How else will you know how to serve Him except by the Spirit? Only the Spirit can tell you what God wants. No one else can, and when you hear it by the Spirit, preached or spoken, or read, you know it is true - you know that is God telling you.

Jesus said, *"the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life"* [John 6:63]. These words come from God, and they have a Life-giving effect, if they are taken as from God. This is the battle against the flesh: You say, 'This is from God' and you insist upon it; the flesh says, 'Well, never mind; it's a bit hard'. That is how the flesh reacts.

The flesh of all human beings reacts like that, and the Church of God knows that, and does its daily task of crucifying it, squeezing it into a corner, until there is nothing left; *"till we all come in the unity of the faith"*, Ephesians 4:13. We have to come to that here; we cannot wait until Heaven's gates open for us. Only the Spirit will show us what pleases God.

**2 Corinthians 3:5b-6** *"Our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament.. - this is referring to God the Holy Spirit. It is **by the Spirit** that we serve the Word of God.*

We cannot serve the Word of God by the flesh, at least, not as God knows it! ... *not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life"* - the letter, the Word of God, without the Spirit **condemns** me to eternal punishment, or charges me with guilt. It offers me no hope, because it **cannot** give me an understanding, which the Spirit alone can give, of God's real **intent**, which is to save my soul from its own merited deserts, the Lake of Fire [Revelation 20:14, 15, 21:8]. This is the amazing Work of God; to save me, who really deserves eternal death, as, in the flesh, I do not desire God of myself.

This is the intent: the Spirit reveals by preaching the Word through the Church that God would save me – and God has done everything to save me! It is a living Word; a proclamation which shatters human reasoning, logic and ways of working. Listen to God then, with **all** your heart.

*Hebrews 3:12* puts it this way: “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief...” All unbelief is evil. If you hear something from God’s Word and you do something else, that shows you do not believe – it is evil. The Church of God is considered by God as looking for God’s Word by the Spirit at every moment, ready to do what that Word shows needs to be done. “Lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, **in departing from the living God.**” Only unbelief would try that impossible thing: depart from the Living God! The Scripture means that one would take one’s mind, heart, and life off Him, but we cannot escape from meeting the Living God some day – so it shows the foolishness of unbelief – the unbelief in God’s Word by God’s Spirit, revealing Jesus Christ.

If my heart is not longing to hear from God, for Him to speak, longing for the Spirit to move, to prompt, to quicken me by showing me Jesus Christ at God’s Right Hand, then I will **not** be listening to what the Spirit says to the churches. If I do not expect anything of a moving in my heart, any correction, any improvement in my life, then my ears are already shut to the Spirit speaking. I may take in the Word with human understanding, but it will kill eventually. It will not have served its purpose to save. God is no respecter of persons. It is God’s Word that we must all seek; we cannot condition it. By God’s Spirit every person is subject to God’s Word, and must respond in that way spiritually, because the Spirit reveals only what is of God – one can be sure of that!

### **The Command Before the Promise**

The **first three** of the seven churches to whom Christ sent The Revelation by John, were having difficulty in overcoming a specific sin in their individual and/or their collective living, because they were not hearing what the Spirit was saying to the churches. Therefore, **the Command** to them to “*hear what the Spirit saith to the churches*” was given by Christ **before** He gave the Promises to those who would overcome the sin.

The sin, or fault, or error that Christ found fault with, was the result of their not listening to the Word preached by the Holy Ghost. They were found doing what modern Christians would think were marvellously spiritual things. They were probably churches with a good following and much spiritual activity, as we would say. They were quite nice churches as such, but Christ found these things wrong in them, and so He said, “*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*” Then He said, “*To him that overcometh...*”

The things we do in the flesh which are sinful, the things we do to please our own convenience and life that are not of God – because the Church of God doesn’t do those things – may be simply the result of our not listening to the teaching and preaching as from the Spirit of God. It could transform your life if you said, ‘From now on what I hear will not be the person speaking but the Holy Ghost speaking’.

Christians can try hard to be righteous, and genuinely and sincerely wish to be as they read of how Christ is, but their battle is lost already – their trying is doomed to defeat and utter failure by their not listening to God’s Word by the Spirit; not taking the Message as from **God**. When we hear **God** speak, we must not allow any margin of tolerance in the matter; the freedom to move either way – for that is not taking it from the Spirit of God. When God speaks, it must be so. It is so in the Place, Heaven, where the language and the Life of The Church come from, and where The Church is going!

## Overcomers Hear The Spirit

The **four remaining** churches to whom Christ sent His Message of The Revelation by John received their **Promise** first. They found it impossible to hear what the Spirit said, because something prevented their hearts from being stirred, from reaching towards God, towards Christ. So the Word came **first** to overcome. Their trouble was to overcome by the Word they had already heard.

Some of us may be like that - not utilizing the Word to overcome what we should in our lives. Then things pile up, and Christians get to the place where they listen to God humanly, and not by the Spirit. What the Spirit is saying cannot then be distinguished, as the thing to be sorted out is still there. Then the heart, instead of being light and free is like lead - for the Spirit gives the Word and knowledge is being piled up, revelation upon revelation, yet without the freedom from the flesh which the Spirit gives.

So these churches were different from the first three. Christ said to them, *"To him that overcometh ... will I..."*, and then added, *"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith"*. In other words, after you have overcome, then you will hear what the Spirit says. Until we overcome what we should have already overcome, we will not be hearing the Word by the Holy Spirit. This is a common trouble.

Both are common troubles in churches. It is not so much a question of honesty, or sincerity - just plain obedience or disobedience. If this is the resolve on coming to Christ: 'I am going to obey whenever I hear God's Word', then you have the most powerful Christian born again into that world by the Spirit of God. 'I hear Your Word, Lord; that is for me. I do not debate it with my flesh, or discuss its possibilities; it is all one. It must be done' - but how few Christians are as simple as that?

## We Must All Speak the Same Thing

Discussions do not produce anything except debate, reservations, arguments, and the discovery that many people think differently from you. That is no help. We are to endeavour to *"keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"* [Ephesians 4:3]. It is the Unity of **the Spirit**; not our idea of unity. It is what the Spirit says that we must agree on, **then** we are in Unity. It is when each one agrees with that knowledge that that is what the same Spirit said, then we are perfectly joined together in the Church of the Living God - members of the one Body; *"members in particular"* [1 Corinthians 12:27].

We need to destroy these obstacles, even as we meditate on the Word of God now. And Jesus also said, 'How can you take the mote out of someone else's eye when you are almost blind yourself?' He is so simple in what He says! You need good eyesight to search out that little speck without hurting the person's eye! If you are half-blind how can you do that? That is what He meant. So we need to have our vision cleared by the Spirit of God before we can see clearly to help others clear their vision inside the Church. *"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."*

*Hebrews 3:13 "But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day..."* That is, for as long as the Holy Ghost is here in this world according to God's Plan to speak to you, that is called *"Today"* - before the Church of God is taken, caught, snatched away, out this world by Christ.

**Now** is the best time to listen to the Spirit. Now is the time to let **Him** do the work. If our ears were deaf to the Spirit so that we could not overcome, now is the time to listen, that we may overcome.

**2 Corinthians 6:1-2** *"We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. 2. (For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time."*

Accepted By God. If our lives are not rid of those things that God's Word has already pointed out – carnality, worldly thinking, selfishness, criticism, fault finding, following our own will – then we must apply God's Word **now**, without fear or favour. And don't favour your flesh! Stick the Word of God (as a two-edged sword) into it today! Our flesh is our enemy. It will pursue you until you go to be with Christ... But praise God that we have every reason to easily overcome as we recognise the means.

*"To day". "Behold, now is the accepted time" – "behold"; **take a good look at it**.* Consider it; let it sink into your heart – *"behold, now is the day of salvation."* **NOW**. God does not guarantee Time, only Eternity. God is Eternal. He only tells you what is going to happen from time to time, in Time, but His Plan for you is an Eternal Plan – living in God's Home eternally.

*"Exhort one another daily while it is called To day."* *"Exhort"* means to call, invite one another, to come near to, close to Christ. Are we doing that lovely work amongst each other? Or are we enticing them the other way? Christ wouldn't have you to be anywhere else, I assure you! We do it by the same Word, by the same Spirit. Exhortation is not a lecture, and it is not 'putting me right' either. You should be put right by the Spirit of God. This Statement *"Exhort one another daily while it is called To day"* is advice to those who are seeking to escape the danger of having an evil heart of unbelief, or being hardened against God's Word coming by God's Spirit. It is not to pull you out of the danger – you have the Spirit and the Word to do that – but it is to stay out of such predicaments. *"To be carnally minded is death"* (Romans 8:6) – that is **Eternal Death** – and the carnal mind will never accept the advice, direction, or command of the Spirit of God. We must think these things out.

### Listening to the Spirit

When we hear a Word preached, we must take it from God, and not say, 'That's something new', or 'It's not as narrow as that'. It is just as narrow, and it could be narrower if God goes on revealing Himself!! Jesus said, *"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden..."* [Matthew 11:28-29].

One could well use those words in the churches. We must have that spiritual acumen given by the Spirit of God to see that we keep calling and inviting each other to stay clear of these dangers of becoming deaf to the Spirit of God. *"...and I will give you rest."* The Rest of being quite open to God's Spirit, because when the Spirit of God speaks it is not uncomfortable. He is **the Comforter**! And it is not unhelpful; it is only to help us, that the Spirit speaks. When we hear a Message that tells us to repent, we should be so thankful to the Lord for that lovely Word.

It is a Call to come out of everything, regardless, and to come to Christ, to take Him into the life, with the greatest enthusiasm. It is an enthusiastic Word from Christ, an enthusiastic Person. *"I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."*

*"Exhort one another **daily**"* – meaning, without ceasing, because of the uncertainty of **time**. Some think it pompous to say, 'I'll see you tomorrow, if God wills', but I can only see you tomorrow if God wills! Do we consider whether God might stop it or not? It is only if Christ tarrys that we will see that person healed, or that one delivered, and the Church added to...

*"But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."* Stephen [the deacon] said to the Jews, *"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears..."* [Acts 7:51]. He had passed through the religious phases, and was now an all out Christian. Christ was his reason for living and speaking. He wasn't attacking, lecturing or reviling them but speaking purely for their good by the Spirit of God, *"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost:..."*.

Then he added this terrible thing from God, *"...as your fathers did, so do ye"*. This is the **religious characteristic**, to carry on the traditions handed down. Religious people are the fiercest supporters of tradition, not willing to conceive that the Spirit of God has something else for them; some correction, some new thing to give man, to reveal the Christ, so long covered over with religious habits, customs and ritual.

Yes, and we must guard against it in our churches! The Spirit of God in you must be full of that energetic hostility to your own religious self; its traditions: the habit of coming every Sunday and listening in a certain attitude. *"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears..."* - heart and ears go together - the heart first then the hearing. *"ye do always resist the Holy Ghost"* - not Stephen, or Peter, or Christ, but the Holy Spirit. He was speaking to them by His Word. By the Holy Ghost any one can speak God's Word. **If you are filled with the Holy Ghost you need not think that you need qualifications or training.** The Holy Ghost is training you because only He knows what God wants to say. Salvation is an amazing Gift from God.

*"As your fathers did, so do ye"* - no change; not willing to listen; not willing to change. Don't we be like that, and it be said of us. It sounds hard, and how many churches would take such a statement from a visiting speaker, or even the Pastor - *"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost"??* It is worth mentioning, because it says, *"lest ye be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin"* (Hebrews 3:13). **Sin always makes me feel that all is well**; that we are proceeding along quite safely... This ceaseless calling by the Holy Spirit is **vital** in a local church, lest the members close their hearts and ears to His voice, His language, His Word...

**1 Corinthians 12:28** *"God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers"* - some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers, according to the need, the Age, and the guiding and counselling of the Church. But they had to fulfil this one general desire of God's: to keep on speaking by the Spirit, and to give the Spirit plenty of room in their life's ministry and preaching, so that those receivers of the Word would be conscious always that the Spirit is there - a 'What will He say to me today?' Attitude.

When Samuel visited the people [1 Samuel 16:4] they trembled in fear, and asked him, 'Have you come peaceably?' meaning, 'Is there anything wrong with us that you have come from God?' That is a good sign! They weren't guilty, but their reaction shows that they knew that in this man the Spirit of God was coming to them. That was that Age, but in this Age the Spirit of God has been poured out upon all flesh - both on the listeners and on the speakers, so we are all conscious when the Spirit of God is speaking. It can become a dreadful, dangerous habit if we do not listen to what the Spirit says, when it is not taken from God. That is what 'hardening' is. We ought to have this moving in our local churches; the sensitivity to **the voice of the Spirit**, to **the language of the Spirit**, to **the Word of the Spirit**, to enable us to overcome Satan's constant pressure. He has constant success with those who do not listen to the Spirit, by persuading and deceiving their hearts into believing that they are in the right place, the right position to be serving God. Oh the Christians who are deceived, not listening to the Spirit and immune to advice and direction as their hearts are not open!

Stephen's word was good – “stiffnecked”; unable to bend the neck, and the heart says, ‘I’ll think about it’. The heart can be hardened, and Satan pushes his advantage home with a heart that is not listening to the Spirit. Christians can genuinely believe they serve God, and when you question them, they know by the Spirit of God they need something more; some more guidance, or correction. By the Spirit of God alone can I respond to that – there is no other Way. We must remember that.

“Exhort one another...” and **v12**, “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God ... while it is called To day”. It is really an immediate decision.

**2 Chronicles 25:2** “And he [**Amaziah**, king of Judah] did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart”. He was doing the right things because he knew the right things to do, but he was not serving God by the Spirit. His heart was not open to the Spirit’s Call, so he went that way. There is always that weakness in such a righteous life – and down went Amaziah in ruin at the end, because he was not acting with a perfect heart. Now a more modern example in the Church –

**Acts 5:1-11** The story of **Ananias** and **Sapphira**, born again Christians, possibly baptised in the Holy Ghost, who, together with 3000 others, gladly received Peter’s Word and repented. They were all so moved that God should push His Kingdom on, they were ready for anything, and to them their possessions were theirs only to use for God. The need arose, and they gave their possessions to God in cash or in kind. So Ananias and Sapphira brought something, but Peter said, “Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?”

This is what happens when we keep back something – in this case the price of part of the land. In every case, generally, it is part of your life. Amaziah did “that which was right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart”. He was the same as Ananias and Sapphira. They were doing the right things; being in a church which worldly folk would not join because of its separated, holy outlook, and yet their hearts were not right. They had not listened to the Spirit at the point preached to them by someone: ‘Abandon your covetousness; Finish with your compromise’. Probably they thought that wasn’t referring to them, so they would not listen to the Spirit speaking, and down they went.

**Balaam**, also a servant of God, would not listen, and the LORD even used a dumb ass to speak to him. What degradation Balaam had fallen to, for a dumb ass to utter the words of God. Some make light of this, but it has a terrible significance, which Balaam knew when he realised he hadn’t seen the Angel of the LORD but the ass had. He was completely blind to the Spirit of God, and deaf to the Spirit’s accent [**Numbers 22:22-35**].

“He that hath an ear let him hear **what** the Spirit saith unto the churches.” You can serve God by His Spirit in this Age **only** as you continue to **see Christ as He is through the eyes of that same Spirit!** There is no other way to avoid becoming stiff-necked or used to listening to God’s Word and feeling free to do what you like. It is a deadly danger – a creeping paralysis.

We **must** keep our gaze on Christ, obviously by the Spirit, and see how Jesus Christ is. All the time, by the Spirit, God is revealing the Perfection of His Son; the Humility, the Meekness and Lowliness, all pointing to the fact that **I** can be humble, meek and lowly. It is positive preaching from the Spirit as He shows us **the Humility of Christ**. Then we may realise we are proud and react spiritually, and say ‘Lord, I **will** be hum-ble, because You’ve told me’. Seeing the Humility of Christ operating, we realise its reality and its feasibility in our life to be humble like that matchless Son of God. It is a stunning thought to the flesh, even to the Christian mind that I can walk humbly with God.

The Spirit convinces us that we **can** be humble, and go out and do it with the Spirit of God within. He energises our thinking faculties to accept it as a truth in our lives now, as He shows us Christ.

**1 Corinthians 12:1-3** *“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant”*  
This is the first thing to see here. **The Church of God has no business to be ignorant if it is of God.** It has all the knowledge of Eternity at its disposal, right in its very life, by the Spirit.

**v2** *“Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.”*  
Paul said “*dumb*” to show that the characteristic of **God who is alive** is that He speaks. But idols, being dumb, cannot tell you what to do.

**v3** *“Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.”*  
Not ‘Jesus is Lord’, but “*Jesus is the Lord*”. The Spirit of God sees Jesus as a Person who everyone without exception in the Church ought to love with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength – the very opposite of **accursed**.

**Accursed** means banned – from your sight and hearing, from your life itself; cut off. If I love someone with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, it would be just the opposite. I would say, ‘Don’t go away’. That is what the Church is presented as saying to Christ in the **Song of Songs**: ‘Where is my Beloved? I can’t live without Him. I’m sorry I wasn’t quick enough to catch Him before He went...’ [*Song of Songs 5:2-8*].

The dreadful conclusion is that if we do exclude Christ from our daily life, it would appear that He is being called accursed. If He is excluded from our table, private devotions, private thinking; our normal natural life – the chores, work and busy times, and relaxation, and all that is ‘me’, it simply means that: He is accursed; He is excluded from anywhere you are. This is the Holy Spirit’s energetic, truthful language, to galvanise us into activities approved of by God.

Jesus Christ expects this love. “*Simon*”, He said, “*lovest thou Me more than these?*” [*John 21:15*]. He expected Simon to love Him; He encouraged him to know that he was expected to love Him, and that Simon Peter could go on loving Him in the face of his abysmal failure, his tragic rejection of his own claim to not deny Christ. It stabilised his heart, established his love, for in his weak, immature, boastful, fleshly way, he did love Christ. But when he was filled with the Holy Ghost, he faced his most deadly opponents, the Jewish Council. How they hunted Peter and would have executed him then. He had said to these Christ-haters, “*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*” [*Acts 4:12*].

Perhaps Peter remembered when he was in arrears with his love, when he was asked “*lovest thou Me more than these?*” ... It is not enough to say you love your family and your church – that’s a different love. You cannot love anyone as you love **Christ**. Some do try to share Christ with others, and make a mess of it, as it satisfies neither the people nor Christ. He expects us to love Him more than we love anyone else. In a rather defensive way, Peter said, ‘You know that I love You, Lord’, but Christ still said “*feed My lambs*”. We can only take it that Christ expected Peter to continue loving Him and to love Him **more than ever**, and more than anyone else, not giving in to the hurt and self-accusation he must have experienced.

What about us? Only when we love Him more can we feed His lambs and be in a position to have what God wants us to have: listening to the Holy Spirit, never minding the flesh. Then we will be able to tell others and we will notice a different tone about God’s Word. It is devastatingly enthusiastic.

It sweeps us out of sin and says, 'There you are, do that' or 'There you are, you are that'. "*Ye are the temple of the living God*" – don't you know that? "*which temple ye are*" – therefore live as that temple!

Speaking of Christ by the Spirit of God then, would be simply the Church's **Declaration** to the world of how much Jesus Christ **means** to them, not of how many times He has got us out of a spot – that simply reveals Him to be tremendously gracious. But the Church, by the energy of the Holy Ghost, **witnesses unto Him** – that is its job. Every member should be speaking of Christ by the Holy Spirit.

*Acts 1:7-8* "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me." This is the policy of the Church. It becomes unaware of other things; aware only of **Christ**. It is sensitive to the movings of the Spirit – 'Who is Christ?', 'Where is He?', 'What does He look like?' This absorbing passion; this preoccupation takes the Church through this life – not living useless lives, but **very useful** lives, bringing in the power of Eternity into every day living.

### The Church Calls Jesus Christ Her Beloved

To the Church then, by the Spirit of God, Jesus Christ is "*my Beloved*". That's in *Song of Songs* 2:16, 6:3 and 7:10. "*My Beloved is mine*"; that is the Church speaking of Christ. In fact, in the *Song of Songs*, the Church is presented as finding **no other description** to express adequately her heart's passion for Christ than "*my Beloved*" – used over thirty times. We should say it out aloud, "*my Beloved*" – I'm saying that to You, Lord Jesus'. Let us have such a passion for Christ that will keep us being excited about Him!

**The Church of God**, therefore, is so full of the Spirit, because of the way they speak of Christ, and so full of passion for Christ, that those to whom they preach by that same Spirit, refer to Christ to His Church as "*thy Beloved*", even though they do not care to know Him [*Song of Songs* 5:9 & 6:1]. They are caught by the same disease of Love, the same passion, so they say, 'What is your Beloved greater than someone else's beloved?' They find that the Church is really preoccupied with this Person they call "*my Beloved*". They get tired of this obsession but nevertheless they use the same phrase as it is so pressed on their hearts. **This is the Witness of the Holy Ghost** – "*witnesses unto Me*", Jesus said, *Acts 1:8* – 'where I am to be found; what I look like'.

"*My Beloved*", says the Church, so they say, 'Who is your Beloved, this wonderful Person more than another beloved to you?' They see it is a matter of Love; a Love affair. They hear the Church speak in nothing but loving terms of this Beloved and it bewilders them. 'What is this preoccupation? We don't find this Beloved like you, but we know He is **your** Beloved; you can't live without Him, so you're rushing about asking where He is; 'Have you seen Him? I want Him, my Beloved'. If we read the *Song of Solomon* like that we would get a good idea of what the Church should be...

*Song of Songs 6:1* "Whither is thy Beloved gone, O thou fairest among women?" The world admits that the Church is beautified by Christ – the beauty of holiness; the loveliness of God. God is a lovely Person; and those marks accentuate the loveliness that Christ is to the Church. Is this our witness? "*Unto you therefore which believe He is precious*" [1 Peter 2:7] – believing by the Spirit of God.

That is the New Testament way of saying, "*my Beloved*" – "*He is precious*" which means He is **rare** – there's no one else like **Him**. You've looked, and found He is unrepeatable to the Church. Peter was caught, hearing the words, "*Lovest thou Me more than these?*", so he fed Christ's lambs. You can only work for God when you are captivated by God.

(afternoon session)

## Jesus Christ Alone Captivates The Church

The Church of God speaking by the Spirit of God alone, and no one else, declares its **passion** – and that’s not an exaggerated word. We cannot just like Jesus Christ – one either loves Him or must hate Him. He is Someone we cannot be indifferent to. So full of the Spirit is The Church of God, so full of their passion for Christ that the Scriptures present those to whom they witness as using the same language to describe Christ: “*thy Beloved.*”

**Song of Songs 5:9**      “*What is thy beloved more than another beloved?*” We see two things from this: **One**, that they see the preoccupation of the Church. It seems very limited, “*my beloved; my beloved*”, but it is limited to the Person. ‘Your Message is **Jesus Christ**’, says the Holy Spirit to the churches.

Then **Two**, they find not only that the Church is preoccupied with Christ, but they find that the Church is quite clear of the rarity of Jesus Christ – that there is **no one** like Him; absolutely none. There is no question of trying to put other people in second place. The Church’s Vision is Jesus Christ, just as God’s Call to the Church is Christ Crucified.

**Song of Songs 6:1**      “*Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women?*” They find the Church really affected if she feels at all out of touch with her Lord. That is what can happen to us, but regrettably, when Christians don’t go much by the Spirit, they think it’s just ‘one of those things’ when things go wrong and are not running smoothly. It isn’t that at all. Those things don’t affect us when Christ is our Beloved – but they do when we have not been in touch with our Lord.

**1 Peter 2:7**      “*Unto you therefore which believe He is precious.*” He is precious, **rare** – the only One of His kind of Person. The Spirit of God shows you that there is no one else to include in that. It is quite simple really! **The Spirit’s Message to the churches is to be taken.** **Rare** also means limitless in His great attraction. No value can be placed on what He means to the Church. It cannot be stated in definite terms. The Church would go on and on when given the chance to talk about their Beloved.

**Song of Songs 5:16**      “*Yea, He is altogether lovely.*” The Church tries to express her feelings. “*Altogether lovely*”; completely satisfying to His Church, through the eyes of the Holy Ghost. If He is not satisfying to any member of the Church, He is not being seen through the eyes of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not speaking to him, but some other spirit. God’s Holy Spirit shows us how altogether lovely Christ is. It is the privilege of the Church to see that by the Spirit; He doesn’t show that to anyone else.

Only the Church says, “*He is altogether lovely*”. So in buildings called ‘churches’ there is death not life; the people are not seeing what the Spirit would show them, if He was there at all – if He was let in. Only where the Spirit is can a church see that Christ is “*altogether lovely*”, and **that** is the only reason for their enthusiasm, their joy and their real sense of well being and enjoyment. No one who is speaking by the Spirit of God will call Jesus Christ anything else but “*altogether lovely*” and “*my Beloved*”. When we see Him face to Face we shall discover how right the Spirit of God was to show Him to us thus!

We know He is right, for even here in our spirit, heart, soul and mind can we be much moved, and the body feel His healing touch, but the physical manifestation to our physical life as we arrive there will be **really wonderful!** The body generally does what our spirit does, but it has to be controlled. So often souls start well and are really happy to see Christ by the Spirit, but then they allow the flesh to take over.

When we get a new body we will not have that to worry about! With a new body you will be complete, with nothing to inhibit your praise and your sheer thrill at what you see brought face to face. That is why the Spirit is the Earnest of what is to come; the Foretaste. He shows you what there is to look forward to. We shall realise then that there is **no beauty** in the entire universe, including the glories of Heaven, of God's Home in Eternity, which could make **Him**, our Beloved, more attractive to us.

This is the wonder of the revelation of the Spirit, that when you see Jesus you will not think that Heaven's glories enhance His beauty. In fact, you may not notice them so much when you see Him! It says, "*When we - that is, the Church - shall see Him, there is no [other] beauty that we should desire Him*", Isaiah 53:2. There is nothing, it means, that would make them say, 'Oh if only He had that it would enhance those scars, or the kindness of His eyes'. Nothing of the sort!

That beautiful City with the glories of God's Throne, the wonders of those special seraphim, all that will be there, and the marvellous beauty of the foundations. It will be so unspeakably lovely, that beyond that, really in spite of that, there is no beauty that you would desire of Christ - a plain Man standing there with all those marks - Hallelujah! "*There is no beauty*" - take it exactly as God says it; that is taking it from the Spirit - which we feel could make Him more attractive to us, the Church. It is to the Church that the Holy Spirit is speaking.

*Song of Songs 2:8*      "*The voice of my Beloved! behold He cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.*"

By the Spirit of God, the Church declares it is longing to hear the sound of **that** Voice. That is her attitude. She **really wants** to hear the sound of that Voice! Jesus Christ recognised that too, saying, "*My sheep - that is His Church - hear My voice, that is our Beloved - and I know them, and they follow Me.*" The result: "*they follow Me*" [John 10:27]. He knows who loves Him like that, because the Spirit knows who loves Him like that, and who is responding to His speaking to the churches - they don't hear another voice; "*a stranger will they not follow*", v5. They really won't! The Church of the Living God, the Church which is His Body, does not have to decide, it knows which Voice it wants to hear and it follows that - "*and I know them, and they follow Me*". The members of the Church of God in this Age, speaking by the Spirit, comfort one another with the constant reminder that they will hear the voice of their **Beloved**, one day, suddenly. But of course we don't know when...

**1 Thessalonians 4:16-18** "*For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout.*" If you read that by the Spirit you will see how the Message mounts in tension - a lovely tension - and the first thing that comes out, the first **signal** is the personal Shout of the Church's Beloved! You can see how those who are seeing Him by the Spirit will be translated and resurrected by that same Spirit, because it is the Spirit's desire for the Church, the Body, and the Head to be united. That is what He is here for. Speaking by the Spirit of God, the Church of God proclaims everywhere with the Energy of that same Spirit that they are longing for their **Beloved** to come for them.

**Revelation 22:17** "*The Spirit and the bride say, Come.*" They say it, and in saying it directly to the Lord, their Beloved, they tell everyone else the same thing.

**Song of Songs 2:8** "*The voice of my Beloved! behold He cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.*" This describes the terrific energy, the great eagerness with which Christ will descend for His Church. He is God and can travel fast. It was when He was dragged up that hill and went to die at Calvary, after some thousands of years, that He went slowly - but when His Love is let loose and He is free to do it, He proceeds fast! "*In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye*", He will come for His Church [1 Corinthians 15:52].

**Hebrews 9:28**

*"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many."*

The Church of God speaking by the Spirit of God does not need Him to be offered again. They are well provided for by the Offering of Himself **once** for their sins. They do not have to go back over the old ground, they have finished with that. They only want to live with Him!! This truly is the Church's attitude. As soon as you are born again, if you are being led on by the Spirit, one of the first things you will think about is the Return of Christ for His Church. You will ask, 'When is Jesus Christ coming?'

When the Spirit is moving and you do get a good Vision of what God looks like and you see your Beloved by faith, the obvious reaction is, "Come"; "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." It is by the Spirit only. People try to be Christians without the Spirit of God. "...and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation" [Hebrews 9:28].

**2 Corinthians 5:1-9**

*"v4. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life".*

The longing to see their **Beloved** is expressed with groanings within the Church. They don't want to be rid of the body; they want to be **with Him**. That is how Paul by the Spirit puts it in *Romans 8:26*, "with groanings which cannot be uttered" – stirred up and produced by the Spirit of God. We don't go about groaning and complaining publicly that Christ hasn't come, but within us there is that deep groaning for Him to come – not to relieve me from troubles, but to see Him as the Spirit has promised. Coming from deep within them, it is heard only by God, for the Spirit is identifying to Him those filled with this deep longing to see His Son. 'Those are the people.' God sees the groans by the Spirit.

**Romans 8:27**

*"And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."*

He knows to whom the Spirit is referring. So great is the Church's passion for their Beloved that they know by His Spirit that they are always in direct touch with **Him** – whether here by that same Spirit, or there by physical sight. That is how they are kept going. So Paul said:

**2 Corinthians 5:6-8**

*"Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord..."*

That was the factor that controlled their lives. Being here, "at home in the body", they were "absent from the Lord" and being there meant they would be "present with the Lord", v8. And that was their incentive for their life – the Lord.

v9

*"Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him."*

This is the Church's life; to live Christ. Its ministry is to preach Christ Crucified, that same Life.

### **The Sole Master of The Church**

**1 Corinthians 12:3**

*"Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost."*

By the Holy Spirit **only** every member of the Church can say truthfully to everyone inside and outside the Church that "Jesus is the Lord" – the sole Master of my life. So we can tell from these readings whether those things are true for us; whether we are spiritually alive and walking by that Spirit.

Jesus Christ is the sole Master of the Church's Destiny, exercising alone that Authority over the spirit, soul and body of every member. Again, if you are listening to what "*the Spirit saith unto the churches*" you will accept without argument, and as a matter of course almost, that what you hear is necessary for your obedience – **forever**.

We cannot subscribe to it for Heaven and not here! We have to start here! **First** the earthly, **then** the spiritual. We are to start here calling Him "*the Lord*", and then we will continue to do so there.

*Hebrews 12:1-2, 3-11, 12-24, 25-29* These passages give an understanding of what we are looking at here. The Church will succeed in its Christian life and ministry by "*Looking unto Jesus*", *v2*, as **the Lord**. Those are the two parts of the Church: its **life** and its **work**.

*Hebrews 12:3-11* *"v5. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, not faint when thou art rebuked of Him... vs12-13 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed... v25. See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh..."*

The Church has its Divine Life and its Divine Work. It has its Spirit-filled Life and its Spirit-filled Ministry. The one is related to the other by the same Spirit: by the same Characteristics of the Lord from Heaven, by that same Nature granted from that One God and Father of all. He is over all and in all, through all and in us all – that is The Church, successful in its Life and Ministry.

The expression 'Nothing succeeds like success' is true spiritually too, because if we always obey the Word of God by the Spirit we might almost become intoxicated with the ease of our success! There is no other definition of what obedience is than just to obey exactly what God tells you.

*Titus 2:11-15* *"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men..."*

Knowing and confessing by the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the sole Master of their lives, the Church is able to triumph over all evil in this present wicked world, with the object of meeting Him when He comes.

*v12* *"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."*

"Soberly" – **watchfully**; "righteously" – **obediently**; and "godly" – **victoriously** in this present world. If we are to be taught that, obviously we can do it, by knowing that Jesus is the Lord, the sole Master of our life.

*Philippians 3:16-21* *"Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."*

It is the same rule of the One Lord. We do not have different rules for every member of the Church. There is only one Master, even Christ, and He is the Owner. The Lord **owns** the Church as well as runs it. So we have a double pleasure, double joy that the One who is our Beloved owns us and also controls us. Fancy Him taking all that interest! Many people buy things then don't have much interest in them after that, but He has bought us with a Price, and we are very much His interest and His preoccupation. He is yours – your "*Beloved*", and so we are able to **walk by the same rule and mind the same thing**.

v19           *"Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)"*

The summary of their crime is that they mind earthly things. They do not mind your Lord, your Beloved. They are obviously within the Christian fold in some sort of manner...

v20           *"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."*

The Church is able to live here according to **His** instructions and advice, which are only issued directly from His Father's Throne, where He is seated, and conveyed by the Holy Spirit. This Word has been written down, but the way the Spirit illuminates it to you is entirely under the direction of the Head of the Church, and everything is done in complete co-operation between the Two. You hear only what Christ wants you to hear. Be sure of that by the Spirit! It is **so important** to listen to the Holy Spirit, and do what Christ wants us to do by doing it by the Spirit. How else will we get to know from Christ what He wants when our real contact with Him is only by the Spirit?

My own understanding will never give me it, neither will years at a Bible College, or my preaching! **Each time** I must receive from the Holy Spirit what Christ wants. *"Our conversation is in heaven"* means that the Church recognises that its community life has its source in Heaven. All its communal living, all its directive to succeed in doing what Christ wants comes from there, right from God's Throne, on His Right Hand, immediately to each heart and life by this same Spirit. So obviously no one can say that Jesus is the Lord, meaning, 'He runs my life', except by the Holy Ghost.

**Hebrews 2:5-10**           *"vs9-10 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10. For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."*

Because the Church knows by the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Lord, it is confident that evil and wickedness of any sort can never succeed, indeed, it is **doomed**. We could be in danger of either ignoring evil and wickedness, saying it is none of our concern, **or allowing for it** just as the world does. The world is used to disease, sickness, crime, wickedness and sin, but we do not need to be, and if we read the Word of God, we will see that the Church of the Living God does not allow for it. We don't need to if we are ruled by the Word of God. We would see that the Church of God, The Church, the Church of the Living God, doesn't do that.

This is the story of Christ, as it were; what He appears to be and what He really is, once you see Him by the Spirit. Though we see chaos, we see Jesus, controlling the chaos. He is in control of all that is going on, and at the said time He will put an end to it all.

vs8-9           *"Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. ... But now we see not yet all things put under him. 9. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man."*

So God is working. Everything is in **His** hands. We will know that by the Spirit of God, because There our very Master, the Controller of our life, is sitting, doing the work! We are not to take refuge in indifference, or in ignoring, or bypassing what is going on around us, but to take it to God, and refer to the Controller of our life, the Controller of our Destiny.

Any matter we are concerned about should be taken to our God who answers prayer, and deliverance will come. The Master of the Universe is the Person we would actually be looking to to do it. Through Him we refer the matter to God; no one less – not to angels – and the Spirit takes the prayer straight up to Him, as soon as we are moved by Him to pray.

**1 John 3:2-3**

*“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.”*

And so, because of the Spirit of God, the Church of God **knows** that Jesus is the Lord. “The Lord” means completely in control of all other authorities. The Church is convinced of that. It is so sure that it refers matters of national and international importance to God through this Lord – **the** Lord – and gets things done. Because He is the Lord in control, the Church is able to live here as He lives There, because they are confident of His complete and undisputed Control of everything. There is no force, creature, influence, person – nothing – that can actually hinder Christ working when you ask God for a thing to be done.

Jesus said, “*If you ask anything in My name, I will do it*” [John 14:14] and He said, “*Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God*” [Matthew 5:8]. Purity is not so much doing right things, as **doing the things that Christ would have you do**. It is a very pure vision, a very pure heart that will have no doubts, because doubt is a sin. Doubt is evil; it is vile, filthy and impure! It is a pure heart that will ask God in Jesus’ Name, and have no doubt in it that God will listen. Purity is having no doubts that Christ will do what He said He will do if you ask in His Name.

“*Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God*” – because, if you believe Him, it means that you trust Him to be pure, of a perfect integrity, and you tell everybody that. The Church all over the world can ask God in Christ’s Name and expect a reply – so He must be of an absolute integrity. The heart that believes that also has that absolute integrity, and that is what is written of Abraham. He “*believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness*” [Romans 4:3]. He was reckoned by God to have the same righteousness and the same integrity as Christ, because he believed God to have that integrity. But we will be damned if we doubt, because that means we do not trust God to have that spotless integrity.

**2 Peter 3:9-13**

*“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” – that is, to come to Christ.*

**Tremendous forces are going to be let loose** by this Lord; all under His control – terrific confusion on the earth and in the demon world, but complete sanity and control in Heaven where your Master sits!

**v13**

*“Nevertheless we, according to His promise,” – nevertheless what? – in spite of all this terror and horror and the disintegration of the very elements of the Universe, “Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” **This is the Word to the Church** – this same Lord.*

So the Church, speaking by the Spirit of God, and saying ‘Jesus is my Beloved’, and ‘Jesus is the Lord’, is able to concentrate on an Eternal Future. They know that whatever happens before that Future arrives – like the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, or the disintegration of everything – the same humble, lovely, holy God, even Jesus Christ, shown to them by the Holy Ghost, He, the same Jesus, will be **There!**

## DAY 5

**Daily Readings** : *Isaiah 55:6-9; Hebrews 1:1-4; Isaiah 53:1-6; Revelation 21:22-27*

### SCRIPTURES FOR THE DAY'S STUDY

1 Timothy 3:14-16	1 John 2:2-18
Ephesians 1:15-23	Romans 6:1-6
John 1:1-18	Hebrews 4:11-13
2 Timothy 3:14-17	Matthew 7:21-27
2 Peter 1:15-21	Hebrews 11:1-6
1 John 1:1-10	Matthew 28:16-20

## Revelations from the Scriptures

### SEATED WITH CHRIST

*Colossians 3:1-4* "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory."

#### The Life of The Church

*Colossians 3:1-3* "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right Hand of God", v1.

We are seeing that God is in **a definite Place**, where He may be found. We do not address our prayers in some vague direction, hoping to be heard. By the Spirit of God, our prayer should be winged straight Home, to where is seated on the Right Hand of God, Jesus Christ.

**This Life**, that is, the Church's Life, God's Church, the Body of Christ, is to be found **nowhere** else in the Universe. Solomon said that the heaven of heavens cannot contain God [2 *Chronicles* 6:18] but He is **somewhere** to be found; and Christ - the Life of the Church - is found on His Right Hand. Neither is **That Life** to be found **here** on this earth...

v2 "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

That is why, as the Church of God, we are constantly being persuaded not to lumber ourselves with the things of this life, for, as Christ warned, in the abundance of those things, be they material or physical, or relationships or whatever, in those things, a man's life does not consist.

The Life of the Church of God is at God's Right Hand. ["And He said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" *Luke* 12:15]. "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

Neither is **This Life** to be found **among men**. Except you draw on that Life by the Holy Ghost, you don't have it! *"He that hath the SON hath Life"* [1 John 5:12] – not, 'He that has a good ministry, or a good knowledge of God's Word' – this is essential. The Church of God has to learn to be in **continuous living contact with Christ**. He is able to; He neither slumbers nor sleeps!

*v3* "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." We have to repair to that Place, that Throne of Grace, to get our Life. It takes but less than a second! If we anticipate being snatched away in a new body, thousands of us, in a moment, *"in the twinkling of an eye"*, that is, in a time too minute to be calculated by men, **surely**, in that time, or less than that time, God could hear and answer our cry!

Christ is by His side; **Christ** is the Life located **There**. We don't find it here. Satisfaction in this world can only be full and blessed when **That Life** is throbbing in us, when we are in contact with It. Dissatisfaction in a member of the Body of Christ here – discontent, covetousness, which is a sign of dissatisfaction, seeking one's own desires, which is also a sign of lack in a life – only comes from a **lack of contact** with Him who is contactable. He is There for us to contact – *"where Christ sitteth"* [*v1*].

*v4* "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." Wherever **That Life** is finally to be found, there the Church shall be found also. The Church of God has Eternal Life, and that Life is in God's Son. We cannot get life from a meeting, except it directs us to that Throne of Grace, where **the Life** comes streaming down! A Message, a ministry, the Word of God preached, is no use to me except it directs me to that Fountain of Life. He said of His people, they have committed two evils – evils to them. First they *"have forsaken Me the Fountain of living waters"*...

**Jeremiah 2:11-13** "Hath a nation changed their gods, which are no gods? but My people have changed their glory – that is, their Eternal Life – for that which doth not profit". Life here has no profit in it. It ceases one day – that's no profit to you, or to God. God didn't intend our lives to cease, anyway, He intended us to continue on indefinitely as God continues on, Age after Age; Eternity rolling on endlessly in the pleasures of **That Eternal Life**.

*v12* "Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this... – God appealed to the heavens to see this disgraceful situation; that His people were without His Life. They were actually trying to get some other kind of life. This was shocking to all Creation. The heavens themselves were moving in an orderly satisfactory way through that same Life, and they hadn't fallen into disarray – ...and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Oh how many of those calling themselves God's children, and therefore professing to be members of the Body of Christ, seek for waters out of broken cisterns, meaning, that they must know there is no other Source of this Life. A broken cistern cannot hold any water anyway, so it is really that they follow the imaginations of their hearts. **Jeremiah** said that also in **Chapter 3:17**.

**Revelation 21:6** "And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega – God the Father speaking – the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the Fountain of the water of life freely." It does not cost anything, not even effort, to draw from the wells of God's Salvation. Those wells are deep, and exhaustless, and available – and it is very easy to draw from. The woman of Samaria [John 4:5-30] said that the well Jacob had dug was deep – not easy to draw from. And **Jesus**, the Well of Salvation, had said, 'If you knew Who you were talking to, you would say, Give me living water, and you would have it right away' – and so she did! May we begin to draw ...

But we must go to the Source; to where it is located, according to God's Word. We have to live by God's Word, breathe by God's Word. And now we're hearing the positioning, the Place, and the Power of **That Eternal Life** - which is yours as you get it. We have to take it. It is not a feeling; it is **Life**. And the connecting link is **Faith by the Holy Ghost**, in sheer obedience to God's Word.

Christ is the Head of **the** Body, **the** Church - the definite article - **The** Church which has **The** Head, and so has this type of Life which is found nowhere else in the world, except at God's Right Hand in Heaven coming down into the Church. It is "*the Church, which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all*" [Ephesians 1:22-23], so the Church of God is constantly drawing on this Eternal Life. **This** is the Power we are looking into now - **the Power** that the Church has, the Power that God claims through Christ for you; the Power that Christ has for you from God. The Church of God, then, must seek for the things of **that Eternal Life**, where He is to be found. "*Seek ye the LORD while He may be found*" Isaiah 55:6. It is a specific Command, with the certain knowledge that, while He may be found available to seekers of That Life, then, in that time, we must seek Him.

**Psalm 110:1** says, "*The LORD said unto my Lord, - Christ my Saviour - Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.*" He is not always going to be on God's Right Hand. There is coming an end of that Position - "*Seek ye the LORD while He may be found*". There is coming a time, then, - that "*until*" tells us, that "*until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool*", when That Eternal Life will no longer be available to those who seek Him in the same old way.

**Malachi 3:1-2** "*Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. 2. But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap*" - the answer to that is those who have been seeking Him while He may be found; seeking **That Eternal Life**. "*The Lord... shall suddenly come - firstly - to His temple, - He'll come first for His Church - even the Messenger of the covenant*" - it's the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant. We must know Who it is we seek.

## Christ The Lord

**Matthew 22:41-46, Mark 12:35-37, Luke 20:41-44 and Hebrews 1:13-14.**

**Matthew 22:41-46** "*While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42. Saying, What think ye of Christ whose son is He? They say unto Him, The son of David - that's as far as their vision went - 43. He saith unto them, How then doth David in Spirit call Him Lord, saying, 44. The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? 45. If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son? 46. And no man was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions.*" (Mark and Luke give the same record.)

They could not, nor would not, identify that Lord referred to by David, as being invited by God to sit on His Right Hand, with the Man in the flesh before them. So they disputed the Authority of Jesus Christ. We must know whom we are seeking; **Someone with all Power**, not just to help us, but to govern and control our life. Often when some speak of God's Power in their lives, it is as His Power to help. But God is always helping, since Christ died; God's ears are open to your cry. But surely, **the Power** that Jesus Christ was speaking about refers to the Authority and the Ability that we are given on how to go and teach people - all nations, none excluded from this massive teaching.

**Matthew 28:20a** *“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you”.* Not one Word of God is to be excluded from the teaching – that requires the Power of God to do that; *“...baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” v19* – that requires the Authority of God. How shall we operate without that Authority, and that Power? ... So they were disputing who He was, but we must know who He is – in complete control of The Church.

**Hebrews 1:13-14** *“But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool?”* – indeed, to which? The answer: *“Are they not all ministering spirits, - none of them is excluded from the service of God, they are all servants of the Most High, servants of the Church of the Living God – sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”*

**1 Chronicles 28:9** *“And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father...”*

We have to know the God we are dealing with. David was well aware that if you cease from contacting that God whom you know, you’ll fall into trouble, as he did. His life was a stormy one, but he knew the God he served, and he came back in repentance, again and again. So to David’s son, and to our children, the same advice should be given. We must teach our children to know God, the God you serve, and as your children behave, really, you will see that is how you behave towards your God, as that is where they get their example from – from nowhere else...

*“And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind:.. Our reactions to God take different ways, because we’re different people, but what-ever the difference is, you can see a similarity of either respect and regard and reverence for God, or disrespect and disregard and an ignoring of God. ...and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD – this same God – searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off for ever. Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it.”*

And this is also good advice for the Church of the Living God. We must know who our Life is, and not just speak rather airily of all His Power being mine to help me; to give me a boost in my ministry and to deliver me from awkward situations – that’s not what He is on High for, just to serve us in our need. He’s there to guide us and control us. No! we should be always boasting that, ‘I do this in the Name of the Lord’, and ‘I go in the strength of my God’, and ‘I encourage my heart in the Most High seated on God’s Right Hand’. So we should **know** who it is we seek. *“...know thou the God of thy father – this Living God – and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind:”* – we cannot serve **Him** with any other mind, because He is who He is; Someone who is able and competent to Judge all the earth by Himself. God does not judge anyone; Christ alone is the Judge. He will sit on that Throne alone and execute Judgment righteously.

**Psalm 2:1-7** *“Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?”* – whether they be Gentile or Jew, it is This One they will have to deal with. So what is the point of raging and imagining you can get by without Him! *v2 “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together...”* – kings, rulers, all involved, endeavouring to establish a system of rule which has nothing to do with this Person on God’s Right Hand. It is doomed to failure. *v4 “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord – that is God the Father – shall have them in deris-ion.”* – to think that they can succeed in some other way, when His Son is in control. *vs5-6 “Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure. Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion.”*

Then Christ speaks, *v7*, "I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son; – no one else – *this day have I begotten Thee*" – no one else. When Jesus Christ rose from the dead on that morning three days after He had been buried, that saw a new world coming into God's View. But many today do not seem to be aware of that.

**The Church**, however, as we see it in the Scriptures, sees only this new world – which is? – a world under the control of Jesus Christ. That is Heaven's viewpoint. "*Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory*", *Isaiah 6:3* – that's how Heaven sees it. It doesn't see the other things prevailing. It knows they are there – it has a good sighting of them – but it sees these things **overwhelmed by the Dominion and Power and Might of Him that is seated on God's Right Hand**.

**Psalm 2:8-12**     *"Ask of Me, - Christ is quoting God – and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. 9. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. 10. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. 11. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. 12. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. – then this magnificent Promise – Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."* !

**This** is the One we are dealing with; we must know who He is. His Return to this world is **sure**, so it's best – a wise thing – to seek Him; to seek His Face, continually...

**Acts 17:22-31**     *"Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious – imagining gods that are not there – 23. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD..."* A superstitious person doesn't know who God really is, or the superstition would go. "*...Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you.*"

So Paul proceeded to declare to them **this** God. Then he spoke of God the Father's attitude,

*v30*,                 *"And the times of this ignorance – **ignorance of Christ** – God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: 31. Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead."*

**John 5:22-29**     *"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: 23. That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him ... v27 And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man."*

**Completely alone** is Christ as Judge; there is no Court, no jury, no evidence called for outside of what Christ knows. **The Word of God is all that He requires**. God does not advise Him; He decides. "*It is a fearful thing*", says *Hebrews 10:31*, "*to fall into the hands of the living God*".

*vs28-29*            *"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, 29. And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."*

**Revelation 6: 6-17**     *"v16. And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 17. For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"*

This Judgment, Retribution, is **sure**. Overwhelmed at the Sight, they realise that the **One** Person vital to their eternal well-being whom they had rejected, was now confronting them.

He is the Judge of all the earth, not only for Punishment but for Reward. He has in His hands the rewards that He finds fit to give.

*Revelation 22:12 "And My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be."*

It will be a very lovely personal experience to receive your Reward from the Judge of all the earth! He alone is Judge; He alone will estimate the quality, the nature and the lasting results of your works. It is then the **Person** of their Lord that the Church must seek. "*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above where Christ sitteth*" [Colossians 3:1]. That Life – that **Person whom the Church must seek** – is located **there** at God's Right Hand.

*Song of Songs 3:2 "I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek Him whom my soul loveth."*

You can't love a feeling, but you can love a person, and this is a personal matter. The Church, after all, is the Body of Jesus Christ, personal to Him, and He is personal to the Church. "*I will seek Him whom my soul loveth*" – they are quite sure of who He is and whom they are seeking; and seek Him they must! "*Whom my soul loveth*" means that, emphasises that, that for Him, the Church's love is a fixed love, fixed on Him, and as unchangeable as He is. The **soul** is that part of the man that makes decisions, determines what should and should not be done. So it says, "*whom my soul loveth*".

*v1 "By night on my bed I sought Him whom my soul loveth"; v2 "whom my soul loveth"; v3 "whom my soul loveth" – The Holy Ghost is emphasising in these verses the fact that the speaker is set on this Person called "Him" – v4 "It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found Him whom my soul loveth".*

The Church's love then, its affections are fixed on Christ; never wavering, never diverting – unable to be diverted. "*Whom my soul loveth*" is a declaration, an adamant one – 'I love You. You're the Person I love; it's Your Life; I want You'. That is the Church's cry; her conversation.

So *Song of Songs 3:1-4* are the verses that emphasise this situation. There is that song which goes, 'My heart is fixed Eternal God, fixed on Thee, fixed on Thee', and the heart of the Church is fixed on Christ, because the soul of the Church says, '**That** is my Love; that's the Person I love' – and it is no effort to the soul to say that!

The Church proclaims that quite easily, without having to build up an enthusiasm to reveal that 'There is my Love; there He is on God's Right Hand'! People will believe the Church when then see the Reality in the lives of the members of God's Church.

### **Christ The Source of Every Need**

Christ's Perfection is in His being **God manifest in the flesh**. It is in the flesh that He sits there on God's Right Hand – a spiritual body could not contain those wounds. And so it is **only** this Perfection of Christ that can satisfy, content, and fill the Church's longing heart – both for time and Eternity.

Time is the important part of the Church's existence to dwell on, because it is **here** that the Church, being away in the body from the Lord, proves that He is their Fixation. It is **here** that we declare against much evil and unbelief and hatred of this Person, 'Never mind what you say, **That** is my Fixation; **That** is my **Life**; **That** is my Love'. If He is your Life, He must be your Love.

But so many Christians give testimony of what He has done for them. Not often do you hear that whatever they've suffered, He is their Fixation; that they are continuing on because of what He means to them. Not often one hears a grand satisfied witness, 'He satisfies my longing soul'!

Let us read *Psalm 107 v9* by the Holy Spirit. It is not "*He satisfieth the longing soul*" but "*He satisfieth the longing soul*– that's the Church's way of looking at it – *and filleth the hungry soul with goodness*". He satisfies; He fills. He does it by His Perfection. "*He that hath the Son hath life*" [1 John 5:12].

It is a marvellous Salvation, because it means that always you will have a very intimate association with Jesus Christ – not a less intimate, gradually growing into a very intimate association later on, but it is most intimate **now** and will still be most intimate in Eternity. For the Church is the Body of Christ: "*the fulness of Him that filleth all in all*" (Ephesians 1:23). He expresses in the Church **This great Life** of His. This Life of His is **His Love**; He lives like that. To know the Life of Christ is to know the Love of Christ, surely? He **pours** it into the Church, and the Church reveals it.

*John 1:4* "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" and that Light continues to shine in the dark-ness of this world, in and through the Church. The Church is pictured as a light – candlesticks, lamp stands; something that gives forth light – **the** Light which is the Light of men. **The** Church is the light of men only because it **has** the Life, **This** Life, in it. It is not my righteousness, my works, or my ministry, but **That Life** is what men are saved by, just as their sins were put away by His Death – not by my crucifying the flesh. I do that because He died, and I live because He lives also.

*v5* "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." The darkness cannot put out this Light. It cannot understand it, cannot get hold of it. It cannot meet it; there is no communication between the two, and it shines on and on in the Church – and always That Light will shine. That Light must be very prominent because it so pleases God.

*Philippians 4:9* "But my God shall supply all your need... We have a complete Promise. We don't have to go grovelling around looking for God to meet our needs. It is a Statement made. How could He say anything else of That Fountain of Life? "*But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus*" – the Source of Hope; the Source of that Glory.

How many times have we said, 'My God shall supply all my needs', and then go elsewhere for our needs to be met? So we are not satisfied, for only **He** can satisfy our needs, truly. If we have a need, and Christ meets that need, we don't really want for anything. That leaves us free from going after our needs to doing what He wants us to do: giving out this **Life**, this **Light**, this **Love**; expending this Energy which cannot be expended; giving it out all around us, because it is exhaustless.

"*They have forsaken Me, He said, the fountain of living waters*". So much came out on them, and they have actually tried to grovel about in the gutters of this life to find some sustenance to live their religious, mean little lives. 'And here am I, the Fountain of living waters' – this was Christ's com-plaint. He called upon the heavens – He couldn't call on men, they were all the same. And the heathen, thirsty and starving, were looking to God's people who didn't have the Life, the Water and the Bread, to give them. This is the tragedy still today... Many people call themselves members of the Church of God but they have neither the Life, nor the Light, nor the Living Water to give. We must take it out; we must give out that Water of the Word. God will supply all our needs, but there is the Water. It must be taken in, and given out. The Church is for that Purpose – it is the Body of its Head.

Like Head, like Body. No one else can be the Source of God's riches in Glory.

Remember **Psalm 24:7**, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in."? The king of something must be able to dispense that something, or get it dispensed. This King, certainly, whatever He is King over, He can use, and He uses it too. He does not refer to councillors. "Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?" [Romans 11:34 & 1 Corinthians 2:16 on Isaiah 40:13] – no one! **No one** other than Christ is the Source of God's riches in Glory. God's supply of what you need, that comes from Glory.

He is called the Lord of Glory. If the princes of this world had known – and they never did know – "they would not have crucified **the Lord of glory**" [1 Corinthians 2:8].

**John 6:35** "I am the bread of life." So He has stated that He has made Himself always, throughout Eternity, the source of **Eternal Life Himself** for thousands and thousands of people – we don't know the number on His Register! but we trust our names are in that Book of Life – because all the names there [at the end, will] belong to those who are living by That Life – **Colossians 3:1** "If ye then be risen with Christ – if you have started with That Life, continue therein – seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God" – Hallelujah! "I am the bread of life: – He always fills you with what you hunger for – he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst."

To believe on Him, you have to go to Him – that shows your faith. It shows you think He is a real Person – and when people find you praying to God in His Name then they know that He is real. When they find you referring to Him, they know He is a real Person for they see it working in your life; they see the results of that contact. Always you will be filled with what you hunger for. The Church is not a hungry Body of people; it really is very well fed – it draws on that exhaustless Life. It goes to that Place and – isn't it lovely – everyone goes to the same Place, because there is only One Place. They are always satisfied. That doesn't mean they stop going, for if you stop going you won't be satisfied! It is because they are going all the time that they are always satisfied. The moment you stop drawing from the well of that Salvation, then you will be dissatisfied. [See **John 6:32-35, 47-58, 7:37-39**]

But the Church, **The Church**, the Church of **the Living God**, is a satisfied Body of people; well-satisfied. They don't need any other sacrifice, they don't need any other plea – 'It is enough that Jesus died, and that He died for me'. These hymns state the matchless Truths in other words – that **HE** satisfies the longing soul. 'So our decisions are right ones', the Church says. They are perfectly happy to have decided that because He has satisfied, He proves, and He makes it good, and He confirms in us and through us that what we decided was right. It was right to come to Him; it was right to take from Him; it was right to draw from Him; it was right to live by Him; it was right to give it out, because there is more to come, more and more and more and more. He gives us what we thirst for.

**John 10:11 & 14** "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep". That is what you have – His Life; He gave it to you. He gave it **for** you in death, and then He **took it again that you may live by Him**. "Much more than being justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" [Romans 5:9-10].

**John 14:5-6** "Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; and how can we know the way? You can now rub out his question! Christ answered, 6. I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me".

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above."

**John 15:1** "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman...", **v5** "I am the vine, ye are the branches."

Notice He said, "I am", so always, **throughout Eternity**, spiritually speaking, you will be a branch of the Vine; attached to the tree, the Body to the Head. Wherever the Life goes, the Church goes with Him. What a glorious Hope we have!

**Revelation 1:11** "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last:"

Everything is to be found in **Him**, "for in Him, Colossians 2:9 says, *dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*". We have to seek that **Eternal Life** - in a Bodily Form. It is **Jesus Christ** - I say that reverently... that is where to locate your **Life**.

**Psalms 105:3** "Glory ye in His holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD." This is the result of drawing on Eternal Life. The pleasures, delights and joys of Christ's Person **alone**, can enable the Church to live with God's Holiness here, and with God Himself There. "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" [Isaiah 33:14] The only answer to that is, 'Those who draw on That Eternal Life'. Christ is God's **Daily Delight** [Proverbs 8:30] and as we draw from that Life we are easily able to walk with God. God's Holiness is not a discomfort. The Church of God, the temple of God, "is holy, which temple ye are" [1 Corinthians 3:17]. Because He is God's Daily Delight, then we realise and welcome God's Holiness into our life, for we draw in that same delightful Life. "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." [Philippians 4:4]

When those seventy disciples returned and said, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy Name", Jesus said, [Luke 10:20] "Rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" meaning, 'because you are going to live with Me' - the Source, the Inspiration and the impetus of the Church's very existence. "The joy of the LORD is your strength" we often quote... Nehemiah 8:10.

**Philippians 4:4-7** "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice", in case you thought it stopped at one rejoicing! That's how the Spirit has put it - "and again I say, Rejoice". Then it follows, **v6**, "Be careful for nothing." "Rejoice in the Lord", because you get **everything** from Him. Not just your needs met - with that Life and Power in you, you'll meet those [other] needs ... you'll have to do some-thing about it. And as you go forward: as you preach **Christ Crucified**; as you exhibit the Power of the Godhead in the Church, in God's temple, in the Body of Christ - so shall your needs be met.

**Matthew 6:33** says, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you", but Christians want it the other way round. They want God to first meet their needs and then they think they will be free to proclaim Him. Not so! The Church says, "Lord ... grant unto Thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak Thy word", 'and You please see to all the rest!' - and so He did! [Acts 4:29] The sheer delight to God of that Obedient Man seated on His Right Hand draws us always to God. "Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; Mine Elect (My Choice One), in whom My soul delighteth" [Isaiah 42:1]. So obviously, if we are seeking That Life, That Delight, That Choice One, That Servant, that Person who rejoices God's heart, God's soul, then we too will enjoy Him. Who else can thrill us more personally than the One Who thrills God personally! Those words explain what is written in :

**2 Corinthians 5:19** "To wit, that God was in Christ" - the Delight that God has in This Life is expressed by that Life, because it is **that Life** who is the Source of God's Delight.

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." So God's delight in that Person was only revealed by **Christ Himself** as the Source of God's delight!

We have **the full Revelation** of what pleases, what satisfies, what thrills God – it is **Christ!** That is why He thrills the Church. Nothing could thrill the Church if it didn't thrill God! That is why **the Person** who has delighted God for some endless ages will continue to do so for endless ages to come – and that supplies us with a sufficient quota of Joy to keep us going like God, day after Eternal day. God is satisfied with Jesus – and this is the Church's part :

*vs18-19* “and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself...”

This is the Message, the Ministry of the Church. It tells that that Man is God's Delight; He is the Source of all God's Pleasure – you take Him and you have all God's Joy surrounding you, flooding you, overwhelming you – ...*not imputing their trespasses unto them* – but pouring His delight upon you because you have That Life; the Source of His pleasure – *and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation*”. This is the Church.

*v20* “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us:

So the Church is now revealing That Delightful Life, because That Life is God's Ambassador, and each of us as ambassadors are each revealing That Delightful Life. That is all you have to reveal for men to find out that God, after all, is not threatening them but is **calling** them – incredible to relate – them, steeped in sin, rotten, filled with guilt and shame and the filth of sin and of this world – God is calling that sort of person to Himself through This Life that so delights Him, and which He offers to them through the Church ...*we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*” The Head is in Heaven; the Church draws That Life into itself, then gives it out, offers it out, reveals it, and invites men to take hold of it.

*v21* “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

**1 Peter 1:8** “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice... – that is, seeing Him by faith clearly through the Holy Ghost, rejoice, because what the Holy Spirit sees is really what is There. If you look at Christ by the Holy Spirit's eyes, by faith in His Word you will rejoice *with joy unspeakable and full of glory*”. It cannot be expressed in human words!

The only way you can express the Joy of That Life is by your preaching in the Holy Ghost, praying in the Holy Ghost, witnessing in the Holy Ghost – not to anything else but to this joyous Life, full of God's Holiness, God's Humility, and God's heart of Love towards sinful man. Already all their sins have been put away; the way has been made clear for them to take this Life in. So speaking these glorious things out is the only way to express your Joy! You can't really find words to utter it!

The Holy Spirit moves on us and we want to speak in other tongues, but in preaching and teaching we are to speak plainly from God's Word – but that's the **LIFE** we know by the Holy Spirit! “*Joy unspeakable and full of glory.*” It's full! The Church of God is full of **Christ – God manifest in the flesh**.

It **is** a Joy and a rejoicing of our hearts, deep enough and lasting enough to keep us living enthusiastically under God's Holiness here. That is the Joy and the Delight of that lovely Life.

As we seek **That Life**, so we are able to live here enthusiastically in all circumstances, and under all conditions – under God's Holiness, of course, under His eye, His Holy Spirit, and His holy Word – here, and then with your sin-hating God there, throughout an Eternity of endless ages of pleasures!

*Ephesians 2:7* "That in the ages to come – that's what is says of God – He might shew – demonstrate – the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

When the Holy Spirit uses the word "exceeding" it is to cover **Eternity**. Man can't fully grasp it here. He could have said, 'the tremendous riches', or 'the boundless riches of His grace', but He used the word "exceeding" to mean **exhaustless!** If you think of our living there for one Eternal Age and you think, 'Why! It's marvellous', but then there is another Age exceeding that – exceeding Grace, and more and more. Do we believe that? – that there is more and more and more and more...?

God's Pleasures will be piling up because He will have no hindrances then, all there will be worshipping His Son – that is the Joy and the Rejoicing of His heart!

*John 1:16* "And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace" – that is, Grace upon Grace.

### At God's Right Hand

*Colossians 3:1* "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

It is important that we know that is where our Life is located – on God's Right Hand. As much room as it takes for a human Body to be seated, that is the exact spot on God's Right Hand where your Life is to be found – isn't it simple?! It is simply amazing, and it is so simple – it's tremendous! Everybody, all the members of the Church are directing their attention to that one spot.

In that Body there, Christ Jesus demonstrates His enthusiastic glad response to God's Demand for His total Obedience to God's need for a Sacrifice for our sins. It is important that we keep reminding ourselves of the state of His Body, because that to us here is the invisible Evidence by the Spirit of God that God has on His Right Hand a good reason to be very pleased with Christ. **Your life is identifiable in a marred Body.**

That is the Evidence to you that the Blood has been poured out. That is your assurance that there is the reason for this Fountain of Joy; for Him to be God's Source of all Joy and all Life for you.

*Hebrews 1:9* "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows."

See the kind of Life! – an enthusiastically Holy Life, full of Joy at having overcome sin. There is no reproach, resentment or regret in **That Life**. The Church of God does not live by reproaches, regrets or resentments. It **calls** men into the Gospel to take a good look at their life, and having looked to say, 'I have reached the end of my own days; **now** I live by **That Eternal Life**'.

**The Church of God**, then, is able to deal with, to face any situation with the same enthusiasm as God and Christ. Christ showed the same enthusiasm, Love and radiance in putting our sin away, and that is the same enthusiasm, radiance and joy that God shows in His Son. He was equally radiant about it, because it was done by His Son. He did it in such a lovely way. "Not My will", He said, 'but Yours'. "He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" [Philippians 2:8]. If you have caught the Fire of Christ's enthusiasm, you are filled with the enthusiasm of God!

Jesus said, "That they may be one as We are One" [John 17:22]. That was His great Cry, Oh, what enthusiasm! Oh, what Love! Oh, what Glory! Oh, what **Life!** what Energy, what Real Joy!! That would be a positive sign that you are drawing from the right Place! – the **right** Life.

**Habakkuk 3:17-19**      *"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines... 'Although everything I relied upon shall go' – that is the essence of what Habakkuk was saying. 'Although all my props are taken away from under me, although all things I am dependent upon in this life are totally collapsed, although...' – "Yet I will rejoice in the LORD" – that is, in That Life, because what-ever goes from you in this life, That Life you can still have here. Nothing can take That Life away from you, if you want it. "I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength." That Life up **there** more than compensates for the total loss **here**. This is what Paul said...*

**Philippians 3:8**      *"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but **dung**, that I may win Christ."*

Paul didn't say that so that Christ would help him, support him, compensate him – no! but that he might **know** Him, and, **v9** "be found in Him" – when the Trumpet sounds.

"The LORD God is my strength", returning to **Habakkuk 3, v19**, "and He will make my feet like hinds' feet, and He will make me to walk upon mine high places" – or as we could say, 'He will make me fit to do His work here; to meet the needs that **That Life** can meet; to meet the demands that God makes on That Life in the Church'. God only demands things from us because That Life is in us, otherwise He could not ask us to do a thing – except to repent... But God calls us to do things because He knows that That Life can do it in us. We really do have a High Calling...! So to Habakkuk again :

**Habakkuk 2:1-4**      *"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower..."* This was the reason for Habakkuk's faith declared in **Chapter 3**. He was given a vision of **That Eternal Life**, and he was told it was coming, "though it tarry, wait for it" – 'though it seems a while, it is coming'. And that changed the whole course of his life! In other words, it **replaced** his old sick, self-centred, faithless life, yes, as a prophet of God, and gave him **this new Life**. So this is the Message.

**v4**      *"Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him – it's a picture of God's servant, being so full of all that he saw; he had so made up his mind, his soul was decided on all these tremendous things, that he did not have the Vision – but the just shall live by His faith" – Oh, Hallelujah!!*

**Hebrews 10:35-39**      *"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. 36. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. 37. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. 38. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."*

Your confidence in today's living is governed by your confidence in that Morrow which is coming – that Eternal Day – that is what really influences, and shapes your activities here.

**2 Corinthians 5:6-9**      *"Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."*

It is **the Lord** that the Church is concerned with, so they are always confident.

If they are absent from the Lord, their contact is still with the Lord. *“(For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”* That is the expressed desire of the Church; it’s the will of the Church, to be **with Christ** – *“The Spirit and the bride say, Come”* [Revelation 22:17].

v9 *“Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him.”* – that is the way it goes... *“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above”* – the Church of God seeks Christ **always**. You do not seek Christ’s help; you seek **Christ**. You don’t seek Christ’s Power, you seek **Christ**. You don’t seek Christ’s healing, you seek **Christ**.

You don’t seek Christ’s Authority over demons, you seek **Christ**. *“Seek the LORD and His strength, seek His Face evermore”* [1 Chronicles 16:11]. That is His Command. His strength is obviously in Him; His Face is part of Him. The Power and the Energy and the effective Action found always in Christ **only** can give the Church of God the necessary Authority over all things under its Head. We must insist on that Authority being present in our life. We must expect obedience to that Authority in us from the powers over which you use it. The Authority is to be used, and the Authority is always effective when used.

**Philippians 3:20-21** *“For our conversation is in heaven”* – meaning, by *“our conversation”*, the Source of our life together as the Church of God; our strength and ability to live here as a Community that belongs to God’s World. The entire Church of God today cannot live in one place, but we can live by One Spirit, seeking That One Eternal Life.

*“For our conversation is in heaven – where Christ sits on God’s Right Hand; it is in Heaven still – from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21. Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.”*

Paul, by the Spirit, illustrates what that Power is capable of finally, when he says, *“Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body”* – **that is the capacity of that Power**.

If only we could see by the Spirit what a change is going to come physically, that this body which is weak, so prone to sickness, to disease, to weariness, to frustrations, physically, is going to be abandoned by God! Just like that, with less concern and less ceremony than you abandon old clothes it will be done – *“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye”* [1 Corinthians 15:52] and you will be gone! That is **the tremendous Power!**

So Paul speaks of that: *“for our conversation is in heaven”*, and that same Power is going to do this very thing, *“change our vile body”*. *“Vile”*, meaning, belonging to this earth; *“vile”*, meaning, unable to live with God and walk before God – physically, I mean – and talk with God, and enjoy Heaven, and sit on Christ’s Throne, and talk with Jesus Christ in the presence of all those angels. This is what the Church of God is for!! We have to be prepared for that, and God will give us a new body as it pleases Him. That is the *“working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself”*.

That is **the same mighty Power** that will raise thousands of His Church, and thousands and thousands of Old Testament saints as seen in *The Book of Revelation*; a *“multitude that no man could number”*... John would have been given the number if God had not wanted him to reveal to the Church that this is the magnitude of the Power in that Fountain of Life.

*“A multitude that no man could number ... stood before the throne”* [Revelation 7:9] – all that number recorded in **Hebrews 11**, plus all who come in through the Church in this Age. What a magnificent experience for us all.

But to be practical, the Holy Spirit tells us this to show us that **this is the Power** we are drawing on. This is **the Life**, Jesus Christ. At His shout everything that He wants moving according to His reckoning will begin to move. Raised from the dead, they will be, as well as thousands of His Church alive on the earth at the time – **all** will be given entirely new physical bodies of flesh and bone – **in a moment**, which is in no time at all. “*In the twinkling of an eye*” – like a flash; that’s the time in which all this will happen!

### Christ’s Dynamic Exhaustless Energy

That same exhaustless Energy which acts always effectively is working in the Church of God **now** as the Church, His Body, seeks His Face, His Strength. Jesus said, “*I am the resurrection and the life*” [John 11:25]. Christ is not only the Perfect **Life** of the Church of God, He is also His Church’s dynamic, irresistible, more-than-abundant **Energy** which enables the Church to overcome the world completely, both in its life here and in its departure from this life. It is not dependent on this world; it lives in the world dependent on that dynamic, irresistible more-than-abundant Energy, and it will leave the world without even a goodbye, as that same dynamic, irresistible Energy will take it away!

**John 10:8-10**      “*All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them*” – obviously not, because they are only listening to That Life, the Voice of That Life. 9. “*I am the door: by Me if any man enter in – that’s how we are going – he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.*”

The Church believes and knows and expects to experience entering Eternity in a glorious entry, heralded by all these angels, millions of angels, countless billions, rather, marshalled by the Archangel to line the route as the Church goes in, and into God’s Home – all in a moment.

It’s not so much dramatic as **glorious!** It will not be a long drawn out affair, but it will never be forgotten! You will be there!

9. “*... by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. 10. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: – that is Satan – I am come – that’s the Saviour – that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*” (vs9b-10)

(end of morning session)

(afternoon session)

So, as we are seeing, there is not only **the Perfect Life** for the Church of God (Jesus Christ), but there is also His Church’s dynamic, irresistible, more-than-abundant **Energy**, and it is this which enables the Church to overcome the world completely.

**1 John 5:5**      “*Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*” – the one who believes and therefore knows, goes to the Source of Eternal Life in a human Body. Jesus is the Son of God, and That Life of the Church is in a Crucified Body at God’s Right Hand.

The Church repairs to That Source of Energy constantly, to enable it, not just to resist, but to over-come the world with its source of evil energy. That evil energy is not greater than the Energy we in the Church have, and therefore it is always in a weaker position. So the more-than-abundant Energy that pours into the Church from God’s Right Hand, is more than adequate to overcome it. To “*over-come the world*” means to crush, demolish, break it down; to utterly defeat and confound it.

v4           *"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."*

"Whatsoever", or, whoever has **That Life**, That dynamic **Energy** in it, must overcome the world; it just has to! And it keeps on overcoming the world. "...and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" - through That Life. Because we receive **That Life**, we have the Faith to go on living by That Life. "...even our faith", which enjoys the full certainty that That Energy will always be available, and always be operative through the seeker after That Life - that Fountain of Life; the Source of our Power.

**Ephesians 4:16**   *"From whom - from That Source of Life, from That Life itself, seated on God's Right Hand - the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."*

That Life is sufficient for every member of the Church; every member of that Body - numbers do not matter. The only factor that limits the numbers is unbelief; or rebellion or rejection of That Life. If one accepts That Life, it is sufficient for the whole Body to operate That Life to the confounding of evil. The Divine Energy which created all things enabled the Living God to die at the hands of mortal men. It required Energy for Christ to die; to keep all that Energy on the Cross. It was more difficult to do that than to create things and to heal our bodies.

The Chief Test of that Energy was to hang on the Cross and die. (That's how we can get anything from God.) But its normal output was healing, deliverance and Life. Virtue went out of Him because a woman, without asking Him for healing, touched Him [Mark 5:24-34]. This Energy works like that! That same Divine Creative Energy that enabled Him to die at the hands of men, and which upholds all things by that same Energy - "*the word of His Power*" [Hebrews 1:3] - is at the disposal of the Church of God, in that disfigured Person.

Let us remember that on the Right Hand of God in a space enough to be occupied by a human Body, sits your Life today - and for as many days as God deems necessary! That Energy that created all things and upholds all those things created out of nothing is the Energy that is in the Church today!

**Revelation 1:17**   *"And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; - I have all the energy - I am the first and the last:"*

John was frightened at the meeting with That Energy, now fully revealed. But The Church has nothing to fear with all that Divine Energy in it. It is an irresistible body, because it is the Body of Christ.

v18           *"I am He that liveth... - always alive. 'I am That Eternal Life, having all the Life, the Power, the Health, all the Authority, Energy and Strength you need. I always was alive, then I died' - ...and was dead;" - still the same colossal Energy, in action to die. The Lord Jesus expired when there was no more Blood in His veins enough to keep Him living naturally. The Sacrifice was now **complete**.*

We have a complete Salvation... and, behold - the Energy doesn't cease; it goes on - *I am alive for evermore*, - the full range of That Life is at the Church's disposal; indeed, it is more important than that; it is available to the Church. It is placed in such a position and positively stated to be where the Church goes for its Life. *Amen; He added, and have the keys of hell and of death.*" The Power of the Godhead; everything is in those nail pierced hands on the Right Hand of God.

v20           *"The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in My right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches."*

In the Right Hand of **Life Himself** were the seven stars of the seven churches. We have to draw on it, and the guarantee that it is in vital contact is the fact that it is locatable. You know exactly where Christ is at this moment!

When Stephen was stoned to death, as he was dying, he saw **that Life**. He was so utterly dependent on **That Life** that now his own human life was ebbing away, with crushed bones, and blood flowing out of him, he saw **That Endless Life**, standing up on the Right Hand of God! He saw Him where he knew He was. We must be practical! A Christian is the most realistic human being in the world today - not vague or uncertain or evasive, but speaking simple statements that are starkly real, pointing upwards and saying, 'There is where my Life is'.

People will know that as they see that Life working in such a Christian, even though they will not be able to see the Life Himself, not having the Holy Spirit. No one and nothing can prevent Christ from pouring His Life, Himself, if you like, His exuberant Energy, into His Church as it seeks Him.

He did say to His people through His prophet **Jeremiah, 29:13**, "*And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart, and I will be found of you.*" But The Church is never told that, for The Church of God seeks no one else, and nothing else. "*I will seek Him whom my soul loveth*", the Church says. All their heart is fixed, centred on Christ. You don't have to tell a member of the Church of God to search for God, his Life, with all his heart - he can't live without that Life!

He has no desire to live without that Life. He has no pleasure in living without That Life, without meeting That Life, and contacting That Life. It is quite different from saying, 'I draw on that Life for my ministry, or my work, or my need'. It is **more than that**.

### That Eternal Life

**The Life** in the Church is Jesus Christ Himself. We see that in this Series; ***The Power of the Church of God***. He is "*the Living God*". Not for us dumb idols which cannot speak, or representations in silver or gold or precious jewels, but **Life Himself!** 'Joys are flowing like a river since the Comforter has come', we sing, because He tells us and makes these things real in our lives - if we have the spirituality to believe it!; if we can come out of self and sense, and truly believe that, then we will enjoy that Ever-exuberant Life!

The Early Church took these Scriptures literally, so they abounded with that unceasing Life. It was not restless energy. It is called, rather, "*the rest of God*". **That Life** in you reveals to you the proximity of God, that peaceable, serene, existence in Eternity, more energetic than from men here, but restful, not as in this world. *Isaiah 57:21* says, "*There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked*". We are asked to **labour to enter into that Rest**; the Rest of that Fellowship.

In **Hebrews 4** the Rest is claimed to have begun after God had created everything! Therefore, all the Energy that God has and is, is diverted nowhere. It is all **poured into the Church** through that Fountain of Grace. There is nowhere else except through the Church. We are **the Temple of the Living God**; we are **the House of the Lord**; we are **the Church of the Firstborn**. We show to the world how people live together in Eternity, because that same Life pulsates through every member of the Church of Jesus Christ.

When we read *Matthew 28 vs 16-17 before vs18-20*, we see the sorry condition of the men through whom this Dynamic Eternal Life was eventually to flow - *v17 "some doubted"...*

*v18 "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth."*

He is the Power Himself for the working out of God's Plan. He is Equal with God, but as a **Man on God's Right Hand**, He has all the Authority of God to operate on man's behalf. He is not operating on behalf of Creation. That is going along, upheld according to His Word of Power. "*All things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist*"; they hold together [*Colossians 1:16-17*].

As long as That Man is on God's Right Hand willing them to do it, the worlds are held together. The sea keeps its place, and the mountains remain where they were raised, **but** at the Word of **that same God**, they will all dissolve into ordered chaos - ordered by That Man. But all this Energy is poured into the Church.

That is why He said, "*Go ye therefore...*" - "*therefore*" means that all Power is given to Him in Heaven and in earth. *Mark 16:15* says, "*Go ye into all the world*". That is not different places; the world means people. God saves people. We are to go out to all the men and women who represent the system called "*the world*" as distinct from "*the Church*". These people, as part of the world, operate it and are subject to it. Every person in your range of vision and relationship who is not in the Church represents this world.

So we are to step out with this dynamic in our life and "*preach the gospel to every creature*". That is the Vision; what the Church does. "*And teach all nations*", continues *Matthew 28 v19*. We read in *Revelation 5:9* that He has "*redeemed us to God ... out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation*". No nation, people or community is unable to receive this Word, this Life. There may be certain difficulties in one place that are not in another, but that is all.

This Dynamic suits every Country, every place, every house, for it is to **the people** that Christ is sending His Church. May God bless us to go out to "*teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*" - with that Authority, sealing them in their walk here until He comes...

And we read in *Romans 6:4* "*Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*" This is more-abundant living. Back to *Matthew 28* ...

*v20 "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."*

**All power** - nothing excluded from the Authority that the Church has. "*Teach all nations*" - no one is to be excluded. "*All things*" - everything must be taught. "*Lo, I am with you always*" - this Life is yours all the time. As we seek **Him**, so we shall proceed. The Church will always have this enthusiastic, holy, joyous, **Energy at their disposal** for them to live by.

*Exodus 3:13-14 "And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come ... what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."*

He was saying, 'I have come to you with That Life'. You will be able to go through seas, get water out of solid rocks, live for forty years in a jungle and your shoes not wear out, and you'll never get diseased. You will eat manna as a small coriander seed every day and not go hungry. You will be able to cross a raging torrent of a river with men, women and children, and encompass an impregnable fortress, and bring it down with that resistless Energy...

And that was the way it worked out, as Moses believed it would, but the people were not convinced...

But now we have Jesus Christ! The Church of Jesus Christ is the vessel, the receptacle for all that Energy, **the Fullness of the Godhead dwells Bodily in Him**, and That Man is at your disposal! There He is at God's Right Hand. That is why He repeated, "*A greater than Solomon is here ... A greater than Jonas is here*", [Luke 11:31-32]. As He looked like an ordinary man dressed in ordinary clothes they refused to believe Him. Just because we do not see anybody but ourselves and other members of the Church, we ought not to look at each other with human eyes as men, but remember **This Eternal Life** is in the Body of Christ, His Church, which does consist of ordinary men and women.

**"I AM THAT I AM"** - 'I am Who I am' is what it means. 'I am What I am, and I will be What I will be to the Church, which is My Body.' But those people would never have it so.

*v15            "And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations."*

Then the same God who gave Moses this Commission, when He was faced with bitter hostility and contempt from His descendants, said this, quoting His own words: "*I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*" [Matthew 22:32].

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will **live, rising up** and walking by the Word of That Power. So He said, "*Ye do err not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God*" - **That Eternal Life**. [v29]

**Colossians 3:1-4** "*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God...*" This is our **Commission** : "*Seek those things which are above*".

If we are members of the Church of **the Living God**, then "*seek those things which are above*". Seek **That Eternal Life** where It, He, is located at God's Right Hand. That is where our Life is. We can find it nowhere else. It is not found in the "*heaven of heavens*"; it is not found in the heavens, or Eternity, but **THERE**.

**Isaiah 57:15**            "*Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place.*"

We can locate That Life at any moment, at any instant. So we are to "*set our affection*"; our longings, desires - our very impetus to live on That Life. We do not live by bread alone, but by every Word that comes out of the mouth of God [Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4].

We cannot find **That Life** anywhere on earth. It is on the Right Hand of God, in that space beside Him on His Throne, where a human Body can sit! **There** sits our Eternal Life! Nowhere on this earth - for a man's life on this earth does not consist in the abundance of the things which he possesses [Luke 12:15], and it certainly cannot be found in us as human beings.

**Colossians 3**, again *v3*, "*For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*" The proof of that will be finally when, wherever this Eternal Life is, **there** will the living Church - everlasting - the Body of Jesus Christ, joined to the Head officially in Heaven, and thereafter going with Him. *Revelation 17:14* says, "*and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful*".

**Psalm 80:17**      *"Let Thy hand be upon the man of Thy right hand, upon the son of man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself."*

Christ is called in the Scriptures *"the Man of Thy right hand"*. All that God requires of any man is to be found only in the Man of God's Right Hand. He is the only Man capable of ascending up to God's Right Hand and sitting right down there. God's **First Perfect Man, at His Right Hand**.

*"Seek those things which are above"* All the pleasures, delights and joys necessary to the life of the Church with God **here** and **hereafter** are possible – only in Christ at the Right Hand of God.

**Psalm 16:11**      *"Thou wilt shew Me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."*

Christ said to God, prophetically through the psalmist, *"In Thy presence is fulness of joy"*, and *"at Thy right hand – where I sit – there are pleasures for evermore"*. **How amazing, how wonderful** that He should say it Himself! These pleasures, and those delights, and those joys are necessary to Eternal life. God has them daily, then so must the Church!

**Matthew 26:63-64**      *"But Jesus held His peace. And the high priest answered and said unto Him, I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God. 64. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see **the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power**, and coming in the clouds of heaven."*

**All the Power essential to the Church of God, for time and for Eternity, is to be found at God's Right Hand.**

*As we come to the end of this first week on **The Church of God In This Age – Its Power**, May every heart be truly filled with this mighty Revelation of the Life, the Love, the Light, the Power resident in The Church, the Church which is the Body of Jesus Christ our Eternal Life, Amen.*

# THE CHURCH OF GOD IN THIS AGE

## *I T S P O S I T I O N*

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# THE CHURCH OF GOD IN THIS AGE

## ITS POSITION

*Ephesians 5:30-32*

“ For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. 31. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. ”

Daily Readings: Isaiah 55:6-9; Hebrews 1:1-4; Isaiah 53:1-6; Revelation 21:22-27

## DAY 6

### SCRIPTURES FOR THE DAY'S STUDY

Leviticus 20:22-26

Psalm 1:1-6

## Revelations from the Scriptures

### SEPARATED UNTO GOD

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

### Christ Crucified Revealed By The Power and Position of The Church

We look again at the Church of God, the Church of the Living God, also called in Scripture:

The Church of the Firstborn, the House of God, the House of Christ, and the Church which is His Body, “*the fulness of Him that filleth all in all*” [Ephesians 1:23]. Now we look at That Church to see and to glory in **ITS POSITION**.

*Hebrews 1:1-2 “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son...” –*

**Jesus Christ our Lord** – to understand fully the Mystery of Christ Crucified, as He is revealed in The Church which is His Body.

v3 “Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person...”

The revelation of this Mystery is presented to us in the Church, manifest in the Church, in the exceeding greatness of the Power the Church has, as well as in the brightness of the glory of its Position. In these TWO ways the Mystery, Christ Crucified, is revealed in and through the Church, His Body :

ONE, in the exceeding greatness of its Power, the Church both receives and reveals the revelation, the understanding of the Mystery of Christ Crucified, and TWO, in the brightness of the glory of its Position, it both receives and reveals the revelation – the full understanding – of the Mystery of Christ Crucified. And in understanding the greatness of that Power and the glories of that Position which The Church has and holds we may also realise what this Church means to God and to our Lord Jesus Christ.

### The Manner of The Love of God The Father

God the Father has given the Church over completely to be loved by His Son.

**1 John 3:1** “...because it knew Him not...” that is, Jesus Christ, whom the world does not know.

v2 “...when He shall appear...” that is, Jesus Christ.

v3 “...every man...” – in the Church of God. “...this hope in Him – in Christ Crucified – purifieth himself, even as He is pure.” – even as Christ Crucified is pure.

These three verses show in the detail that God the Father is revealed as bestowing this Love upon us – “*What manner of love*” – and then after it is all to do with Christ. ‘What sort, what type, of love, this Love is of the Father, that we should be called the sons of God!’ Where shall we find such a love? – all that is involved in the word “*manner*”. What other love can compare with this Love, the Love of the Father?... We must identify God in all His dealings with us, as we are learning to identify Christ in all His dealings with us. For the Church, the Body of Jesus Christ, must of necessity prepare itself not just to meet God, but to live with God. We must know Him, “*the only True God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hath sent*” [John 17:3]. We must know Them on an Eternal basis, that is, we must be prepared to live with These wondrous Persons for ever in an intimate and close relationship.

This Love is **bestowed** upon us. That is another Wonder! The Love, itself wonderful, is bestowed, that is, lavished upon us; poured upon us, the Church, God’s own Family. God is a very **extravagant** Person. His Family is His possession, not anyone else’s. His Love is extravagant because He loves extravagantly. You can see that with what He was pleased to do with His Son for our sins... And so this Love is not only wonderful because of the kind of Love that it is, but also that He should even find it possible to lavish that lovely Love upon us – poured upon the Church by the Father, no one else!

That is important! *“What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us”* – the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself has lavished, poured that Love upon us. To be called *“sons of God”*, as John by the Spirit said, shows the manner of love poured upon us by God the Father. It makes us directly related to His Son, and see the magnitude of this Love. John wrote that by the Spirit for the Spirit well knows the magnitude of a Love that so lavishly is prepared to call any one who accepts it a direct relation of Jesus Christ. And God knows better than anyone how holy, particular and very specific Jesus Christ is like Him, in hating sin and destroying iniquity.

**Hebrews 2:10-13** *“For it became Him, – that is, God the Father; meaning typical of that kind of Person – for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, – the Love wasn’t forced out of Him; it is typical of such a wonderful Person with such a wonderful Love – in bringing many sons unto glory – where God the Father lives. The sons, the children, must be brought into the Home, and must be united with the Father – to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”* Christ is called the Captain because in that sense He is the Start of it all. God could never have obtained this Family without Him! So in putting His Plan into operation, and achieving His objective of having a Family, He made the Captain of their Salvation perfect through suffering.

See the expanding of this great Love; a Love not compared with any other love, and really cannot be found elsewhere. It was typical of that Love, that He who had everything and quite independent of anyone, should do such a thing without obligation to the sons of glory. But in bringing them to glory He made the Captain of their Salvation perfect, so that His Family should be a perfect one. *“What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God”*, His children, and therefore directly related to Christ!

**v11** *“For both He that sanctifieth – Christ – and they who are sanctified – the sons of glory, the children of God – are all of one: – of one Father. **This** is the manner of this Love – for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.”* It is wonderful to see such Love enveloping mankind! No wonder John said, *“What manner of love”*, for **God** has effected this: that sinful men and women coming into the Church, His Family, should come by the Blood and the Death of Jesus Christ. They come in on a **perfect relationship**, because they are accepted as perfect in the Firstborn. They are of one Family now. Jesus Christ is not ashamed ... and does not hesitate to call the members of His Church **brethren** before the Father, and the angels and the whole world. He told Mary Magdalene, *“Go to My brethren”* [John 20:17] as when He spoke that, He was the First Perfect Man whom God had to enjoy! **The Firstborn of the Family**, of which many more were to be added by the Grace and the Mercy of our God!

*“What manner of love”* has the Father lavished, poured out upon us, that we should be put into such a **Position** that Christ should call us *“brethren”*, and not be ashamed of that! It is stronger than saying simply that He calls us His brethren. It means that all the barriers have been abolished; the past life of members of the Church of God have gone for ever. Jesus Christ calls them *“brethren”*, in other words, ‘holy’, ‘without blemish’, ‘perfect’ as the Father is perfect, for they are all of one Father.

**v12** *“I will declare Thy name”*. So He says, quoted now as Him speaking to God the Father, *“unto My brethren”* – not just to *“brethren”*, *“in the midst of the church”*, that is in the midst of God’s Family, *“will I sing praise unto Thee”*, like any other member of the Family! Perhaps through these verses we will get a new idea of the meaning of ‘brother’ and ‘sister’ in Christ. The word ‘brother’ can be used by some in a very superficial way; as merely a title, that because one happens to come to the same church he must be addressed as ‘brother’ ... Not so here! **This** is a deliberate act of Love.

It started with the Cross and finally ends up in glory – and on the way, as member after member is added to this glorious Family, one is put into **the Position** of being called the child of God, and also put into **the Position** of being called a brother or a sister by Jesus Christ. Mind you, nowhere in the Scriptures is Jesus Christ referred to as Brother, for He is Lord of All; but He calls us “brethren” as we are members of that one Family. It is not pretence. It is a Reality. We are actually adopted into that one Family. Our iniquitous natures have been blotted out. It is a Glorious Truth! It is a revelation of the Work of the Blood of Christ. So He is represented as saying, “I will declare Thy name” – ‘I will tell them how much I know about You, that they too may enjoy being in the Family Circle together’.

What a difference from that first family! Adam and Eve had everything – all power over all Creation, but they allowed the pollution of Satan’s lies to break the Joy, Peace and Love of that Family Circle. But here it is again! For God will have His a Glorious Family, and its Head is your Saviour. So Satan has to reckon with Him; He is in charge of the Family. May God help us to see our **Position** today, and capture something of the largeness of God’s heart of Love, and benefit by saying, not, ‘I’m covered with Love’, but, ‘I’m going to love like that’. Surely it will help us if we declare, ‘If that is my Father, and that is the Firstborn, I must have some of that Love to love others with’.

*v13* “And again, I will put My trust in Him – just like any other member of the Family – And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given Me” – ‘behold, My brothers and sisters’. Isn’t it wonderful to be a child of God? What “manner of love” the Father has poured out upon the Church, that we should be called into His Family with Christ as the Firstborn. The members of the Church of God are now the members of God’s own Family. It is to God’s Family specifically that we belong.

**1 John 3:2** “Beloved” – he was touched by this so great Love. Yes, it is an extravagant word but he was a member of a Family extravagant in its Love – and He can afford to be as He is pure and holy, John meant it. Love and lust are greatly different, and in that Family Circle there is only one lavishly extravagant Love. John wrote extravagantly to the members of that Church to which he belonged...

*v2* “now are we the sons of God”. What a wonderful statement to make! We must establish that immediately – children whom the Eternal, Holy Christ is not ashamed to call “brethren”; children whom Christ is glad and eager and ready to acknowledge as His brethren.

**Hebrews 2:14-15** “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15. And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”

Christ destroyed the arch-enemy of the Family in a way any member of it could have; by a **perfect obedience to a perfect God** our Father. That is why He took on flesh and blood. He couldn’t destroy Satan as a Member of that Family from Heaven. The Eternal Family of God starts here. He became the Firstborn here – after He rose from the dead. Let us remember the Love of God lavished upon us now and go out to not only enjoy it but **lavish** it upon others in the way we have received it, showing them that we are conscious of **this manner of Love**, and that we are benefiting from it.

### **Christ Pours Out On His Church The Same Love He Received From God**

*v11* “both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one:”

They are all of one Father, the Source of that amazing Love – Christ pours out upon His Church all the Love the Father lavished upon Him. This is the amazing Result of Grace and Mercy.

*John 15:9-17*                    “As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love.”

It should not seem a very difficult thing, rather a delightful thing to do, but if we do not see God’s Word by the Holy Ghost, we will not do it. As the Father loved Christ, in that same way, He has loved us. To God, His Son is a delightful Person, the type of person He wants to love, and so Christ is lavishing all that Love – just like someone who receives all kinds of things from a parent and gives them away to friends. That shows a great response to love; but man is different. Mostly they don’t want to part with what they are given but want to keep it for themselves.

However, God’s is a different Family; it is Eternal. “As My Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you – Hallelujah! – *continue ye in My love.*” God and Christ have been through endless Ages, so for endless ages it is poured out upon the Church of God. The Family, begun in Time, continues throughout Eternity in endless Ages of Love heaped upon it. What shall we do with such a weight of Love? How shall we live except by pouring it out?!

*v10*                    “If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.”

The same Love from God the Father to His Son, to the rest of the Family; the same conditions; nothing less or more; not asking us to do anything more than Christ did. The way Christ lives with the Father as the Firstborn, that is the way we are asked to live. No further duties are put upon the Church because of our sinful state. No conditions made, no reproaches presented, no resentments. What vitality – the exuberance of Christ is wonderful!

*v11*                    “These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.”

Full of **Love**, generated by this endless, eternal Love, poured out forever. “So have I loved you”, He said, *v9*, meaning, ‘With all I have, I have loved you, for God is everlasting’ – so our joy is to be **full**.

*v12*                    “This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.”

We must express this Love. God expressed Himself in Love and Christ expresses Himself to the Church in Love – the only way He knows.

*vs13-14*                “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

‘If you have all the characteristics, or if you reveal, exercise and operate all the characteristics of the Family, of the Father and of Me, the Firstborn, we are friends, and in the Family.’ Christ is talking about this perfect Family where Love continues to be its life-blood. So not only is He your Brother, in that sense, not only are we His brethren, but also we are His friends. *There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother*”, Proverbs 18:24. According to the Bible, a friend is not just a passing acquaintance, or someone you take your troubles to, to get good advice or to speak your mind to. “A friend loveth at all times”, Proverbs 17:17. So, here He is, and here are we...

*v15*                    “I have called you friends”, so we should love Him **at all times**.

We are friends in this Family with brothers and sisters who are friends. We care deeply for what happens for the Father cares deeply for what happens. We are born of God.

*“That which is born of the flesh, is flesh” – that’s the end of that – “and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” [John 3:6] – and there is no end to that Life, to the growth and the enjoyment of that Life born of the Spirit and God’s Eternal Word! “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you.”*

Notice the beauty of the Holy Spirit’s wording! Although He is my Lord, He is still my Friend, and He is not ashamed to call one of us His brother or sister. I cannot get over that – I never will!! Throughout Eternity we shall enjoy this Love, and give it out – but we have to start here. *“But I have called you friends.”* – Someone who clearly knows exactly what we think and do; our motives. No secrets in this Family, brothers and sisters, and friends.

**1 Peter 2:22**, *“neither was guile found in His mouth”* [quoting *Isaiah 53:9*]. Men crucified Him for that; men love guile. It is the way of human nature, born of the devil, children of the devil, of this world of darkness. *“Children of wrath”*, [Ephesians 2:3] is a very suitable description out of which we have come into this glorious Family of Light to be children of light, of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, the Firstborn, the Righteous. So here is the Family Position stated, for your blessing and enjoyment, and for your share in it. It is obviously a Family that shares everything.

It is right for a Christian to say, ‘I must have some privacy’. For this reason only it is right – to talk with God. Here we are in an alien country and need to repair to the Throne of Grace, to be filled again and again with the rivers of living water. We need to be always assured by our Father, by the Spirit, ‘I love you; things are going well with your soul. There are difficulties in that alien country, but I am still your Father, and here He is on My Right Hand. He is the Firstborn, so you are all right, My child. Out you go; there is nothing wrong, no harm. Face all those troubles.’

We need that time, but when all the conflict is over, and there is no more death, pain, sorrow nor crying, there will be no need for privacy!! That is why the Holy City is transparent! Pure gold is as transparent as glass, clear as crystal. Everyone knows everyone – they know **Him** who first knew us and loved us! So, while we are still here, remember that it is essential to have some privacy. Jesus Christ Himself went away to be alone all night in prayer, not because He didn’t trust anyone, but because He needed that privacy in the same way as we need it, since we are all one Family of God’s.

In the Garden He tried to show His disciples that they were together in the matter, and they could pray with Him. But when they didn’t, He fought out His own conflict. As He fought with the Father’s knowledge, so He expected them to fight out their conflict while He was with them. He said, *“Pray that ye enter not into temptation”*, [Luke 22:40] – the temptation of going away from the Father, from the Son, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, back into that awful world of woe upon woe upon woe with nothing to offer. Well, we do know that; that is why we are looking at these things now. We want a little break; we need little privacy, for how else are we to be like the Firstborn who draws His strength from the Father?

When the multitude took Him away from that Garden, the only One who did what was right was the One who had prayed! Peter cut off Malchus’ ear – not the sign of a man in prayer to God – and the rest ran away. Later Peter told lies, and, when they were all in hiding, they didn’t believe when told, He was alive from the dead. This is the result of not keeping one’s privacy with the Father!

In this world there are other families, but in that world there is only One Family, so we need the privacy from those other families to get alone with our Father in Heaven and discuss the Divine business with Him. Other families have no part in that; if they're not in, they're not. We can't discuss our Heavenly Father's business with worldlings. That is not proper. We don't discuss our own family affairs with another family, however much we may care for them, it isn't done; it doesn't help, they wouldn't understand the position – so how much more in relation to spiritual matters.

An earthly person cannot understand what you want to tell your Heavenly Father, or what He wants to tell you, nor how it goes with you in relation to His Son, or how much you long to see Jesus Christ – all that, the worldly family cannot know about. It doesn't need to, and shouldn't, until they decide they would like to join that Family, that they would love to have the same Father as you. Hallelujah! So we must remember these things – *“What manner of love...”*

*v16a “Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: ...”*

In this spiritual Family the Work goes on of adding members to this growing crowd. Marvellous, isn't it? to know you can be part of **this** Family. And so Jesus Christ, the Firstborn, the Creator of the Family with God's full approval, has the job of sending out members of the Family to produce more children to bring in. That is our responsibility as brothers and sisters in the Family of God, the Church of God, Jesus Christ. The Family of God cannot be limited in human terms, so we can take out this Message to all the worldlings.

How many families are torn with strife, envies, jealousies, selfishness, conflicting ambitions, no love, only hate, and now growing and mounting in evil – *“Without natural affection, disobedient to parents”* [2 Timothy 3:1-5]. These are the people to whom we must go, because we belong to this lovely Family, not because it is your duty to go. This manner of Love pushes us to it. It impels us to tell men, ‘Why stay in the shambles of such a family life? Come with your human family into this glorious Church of God and join this Family of which God is the Father – God Himself and Christ Jesus our Lord the Head, the Firstborn, the Most Senior Member!’

*v16b “... that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you.”*

Each member of the Family then works to this end under the direct Guidance and Control of Jesus Christ by His Spirit. So the whole concept of Salvation is breaking out upon us through these revelations! How we started; how we became a member... Do you remember the day when you accepted that manner of Love, and were born of God by His Spirit, receiving this Extra-ordinary Person called Jesus Christ, not just as your Saviour, not only as your Lord, but directly related to you – the Elder Brother, the Firstborn? He at once takes over responsibility from the Father like a good Elder Son ought to; the responsibility of running the Family for the Father! We are His responsibility, so we must live up to that. That is **the Position** God has put you in, and Christ has made it possible for you **to stay in that Position**.

*v17 “These things I command you that ye love one another, as I have loved you” – because “as the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you” [v9]*

This Love of God and Christ looks upon the Church being children of God, as having the same Character, the same Nature, the same reflexes, the same responses, to every situation as God and Christ :

*v18 “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you.”*

So the Family looks alike in its behaviour. The Jews recognised that two members of the Family had been with the Firstborn; that their speech was from Him; that they were looking at Holiness as He looked at it, and the light in their eye and the expression on their faces was of that Family. They looked and talked alike. They resembled each other very much. So the Jews "took knowledge that they had been with Jesus" [Acts 4:13].

v23           *"He that hateth Me hateth My Father also."*

So the hatred for God is centred on Christ - He took the reproaches of those who reproached God [see *Psalm 69:9b* & *Romans 15:3*] He who is the Mighty One - and they, members of God's Family will be hated like that. You can tell now if you are really revealing the characteristics of that Family, which are hated by the world! They hate humility, because humility is essentially unselfish. They hate meekness and lowliness because essentially that has no motive except the good of someone else. A meek and lowly heart has no self-interest at all. What a lovely Family to belong to! God the Father, who is above all and over all, He has got all that we need, so we do not really have any excuse to be self-centred or motivated by self-interest. This sort of characteristic is hated by the world.

They dislike that because they are afraid, not being of the Family, that they will go without. But the Family of God is never afraid of being without God their Father, with Christ the Elder Brother, the Firstborn, so they do not have that way of thinking; they are not motivated by fear. The only fear they have is to do anything wrong, to spoil the Family atmosphere, the relationship, and they have the same fear that God has of evil. "*The fear of the Lord is to hate evil*" [Proverbs 8:13a]. Oh yes, it is a healthy hatred of all that is wicked; all that comes from murdering and lying, the twin maladies of the human heart based upon unbelief. So, therefore, **this** Love looks upon the Church, being children of God, as having the same character and nature as God, as Christ.

*John 17:21-26*           *"That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me... 'All that You are, I am. You are in Me - and I in Thee. - all that God is is what Christ is; they belong to each Other - that they also may be one in Us: - what God the Father is, what Jesus Christ the Son is, the rest of the Family is - that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."*

That is the way to look at it.

### **Christ's Love For The Church Equal To His Love For God - and To God's Love For Him!**

The world in believing that God has sent Christ does not mean they love you any the more, but they will know that this is a different Family. Christ's Love for the Church, His Body, is equalled only by His Love for God the Father. And also, Christ has lavished upon us all the Love that the Father lavished upon Him because God has bestowed upon us His manner of Love and prepared to call us His children; prepared to receive us into a direct relationship with His Most Holy Delightful Eternal Son. It is not equalled by any other love. This is another Fact about the Love of Christ to consider!

*John 17:20*   *"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word."*

Christ is prepared to love in this fashion; the way that He loves God the Father. Any or all who wish to and do join His Father's Family, however many they be in the Family's growth, Christ's prayer to God was for them. It was a declaration of His deathless Love. It is so vast that He said in effect, 'I do not mind how many really, but it is those who will join themselves to the Family through My Work on the Cross.'

As John 1:12 says, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."

v21 "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

Christ is prepared to give Himself, to pour out His Eternal Life into every member of this Family, that they all may be **one** – having the same characteristics, nature, reflexes, responses and reactions to all circumstances in Heaven or earth, in Time or Eternity. All that is found in God the Father is found in God the Son, and in the Church of the Living God, the Family in which Christ is the Firstborn ... and He was prepared to give Himself, to pour out His Love, His Life, into every member!

**John 7:37-39** "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink."

Jesus called out, appealing to the people: 'I'll get him into the Family. I have the Authority and the ability to do it, and the knowledge \* by which I have justified many. I know how to do it; I know what I am speaking about, so, come to Me and drink, whoever is thirsty. If you long to join a Family like this where **Love** is the order of the day, and **Peace** is the order of the heart, and **Joy** is the daily experience of the life.' That is exactly what we must believe of the Church of God, which is the Family of God the Father, in God's eyes and in the eyes of His Son. \*Alluding to *Isaiah 53:11b* – the knowledge which He learned: His Obedience to the Written Word of God.

v38 "He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." – the results of being in this Family, of that Love, that Joy and Peace, stirred up by the Holy Ghost. Out it flows upon the joyless people without peace around them. This is the story of the Cross; the story of God in Christ; the story of man's reclamation – to make fit for use – by God through His Son. "Then I restored that which I took not away", He said [*Psalms 69:4c*] and He promised through the prophet **Joel** to restore what the caterpillar and the locust and worms had eaten [*Joel 2:25*].

If you are moved at all by the Spirit, you will see **the magnitude** of this Love, to make such extravagant statements – because they are extravagant! We know something about these facts, but the Creator knows how locusts raze the grass to the ground, leaving everything living, grass-wise, gone. And what is not there, Christ promised to restore! He didn't even say, 'I'll give you something new', but, "And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, My great army which I sent among you."

Only such a Love can make these extravagant statements and make them good. Our lives were eaten with the caterpillars, palmerworms and locusts of lust, fear and selfishness, disobedience and unbelief – eaten to the bone; just skeletons there. And God put a new heart in us, a new Life, a new Spirit, a new mind, and put flesh on our bones, and said, 'Go out and tell men that now you are an honoured member of the Family!' May God help us to do this...

v39 "(But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)"

The Fact of the Holy Spirit's coming in the past.

## The Benefits of Christ's Obedience Lavished on The Church

**John 17:22**

*“And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one.”*

Christ is preparing to give to every member of the Church all the benefits and all the honours that His obedience has obtained for Him as a Man. Everything! All that His obedience has from God for Him as a Perfect Man belongs to the whole Church - *“What manner of love the Father hath [lavished] upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.”* This is not the Glory which He had before the foundation of the world, but the Glory of living out in this world of disobedience, **a Life of complete perfect obedience to the Living God**. A *“root out of a dry ground; a tender plant”* [Isaiah 53:2].

**John 20:27-29**

*“Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.”* - believing what? That He had all the Power of the

Godhead available to Him through this Obedience. So Thomas said, *“My Lord and my God.”*

v29

*“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”*

‘You have done well, Thomas; you have seen Me and you are believing it.’ Thomas received it and went out to proclaim it like Peter, John and Philip, but this is for you and me. *“Blessed are they that have not seen, [Me, and not put their fingers and their hands into My hands and side] and yet have believed.”* ‘They will receive what you have, Thomas - all the benefits, all the honour and glory which My Father gave Me as the First Obedient Man. That is yours, but it is also theirs who believe on Me through your Word.’

### **The Father Loves The Church As He Loves Christ**

**John 17:23**

*“I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.”*

Christ is prepared to have His Church loved by the Father as He is loved by the Father. What a wonderful Person! He doesn't keep some part of His previous Eternal Life reserved for only Himself and the Father. It is something we must pray over, and study, to get something of this Love into our hearts. Christ has no reservations.

Just fancy! I was born in Time and I have sinned; my body has known sin, and it will know corruption, and yet I will know all the Love of God just as much as Christ knows it. I am beginning to know it now, but Oh! the Ages of Eternity God is looking forward to showering the *“exceeding riches of His grace - God always exceeds! - in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus”* [Ephesians 2:7]. *“That in the ages to come”, v8*, doesn't mean they are coming and ending; they will still be to come when several Ages have passed, for the simple reason that God needs endless Ages to reveal Endless Love!

This is a very practical thing! Time is not enough to live with God! We must have Eternity if we would live with such a wonderful God. If we would spend time with Christ, we must have an eternal reckoning so there is no further interruption, no conflict, nothing to mar that Life. That is why God's Eternity is given to the Church of God! Just as much as God loved Him, Christ is prepared - glad, in fact - for God to love you.

**John 16:26-27**

*“At that day ye shall ask in My name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you.”*

Finally a relationship was established where God will love you as much as He loved Christ because of that Fact, that His Love through Christ has generated in you this absolute devotion to His Son. So Christ said, 'At that day it won't be necessary for Me to pray the Father for you', "*For the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God*", v27.

You will **always** need Christ in Eternity. You cannot have a Family of Love without Jesus Christ! Paul, though, dared to write, "*And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ*" [Romans 8:17a]. The Divine Logic will continue. If Christ is **the Firstborn** of the Family; **if Christ has deliberately accepted a subordinate position to God to be that Firstborn in the Family**, then we are joint-heirs with Christ. We rise correspondingly in God's reckoning - and that is our **Position** today!!

**John 17:24**                      "*Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which thou hast given Me: for thou lovest Me before the foundation of the world.*"

God knew Christ from Endless Ages before Time. So knowing Him like that, He now knows Him as a Perfect Man, marred in a terrible way. God's knowledge of Christ is very profound, as to be expected! Some saw Him as a Baby; some as a Boy, some as a young Man, and some saw Him as a mature Man. Some saw Him crying and praying; some have eaten and drunk with Him; some slept where He slept. Some saw His poverty, and some even saw Him hanging naked upon a Cross. Some heard His cries to God and some saw Him risen from the dead in that same Body. That is where it ends now. We all have to wait for Eternity to see Him as God is seeing Him now!

So in v24, Christ is saying that the Eternal Endless Person who is actually the same as God, is there in a human form, marred in that dreadful way, but with the Eternal Glory of God lighting up the Glory of His Obedient Life. It is too wonderful to analyse... You must pray as you read these words...

So Christ was quite prepared to have His Church as close to Him as He is to the Father. It says in 1 Corinthians 13:12, "*For now we see through a glass darkly; but then Face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*" In the Word of God by the Spirit of God, we get as much as we are capable of receiving. Only what we can take, we can take, but this is written, "*but then Face to face*" - in the brightness of that Glory - "*then shall I know even as also I am known*" - by Him.

Then we will know as God knows the kind of Person JESUS really is. Then we will realise to the full how God is able to accept millions of people in Christ as His children, and lavish upon them His own Love; to accept them into the privacy of His own Family Circle, in His own Family Residence, and be prepared to live with them for all Eternity. So you have that to look forward to!! Hallelujah!!

**Revelation 3:21**                      "*To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.*"

Complete equality of vision, of position, of experience and of life. My! He is a meek and lovely Person! Only humble people can be really generous with all they have because they do not hold it to themselves. They do not say, 'That is mine!' That is the Mind that Christ has. He didn't say, 'I am God. Why should I do that? I will try another way'. No, He "*made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant*" [Philippians 2:7]. He took it; He did it. It couldn't be forced. You cannot force God. God has to decide and do it or not do it. So being God in Truth and Substance, He had to decide, and having decided, He took it all on

Humility is really truly **generous**, extravagantly so, and therefore He doesn't ask for anything to be returned – He gives it. Freely you have received it, freely give it out. Give out this Love, with not so much words, as the Word of God, geared and motivated, and given life to, quickened by the Spirit, to reveal to people these Truths that God intended for them as much as for you.

This is The Church of God, and we see it in the early part of its Divine History. It was outgoing. Some saw the Love and fell for Christ! Some saw the Holiness and said, 'Oh, we don't want anything to do with that; that Life is too narrow'. But whatever way they reacted, they saw "God ... manifest in the flesh" **in His Church** – God who is on High, as God's Son now, by His Spirit and they took knowledge of that – that "they had been with Jesus" [Acts 4:13]. This is the Way it has to go.

### **The Church To Know The Father As Christ Knows Him**

*John 17:25*                      "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me."

This wondrously, extravagantly, lavishly loving Christ, like the Father, of course, is quite prepared to have His Church know His Father as intimately as He knows Him. He is quite prepared for that! Remember who His Church is: erstwhile sinners, heretics, God-rejecters, liars and deceivers –but now in His Church! How marvellous; how wonderful! So, for Christ, there are to be no shadows, no questions, no secrets in Eternity. The mystery of God will be finished [Revelation 10:7]. That Eternal World, of a truth, will know God as He is in Christ, and as He is in the Church.

*John 17:3*                      "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent."

Yes, Christ wants His Church to know His Father as intimately as He knows the Father. There is no trace of jealousy. The emphasis is this: In the story of the prodigal son, Christ particularly showed a weakness in the family life, in that the elder brother showed some resentment at the forgiving joy and the great welcome to this waster of a son.

But we, who are literally actual sinners, only finished with sin coming into the Family of God because of Grace and Mercy, because of Christ. It would seem as though we had never sinned, never known it, never touched it, were always perfect, because here we are right in the Family as free to talk and consult with God as Christ did! Have you ever believed that? Have you never thought of it? The Scripture shows us that...

### **The Church To Love Christ As The Father Loves Him**

*vs 25-26*                      "And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

These declarations of Love do not end, because **God** is Love. Christ wants and longs for His Church to love Him as His Father does. Are you prepared to do that? Then you are in His Church! and if you are prepared to do that, the Spirit of God will always be on your side. He truly then will be the Comforter – One called alongside; **to help you love** such a wonderful Person. It is not easy to love such a wonderful Person. You can have a little love for Him; a little gratitude, but the Love of God for Christ can only be "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us", [Romans 5:5] – "**by the Holy Ghost**"! and given unto us by that same Love! Wonderful!! He is Wonderful! His Name is called Wonderful! Oh, Hallelujah! **Christ wants His Church to love Him as His Father loves Him.**

**John 15:26**

*"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me."*

This is a sign of **Love**, not just in order to help you, because that would be an obvious breach of Love to not help you, but in order that by the **best way possible** you may come to love Him – and that is only **by the Comforter**. Love must be loved, and Jesus Christ wants to be loved. He enjoys being loved. He lives being loved. Love runs that Family, because God is Love. *"Whom I will send unto you from the Father, – He was specifically clear on that point – even the Spirit of truth – the true revelation of what His Family is; what His Church is; who are in it – which proceedeth from the Father."* Christ was careful to say that the Holy Spirit came from the Father. *"I will send unto you from the Father."*

He constantly shows the complete **Unity**; the complete **Love**, and that this Love is at our disposal. There is no need for privacy in Heaven; there is no other type of Family there. That kind of Love cannot be enjoyed in private! It is too much; it must be poured out, and everyone must enjoy it! Where there is reservation and lack of knowledge, there must be questions, and difficulties arising out of those questions. When troubles are caused by reservations or an inability, perhaps, to express the situation, or a difficulty in expressing it, or an uncertainty as to what to say, we use words such as 'misunderstandings'.

Satan uses those things, because here there are other families. There are families in the world which constantly want to get into this lovely Family of Love and break up the Circle, because they are envious. Satan's deadly work in Eden was only because he envied that Love, that Purity, that Meekness. Pride is always envious of Humility, because it cannot climb down to that lovely, lowly level. Humility is guiltless before everyone, before God, and man, before Satan, before angels, before demons, before archangels, before all the Universe, before His own Creation.

And God is guiltless; He has done nothing wrong. Isn't it wonderful? and we can belong to that Family. But evil doesn't like that as it is very envious. Envy breeds hate, obviously, because it wants something it hasn't got, but then it doesn't like those who have it, and so has no intention of joining in order to benefit... [Mark 15:10] records that Pilate, that heathen man, saw that they delivered the Lord up only for envy. They hated Him because He had a meek and lowly heart. No doubt, because they knew He was humble, they mocked Him in His humility hoping to provoke Him into a proud step-down from the Cross. But of course, evil is ignorant of the length to which Love will go!

If the princes of this world had known the length to which Love will go, 1 Corinthians 2:7-8 reveals, they would have done their best to stop it. But they didn't know; they still don't know the actual depth of such Love. They have seen now the awful results – and it is awful because it is so devastatingly final – that through the Blood of the Cross ONLY a man can be born again. It is so final because if you are not born again through the Cross, you are lost for ever. Satan's whole grip on man-kind has been shaken loose through that Blood-bath on Calvary. Blood poured out of Christ.

So we have to see that Christ wants His Church to love Him, and that is why He sent the Comforter, **not just** to fill you with power to preach a wonderful Message, and to get people born again, and baptised and healed... Oh! far be it from us as members of the true Church to just look on things in that petty way, because all these signs and wonders will cease here. When the Church goes you will not need to heal anyone or cast out demons. What a lot of emphasis we put on that, and therefore we lose out on this wonderful revelation of **Love**. Perhaps we miss our opportunity and our Position to enjoy it and to give it out.

**John 15:26**

*“But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me.”*

(end of morning session)

(afternoon session)

### **Behold, What Manner of Love!**

**1 John 3:1**

*“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God:...”* – what kind of Love; what sort of Love; such a Love is not known anywhere else, that can-not be equalled or compared with, the Father has lavished, poured out, gushed out upon us, so that that same Love may come gushing out of us in rivers of living water!

This Love has God lavished upon the Church that we should be called the sons of God; that we should be brought into direct relationship to Jesus Christ; that we should be the people upon whom Christ will pour out, and has poured out, **the same Love** that God lavished upon Him! Then we should be the people, sons of God, who Christ loves with a Love equalled only by His Love for God! **Such a love has and never will be known** – the Love of God for Jesus Christ and His Church...

### **Christ Calls His Church, “My Love”**

To Jesus Christ, His Church is always, “*My love*”. Always! ‘My own personal possession’ – because it is His Body. “*For we, it says in Ephesians 5:30, are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.*” He declares the Church’s special Position in His heart: “*My love*” – the Church is His love, *Songs 1:15*.

**Luke 22:14-18**

*“And when the hour was come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. And He said, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer...”*

To Him, the Church is “*My love*”. That was the last time of the Passover Feast, in God’s reckoning. In the eyes of Love, no more lambs were to be killed. The Lamb was about to pour His Blood out.

It was the First Lord’s Supper! – the First Service of that kind initiated by **Love**, and to Christ, the next time He will eat like that will be with His “*love*”. So to Him, not eating bread and drinking wine is a sign to Him that His “*love*” is absent from Him. Just as to the Church it is a sign that we are not present with our “*Beloved*”. “*Behold, thou art fair, My love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves’ eyes*” [*Song of Songs 1:15*].

**Song of Songs 2:10**

*“My Beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away”* – “*My love*”, always, “*My love*”. How often that is said by shopkeepers! But this is Jesus Christ, the God of all the earth. He doesn’t say “love” to anyone, but to His Church.

**2:13**

*“The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, My love, My fair one, and come away.”*

Jesus Christ desires His Church to be joined to Him in Eternity; to be there physically with Him for ever.

**John 14:1-3**

*"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me – 'because you are "My love" – In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

("My love"). Jesus Christ means what He says. One of the characteristics of worldliness is insincerity, conventionality, superficiality, social talk and conversation – *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."*

*v4* "And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." 'You know where I am going and you know the way.' And when Thomas said, 'We don't know where You're going and how can we know the way?' (*v5*), He said, 'Yes you do:

*v6* "Jesus saith unto him [Thomas], I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me."

No member of the Church will get Home without Him, because He knows the way Home! He is the Firstborn, so He takes the Church Home to its God and Father. That is the Way He went

**Song of Songs 4:1**

*"Behold, thou art fair, My love; behold thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks: thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead."*

It is the Church's Position. It is in the heart of Jesus Christ; in the heart of God. Not just emotionally and sentimentally, but as a real group of living people, born in sin, shapen in iniquity, now washed in the Blood of the Lamb, justified by the name of Christ, sanctified by the Spirit of God, prepared to live with their Father and with His Son as a Family in their Home.

**John 16:1-5**

*"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended" – it's a matter of Love. He is anxious that they should not think badly of Him; that they shouldn't misunderstand His motives and His subsequent actions. He was going away but He still wanted them to trust and love Him, because the Church is His "love". "But now I go My way to Him that sent Me" – He looked upon His Church, His "love", as represented by those few men then – and He looks upon you in the same way! "and none of you asketh Me, Whither goest Thou?"...*

*v6* "But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart."

He is obviously talking to someone He loved. He is sad to go, but He has to go. You could be sad to have to go away, but if God calls you, you must go, mustn't you...?

*v7* "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you."

That was His own comfort that He was sending the Holy Ghost, so He called Him "the Comforter". He comforted your Saviour's heart with the Fact that He, the Spirit, was ready to come to comfort the Church – and He is still comforting us.

He is still encouraging our hearts in our God, and assuring us that the Church is a living reality because God is a Living Reality, and because God is determined to have a Family, that is you. So the Holy Ghost only can convince us of these wonderful Truths. He was the best Person that Jesus Christ could send! He said, 'I will send another Comforter' – to replace, or make up for My absence until I see you again'. He intends to see us again. He was not going to come and pour out His Blood, and not have someone to love and to love Him; so He went away and He is coming back!

He said it before He went. *"In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you"*, [John 14:2]. The Comforter is here to establish that in your hearts, to make it true and workable, and really bring Eternity down to your very level, to your very eyesight, almost! Then you can look eye to Eye, as the prophet wrote, with your God, and know that Salvation is about to appear!

v8 *"And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin."*

The Comforter's Work was to reprove the world of sin, through you. So He keeps the Vision of Christ alive in you in your ministry. Your ministry is all of that – the missing part of the Church, the Head – so you say to people, 'You are a sinner, lost in your sins because you will not accept Christ as your Saviour'.

**That is the only reason why they are going to be lost. God has forgiven them all their sins, but He cannot forgive that one because they are now dealing with Christ directly.**

v9 *"Of sin, because they believe not on Me."*

To reject Christ means one is **lost**, as the Word of God must condemn that one at the Last. The Way has been provided to receive Christ, but there is no way to cover the rejection of Him. One who rejects Christ, rejects everything – the forgiveness of previous sins, **and** the Future Life as a member of Christ's Family.

v8 *"And when He is come, He will reprove the world ... of righteousness."*

There is only One Righteous Person. We don't have to say, 'Come to my church, they are all very nice people!' We just have to say, 'Take Christ as your Lord'. There is only One Good Life God looks at, and you can say it with such enthusiasm they will know you are speaking the Truth!

That is their sin: *"He will reprove the world ... of righteousness"*, because they look about for righteousness in other people, and not from Him at the Right Hand of God.

v10 *"Of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more." "Because I go to My Father"* – that is where the Righteousness is, and which God wants in His Family.

v11 *"Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."*

Who judges but the Head of the Church?! The Church is the conqueror, the *"more than conquerors"* (Romans 8:37 – *"through Him that loved us"*). The one Body that has control over things and complete dominion over all Satan's unclean legions of devils, because it represents the Head here, fully, completely – not a bit at a time! It is for us to take our Position, and use the Power that God has shown us.

**Song of Songs 4:7** *"Thou art all fair My love."*

Declaring again His Passion for His Church – it is repeated over and over.

5:2 *"I sleep, but my heart waketh" - it is a heart affair – "it is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to Me, My sister, My love, My dove, My undefiled: for My head is filled with dew, and My locks with the drops of the night."*

Hear the language: the voice of her Beloved knocking at her heart – personal; intimate; very holy, but very real emotion, Love for His Church; *"My love"*. We find **Love** here.

**John 13:1-6**      *"Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end ... v4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself."*

He was expressing His Love. There was no other way. Apart from pouring out His Blood on the Cross which He was about to do, washing their feet was the only way He could express how much He cared for them. Simon, of course, said, "Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?", v6.

Jesus said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me", v8b. So Peter, full of exaggeration, responded, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head"! v9, but He said, 'You don't need all that!'

**v10**              *"Jesus said to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all."*

You can see that the washing was not a literal necessity, like real water applied to real feet, but it was symbolic, **an expression of the deepest Love**, because it showed the deepest Humility. He cared for every part of those bodies, those poor sin-filled, helpless, human bodies, enclosing souls and spirits. He cared for them from their feet upwards and He died to deliver them, spirit, soul and body, from the toils and the torments of sin and Satan.

It tells us of a Love. Some churches have washing of feet as a custom, but it is not supposed to be a ritual. You might wash someone's feet but have arrogance in your heart - that wouldn't make sense, would it?! It is a symbol of the deepest longing that those men, even Judas, should be kept with that strong Love and know that He loved them. "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end", v1; unto the end of that time. He couldn't do more than that. He was going out to be hard done by; to be nailed to a Cross. That was the most His life could go, to pour out every drop of Blood. After that He commended His spirit to His Father and some men took charge of His Body. Isn't that marvelous?! That is LOVE. He gave Himself away! He gave Himself to His Father, and to His people, and He went that way - and of course, He had to come back [in Resurrection]! That is the Joy of it all! "Many waters cannot quench love." Song of Songs 8:7 is true!

**Songs 6:4**              *"Thou art beautiful, O My love." "O My love" - always the Church is His love. All God's servants teach the Church that, that to Christ it is not a doctrinal or religious, or a spiritual issue; it is a Personal issue. The Church belongs to Him. It is His "love", and not even just as a possession.*

"My love"; something that stirs His emotions, His heart. It stirred Him to whom all things are committed to kneel down and wash, like a servant, those men's feet. It stirred something in Him. "Love" He called it, in the Bible. "God so loved..."; "What manner of love..." And what manner of love is this Love, that Christ should love me!

**Hebrews 13:5**        *"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have" - because LOVE has spoken to us - "for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee".*

So the Christian should be contented. The world cannot be contented. If it has one thing that it covets, it goes for another and so on - because it does not have LOVE; The Love. It does not have the comfort of knowing Christ's Love. But we know it, so in our conversation we do not show envy or desire for the things, because we have Him. We are content with what we have already because we have Him. He has said, "I will never leave thee". How wonderful!

He said, 'I am not going to forsake you' because it is a personal matter – 'You are My love'. It is serious to God when He says, "love" to someone, it is not a form of address; it is a Fact of Life.

*vs6-8* "So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

Always, the Church of God is Christ's love.

*Song of Songs 7:6* "How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!" "O love" – He even makes it sound like a personal name. So full of Love that He is calling His Church "love"; "for delights."

### **Christ Longs To Be With His Church Forever**

Christ's passionate longing for His Church to be with Him forever again is expressed in those words, "for delights." And that longing is 'the heart and soul' of the Lord's Supper, the Service we have every Sunday. That is why God would have us to be so careful to learn about it so thoroughly...

*1 Corinthians 11:24-25* "This do in remembrance of Me"... "as oft as ye drink it". All that is an expression of great longing, that whatever else you remember, you have Him in your mind and your heart, until the remembrances are no longer necessary, when we see Him face to Face and eye to Eye!!

*v26* "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come."

The Holy Ghost always reminds us that Christ is coming for those He loves. "Without sin unto salvation", we read in *Hebrews 9:28*. There is no sin in Love. No mention of it; no talk of it; no sign of it. He is coming for His "love". Paul put it that other way, "without sin unto salvation".

*Song of Songs 1:15* "Behold, thou art fair, My love; behold, thou art fair."

To Christ, His Church is always "fair", that is, having a beauty that is not ordinary. It doesn't mean fair in colour, as opposed to dark but to having a beauty like no one else. The Church is not an ordinary group of people. It is an out-standing beauty, easily picked out amongst other beauty around it. The beauty of the Church is brilliant to Christ, not to you or me. It's very bright, blazing – it is "a glorious church" that He is going to present to Himself! "Behold, thou art fair, My love; behold, thou art fair" – declaring what His Church looks like to Him. This is Christ's view of His Church.

### **Christ's Love For His Church Expressed In The Holy City**

*Revelation 21:2* "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

All that Christ has put into that building, all its glorious beauty, is an expression of His love for His Church; His opinion of what the Church looks like to Him. He has made a Place that is unrepeatable, because of how much He thinks of His Church. It says, "Prepared as a bride adorned for her husband".

v9           *"And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife."*

That is a Scriptural way of speaking of the Holy City, which will contain the Lamb's wife, and which has been built for the Lamb's wife to live in with the Lamb. That is why it has to be a glorious building, for the Lamb is preparing it for His Church to live in. Others will be there too, but it is called "*the Lamb's wife*". In other words, it is a Place where the Church will be with Him. Remember He said, "*I go to prepare a place for you.*"

How foolish a Christian can be to hanker after things in this life – because it is foolish to reject, neglect or ignore such a Love. No one will have such a high opinion of a human being as Christ has for His Church, both in respect of His own personal feelings, "*My love*", and of His opinion of what the Church looks like to Him.

The Love of God is amazing; the wonderful, matchless Humility and simplicity of Jesus Christ. And so that whole description in *The Book of Revelation, Chapter 21*, of the City, is an expression – God has it written down there! – of a Place where He will live with His Son and His Family. God is with His Son in all this of course, and He is showing us that this beauty is not His idea of life – stones and jewels are not God's idea of living, but it has to be a beautiful Place as it will be God's permanent Home. He has longed for a Family, and here it is; it is arriving – the time is coming!! Hallelujah!

**Songs 2:10 & 13**   *"My Beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away. v13 The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise My love, My fair one, and come away."*

Only the beauty of His Church will satisfy Jesus! The Shout from Heaven will be something like that, '**Come away!**' Pray God we will go away with Him!

**1 Thessalonians 4: 16-17**   *"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ" – that's the Church – "shall rise first."*

"*The Lord Himself*" – Paul didn't just content himself by the Spirit to say, 'The Lord', but "*The Lord Himself*", the One whose Church it is; who died to get this Church; who lives to fetch this Church Home!

v17           *"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*

Those remaining in Christ – the Church. Both the living and the dead transformed – all to be with Him. He said, "*Behold, I come as a thief*" (*Revelation 16:15*), in the sense of taking something valuable – thieves don't take what isn't valuable to them. And the idea here is that this is what He wants. It is valuable to Him; He takes the trouble to come and fetch it, and take it away with Him; His Church, His own personal possession – His Body.

**Song of Songs 4:1, 7**   *"Behold, thou art fair, My love; behold, thou art fair. "Thou art fair" – He keeps repeating that; v7 "Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee", contemplating with satisfaction, the beauty, the holiness of His Church ... as they will be when He meets them.*

**Ephesians 5:27**       *"That He might present it to Himself a glorious church"; "Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee"; "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."*

**Jude 24-25**      *"Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, 25. To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."*

**Song of Songs 7:6**      *"How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights."*

The Church's beauty, the beauty of its holiness, will delight Christ forever. That is what He died for. *"Who for the joy that was set before Him"* [Hebrews 12:2]. 'O love, how pleasant you are for delights.' For the Joy that was set before Him He *"endured the cross, despising the shame."*

### **The Call of God Is a Call of Love**

Christ is a Man of God of Purpose; what He sets out to do He does, with the certain object in mind. You cannot live a Christian live without having Christ as your Objective. 'I am going to live with my Beloved, as He wants to live with His love, His fair one'. There is no other way to work for God. The call of God is not easily definable in words from one to another, but it certainly is definable inside the person who is called.

It amounts to a Call of **Love**. A Love that is greater and stronger and more absorbing than any other love. The one who is called is not denied other loves – or sorrows, or heartaches or heartbreaks – but **this** Love calls one on, and the one who is called just goes on! It is very ordinary; nothing very dramatic or spectacular about it. Love works in a quiet ordinary way. That is the way men are called to serve God. They just leave a job and go where Love calls them, or do what Love calls them to do. They cannot let it go because Love has not let them go!

This is the Call of God. It is purely an irresistible Call of Love to something in the one who is called that opens up a Deep, and it is never closed again. Into that Deep is poured that Love more and more and more... When the called one feels that things are hard, when other things press and other loves and other calls come, that deep thing begins to well up, and then it has to be said, 'Your will, Lord, Your Way. I cannot not do it because You love me and now I love You'. It is good to know that for Christ, both apart from God the Father, or with God the Father, the Church is *"His love"*. He doesn't want to have God the Father separate from the Church; they must be together with Christ – and how that delights God: The Church and Christ together!

He truly is a Father. It is giving Him what He wants – a large Family upon whom to pour His Love for ever. Jesus Christ is that type of Person. He will give God that because God wanted it, and God is good and full of Love, and pure, and He needs to have what He wants. He deserves it. He deserves to have a Family that He can love, who is just like His Son; every member of it. He needs it, and He merits it. He really deserves love! None of us does, but He does – so make sure you love God! Take out all the stops!

You will not be kept from tribulation. You will have other loves and other sorrows and heartaches, distresses, disappointments, and your heart may be broken, and you may have much grief, and with pain and disappointments – but that Love will keep you. It really sustains you. *"He healeth the broken in heart"* [Psalm 147:3]. That is not a sentimental statement. How does He heal? He doesn't remove from you all memories of people; He just heals you by enabling you to answer that great Call of Love, because He said, 'I know you can do it because you love Me and I love you'.

**Songs 7:6**      *"How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights."*  
The Church's beauty will delight Christ for ever.

**Hebrews 12:2**     *"Who for the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross, despising the shame."*

I am glad God added that just to show us it wasn't an endurance, it was a vital enthusiastic putting aside of His shame, as He hung naked, covered with spittle and the shame of men. He was glorious in His Humility. That is why the Church loves Him. That is why that wretched, debased murderer hanging on a cross by His side went into Eternity with that spotless Lamb of God. Side by side they went in! Isn't that amazing? What sort of Love is that?

*"Behold, what manner of love..."* A criminal and Christ – and He was glad to take him with Him. This wretched criminal, but no longer wretched – it just shows what Love can do – transformed by Love. Love can transform everything; and not only did it transform the wretch's future, but it gave him a Love. He had possibly never loved before, like that. Here he was saying to Someone who to him was so great, realising that He was Lord in some unknown Eternity, and he remonstrated with his fellow criminal about God and fear and the Future Judgments. He knew this Person had something to do with God, so he said, *"Lord, remember me"*. It takes love to ask someone so important to take a little notice of you. It shows how much His love fell upon that man hanging by His side, in a worse state than he was, and yet to him He was his whole future world. Oh that the Church of God today would have that Vision and that great response to Jesus Christ!

**Songs 6:4**           *"Thou art beautiful, O My love, as Tirzah."*

Tirzah is the name of a woman of Israel, and it is also the name of a place where several well known people went to live. *"Tirzah"* means what Christ means the Church is – a beauty that delights; 'something that delights', satisfies and pleases. So He said, 'You are as beautiful as Tirzah. Your beauty delights Me, satisfies Me and pleases Me. It suits Me very well. I enjoy you; you are My Church, you are My love'. *"Comely as Jerusalem"* – that is, with this beauty that is to be found nowhere else, for there is no city like Jerusalem to Jesus Christ.

**Psalms 48:1-3**     *"Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge." – applied to the Church, it is very literally true.*

'You are as beautiful as Tirzah. You are comely, O My love, as Jerusalem' – a choice beauty; Christ chose the Church for His own. It has a beauty that no other being has. Nothing satisfies Christ like this; most attractive. Jerusalem always draws God to it, and a great sorrow of the Church should be that He had to destroy it. Another Jerusalem will come up [in the Millennium Reign] and that will be destroyed also [later, with all Creation], then will be the New Jerusalem, the City of the Great King. Finally, His heart's Desire! What? For a City? No! A Place where He can enjoy His Church for ever and ever! Hallelujah!

Over the ages, we can see how the vision of the Church was in God's heart, but we can only see it by the Spirit, looking back now. Looking forward, the angels couldn't see it; the prophets couldn't see it, and all the zealous, earnest seekers after Truth hadn't a clue. Satan and the evil spirits never knew a thing, and today we know these lovely truths about it! **Most attractive!** A joy above all joys. *"The joy of the whole earth."* The joy of Christ's heart – The Church!

**Songs 6:4**           *"Thou art beautiful, O My love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners."*

This is all to do with how wonderful the Church is to Christ.

An army with banners terrible to look at is obviously an army that is victorious. Its banners wouldn't be flying if it had failed to defeat the enemy, and win an overwhelming victory. Then the banners come out and the shouts of triumph and the triumphant march – so irresistible; the Church is irresistible in its attraction to Christ... “*terrible as an army with banners*” – **invincible** and **inspiring**. And we know His Church will come out with Him to the Greatest Battle of all Time – the Battle of Armageddon. The blood flows for two hundred miles [1600 furlongs, *Revelation 14:20*] and the Church is with Him in all that welter of death. Yes, He has to have the Church with Him; it is His very own, and this Scripture has perhaps a prophetic sound about it, when with its Head, the Church will be terrible as an army with banners. He will go through all those armies without any effective opposition. It will be the greatest slaughter of all time, ever known, Jesus said [*Matthew 24:21*] with the Church riding behind Him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean – nothing colourful, but to Him, the Church has all the colours of the rainbow; the blazing glory of all those Eternal stones used in the building of the City. **Every-thing** that God could think was beautiful was put into the building of that City, by God, not by man, that He may express in that way something of His opinion of His Church!

**Song of Songs 6:10**      *“Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.”*

“*As the morning*” – **full of light**. No one but the Church could be like that to Christ; full of light, no darkness in it. “*God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all*” [1 *John 1:5b*]. The Church of God is surely light. We must not allow for the darkness – that’s a sin in the Church. Full of light as the morning, for the morning is full of light – it is not the night!

“*Fair as the moon*” – different from everyone else. The moon is different from every other planet, or star! “*Fair as the moon, clear as the sun*” – having no blemish to mar the glory. Man sees spots in the sun. God did not put any there! It is a blazing light; a ball of fire. Men will always see spots, for their eyes are full of evil! But to Christ, speaking of the Church, it has no spots. “*Without spot or wrinkle*”, ‘My love is all fair’, He says. Hallelujah! “*Clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners*” – irresistible!

**Songs 1:15; 4:1**      *“Behold, thou art fair, My love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves’ eyes”, 4:1 “Behold, thou art fair, My love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves’ eyes within thy locks.”*

To Christ, **mark this**, His Church has eyes **only for God’s Word**, the Written Word and the Living Word, like the Holy Ghost. He has eyes for nothing else. So if you look by the Holy Ghost, you will see Christ only. You won’t see other things with equal intensity. You see other things, but the Vision of the Holy Ghost is cent-red on the Christ; He takes you to the Written Word. **That is the mark of the Holy Ghost operating on you** – the Word of God, as it is written! “*For what saith the Scripture*”, Paul said *Romans 4:3!*

The men and women of Berea were said to be more noble than those of Thessalonica, because they did that very thing – they searched the Scriptures to see if what Paul said was true [Acts 17:11]. They went to God’s Word by God’s Spirit. One cannot go to God’s Word by God’s Spirit and not see the Truth! One cannot go to God’s Word by God’s Spirit and not see Christ!

**Hebrews 3:7-8a**      *“Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear His voice, Harden not your hearts...)”*

**1 Corinthians 2:10**      *“But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”*

The things which have not entered into human ears to appear before human sight and enter into human emotions – the things that **God is preparing for them that love Him** – but the Holy Ghost has revealed them, for the Spirit searches the deep things of God. What does “searcheth” mean? – He goes through God’s Word to so present it to the listening ear that you hear, and see Christ. We must understand that Love takes a lot of trouble over us, and that the Holy Spirit loves me no less than Christ, no less than God. “*The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God*”. The things not of God, therefore, are discarded straight away, and the things of God are put in order by the Holy Spirit for your proper revelation and understanding of the things you ought to know.

Then Jesus Himself said in *John’s Gospel, 15:26*, “*But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me*”.

**John 14:26**      “*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall **teach** you all things, and **bring all things to your remembrance**, whatsoever I have said unto you.*”

As we read the Written Word by the Holy Ghost, we know there is a Person talking to us. We know that Christ is leading and guiding us and empowering us.

### **The Church Has Eyes As A Dove**

So the Church is said to have “*doves’ eyes*”. The Holy Spirit is represented as a dove. In *Genesis 8*, Noah sent out a dove, and when it couldn’t find land, it came back to the ark. It was looking for a fulfilment of God’s Word [God’s Promise to destroy everyone except Noah and his family]. The raven, though, flew back and forth, feeding, one presumes, on all the rotting carcasses all drowned in that dreadful Deluge. But the dove returned only the second time to the ark with a sign that dry land had appeared, then, after another week, it returned no more. [She found a place to settle.]

[These are the four Gospel accounts of Christ’s Baptism in water by John the Baptist:

**Matthew 3:16**      “*the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him*”;

**Mark 1:10**        “*the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him*”;

**Luke 3:22**        “*And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him*”;

**John 1:32**        “*I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him*”.]

The dove therefore has symbolised the Holy Ghost, not because the dove has any Divine qualities, but simply because it shows what it looked for – as the Holy Spirit **settled** like a dove upon Christ. The Holy Ghost looks for Christ. He is looking for Him now; He says, “*Come*”! [*Revelation 22:17*]. If we are going to look with the Holy Spirit, we will be looking for Christ as He does, until He comes. The Holy Spirit is a Person, not a force or an influence. We know the Great Commission: “*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me*”, *Acts 1:8*.

“*Doves eyes*”; “*Thou hast doves’ eyes*.” Oh may we have those eyes, having that Vision. Oh that we should be as Christ described it!

**Song of Songs 5:2, 6:9**      “*My sister, My love, My dove, My undefiled.*”    **6:9** “*My dove, My undefiled is but one.*”

“Undefiled.” Christ is holy, harmless, undefiled [*Hebrews 7:26*]; surely His Church must be undefiled too. “*Undefiled*” means being in the midst of filth and yet not being contaminated with it, as Christ was in the world – so are we. Undefiled by sin – spotless.

Christ's Church, then, is like He is, like the Holy Spirit is, utterly opposed to all sin in any shape or form.

*"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh" says Galatians 5:17. We are concentrating on the Holy Spirit – the undefiled Holy Spirit, who cannot be bought or bribed or turned away from God's Holy Purposes. So, neither is the Church. The Church cannot be seduced, (persuaded to do wrong), or induced, (provoked to make happen).*

Seducing spirits and doctrines of devils don't affect the Church, not because they do not come near it – they are probably swarming all around – but because they cannot get in to that Family; there is too much Power there, too much Purity and Holiness, for anything to live except what is equally pure, powerful and holy. All else must have the consuming fire – destroyed for ever.

### **No One Like The Church To Jesus Christ!**

*Song of Songs 6:9      "My dove, My undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her."*

To Christ, there is **no one** like His Church in all the Universe! Can we believe that now? It is written in the Scriptures, 'You are but one; the only one of your mother.' There were other daughters, apparently, but to Him she was the only one, *"the choice one of her that bare her."*

*1 John 4:15-21      "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. 16. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."*

We must believe this truth, that there is no one like us to Christ, saying, *"Jesus is the Son of God"*. 'What have I to fear, what have I to dread, leaning on the Everlasting arms?'

*vs17-18      "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world. 18. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."*

There is no torment in this relationship. To know and believe that there is no one like you to Christ, My! what confidence!! It would carry you through a million years of tribulation, if that was to be!

*v19      "We love Him, because He first loved us."*

### **Separated unto God by the Love of Christ**

That is the Message for the Church today. Only that strong Love can separate you. You can only come out and be separate because you are coming out to a Love that is different from other loves. It is **the Attraction**; the overwhelming Attraction of not only this wonderful Person Himself but the Love He has for you. It is very attractive, isn't it, to be loved like that? It must cause some change in my position, my life and my thinking.

So in the *Song of Songs*, in all these verses, it is **always**, *"My love"*, not just 'the love'; *"My fair one"*. Jesus Christ will never, **never, never** let His Church go; **His** Church; the Church of God – *"My love"*.

**John 10:27-28** *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: – they are His love – "My love". "...I know them, and they follow Me: – inevitably, because of that Love – And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."*

When Christ goes with the Church, He goes with **The Church!** Don't make any mistake about it. Anyone left behind is not left behind because Christ couldn't take him. It is because Christ wouldn't take him. He is not part of that Body called "My love". May God help us to see these things.

**v29** *"My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand."* Don't forget, the Father is the Head of the Family.

**v30** *"I and My Father are One."* The Church will satisfy, please, and delight Christ and the Father for ever.

### **Christ's Love for His Church: the Revelation of this Age**

**Ephesians 5:31-32** *"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh."*

Throughout Eternity the Church will be for ever where Jesus Christ is. This wonderful, amazing, unique Love of the Lord Jesus Christ for His Church is **The Revelation of this Age**, transcending all other revelations, which only come out of it. **The Love of Jesus Christ for His Church** is the Revelation of this Age.

**v32** *"This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."*

This is a great mystery now revealed. Now you personally today have the full story, **the full revelation of this mystery**. It is a great mystery because it is a great Love.

This revelation will be finally consummated in Heaven, just before Christ returns with His Church to the earth, to the Battle of Armageddon and His Thousand-Year of Rule on this earth with His Church:

**Revelation 10:7** *"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets."*

When the Seventh Angel sounds his Trumpet it is quickly followed by the pouring out of the Seventh Vial, one after the other. Through the Plague from the Sixth Angel [Revelation 16:12-14] three unclean spirits entice, seduce, all the nations to that great battlefield of Armageddon – all that will be taking place here – and **in Heaven**, the Marriage of the Lamb!!

**Revelation 19:6-9** *"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, sayings, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give hon-our to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."*

**Amen!**

## DAY 7

**Daily Readings: Isaiah 55:6-9; Hebrews 1:1-4; Isaiah 53:1-6; Revelation 21:22-27**

### SCRIPTURES FOR THE DAY'S STUDY

Exodus 28:36-41

1 Corinthians 1:2-10

Jude 1-3

1 Corinthians 6:11

## Revelations from the Scriptures SANCTIFIED IN CHRIST

**Hebrews 10:10**      *"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."*

### The Church of God Made Holy

We are now seeing by the Spirit of God **The Position** of The Church of God as a sanctified Body.

We also see that this Sanctification is **Perfect**. The Church is a Perfect Body because **God** is Perfect and it is The Church of God! This Sanctification is **once for all** – it cannot be added to or taken away from. We shall see that this Sanctification of the Church of God by God is and has been His Purpose – in fact, it had to be included in His Plan for fulfilling His desire for **a Family**, for a Church [for Christ].

Then also we shall see this Purpose of God, *"even your sanctification"* [1 Thessalonians 4:3], the creation of a sanctified Body called the Church of God, has been brought about **only** by the Power of God, through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ, once for all – a sanctified Body.

And so, we now see that the Church of God is **holy**, because God is holy.

**Hebrews 10:10**      *"By the which will – the Will of God – we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."*

**Nothing more** can be added to that sanctification. To be sanctified, Divinely or Scripturally speaking, is **to be made holy**. No man is holy; only God is holy. Even if we were made sinless, we would have to be sanctified, made holy, by our response to God's Directives. Jesus Christ said, *"I sanctify Myself"* [John 17:17] – by His Obedience, of course, to the Word of God. We were made holy by God, not just forced into a mould called *sanctification* but made holy by our relationship, by our responses, reflexes, and reactions to God's Holy Word. Sanctified means all that.

It means to be **pronounced as clean** by God – it means that God proclaims that man is holy – *"we are sanctified"* – **clean**. When God proclaims something as clean, it is clean in God's sight. That is going to be a heavy call on your faith today!

We are not accustomed to thinking cleanly of ourselves or of other people, but God says we **are** sanctified. The Church of God is **a clean Body in God's sight**; therefore we must accept the Position of being clean. 'Proclaimed clean' – that's really what *sanctified* means – to be pronounced clean by God, and observed from Heaven itself by those very keen and searching eyes as clean, holy, by God.

We should see now from these two remarks that **to doubt** is in the words of the Scriptures, to be **damned**, [Romans 14:23] because a person who is clean doesn't ever doubt God. The way we show we don't doubt God is to accept His Word as simply as it is given. To be sanctified means all that.

It means to be **pronounced pure** by God. The Church of God is pronounced pure by God, whose Church it is. The Church of God is pronounced **blameless**. *Sanctified* means all that : to be made blameless, to be made spotless; to be made innocent – every one of those words is fulfilled and met to God's satisfaction in that word "*sanctified*". In fact, often you read in the Scriptures, [giving 1 Corinthians 1:2 as a typical example] "*to the church at Corinth, beloved of God, in the name of Jesus Christ, called saints*". A **saint** is a sanctified member of the sanctified Body of Christ which is the sanctified Church of God. "*Saint*" means all that – blameless ... spotless ... innocent ... in God's sight.

This may be a heavy assault on one's faith, or lack of faith today! It is a Call to us to lift up our hearts and believe every Word of God. When you speak God's Word to me I should never be the same again, if I am the same again on that particular point, I am doubting, and that's not a sanctified life. We must maintain that **Position**; we have been given it by God. And this **holiness**, this sanctified Position, this **purity** and **blamelessness** and **spotlessness** and **innocence** – this Perfection in God's sight is in relationship with God and with Man. We don't have one kind of sanctification for God and another kind of blamelessness for men. It is the same Holiness that God has, which He pronounces His Church as having. So it's a wonderful Call today; **The Position of the Church**.

**Genesis 2:1-3**     *"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. 3. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made."*

So the seventh day was sanctified – it was pronounced a clean, holy, pure, blameless, innocent, Perfect Day. God then, by Christ – for Christ was the Creator referred to there, and God approved of everything that Christ did – made the seventh day a Special Day. He blessed it, we read. When God blesses you, you become **special** because something from God comes upon you – something Good! for God is Good! So He made the seventh day, the day after He had completed His Creation, a Special Day. He blessed it; He made it **a holy day**. He **pronounced** the seventh day a **spotless** day, a Perfect Day because, of what He'd done. Now everything was **new; clean; Perfect** – "*God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good*" [Genesis 1:31] – His own Finished Work. The Fact that it was Finished meant that it was Perfect – a Perfect Day! We miss the whole point of that Message of **the sanctified seventh day**, when we leave it at that day. It was meant to go on...

It went on a while; it didn't end in a few hours. It went on until it was broken by Adam's disobedience. It was a Perfect Day. Christ and Man could now live together in holy fellowship, innocent Fellowship, blameless Fellowship. The man and the woman were **innocent** – they were naked and not ashamed. What a tremendous thought that is – they were blameless; there was no shadow, nothing not of God in their thinking, they thought well, and they could walk with Christ and they talked with Christ on that day, for that was a Perfect Day.

There is that Eternal Day, another Perfect Day is coming, and that will go on Forever, as that day was intended to do; only the second time this Eternal Day will not be interfered with by sin! Oh, Hallelujah, That Day will go on. Jesus Christ said, “*I am the Bright and Morning Star*” [Revelation 22:16] – that is, He will usher in that Eternal Day – and that’s not poetic license! It is true! Because to God it will be always Day as there is no night there!! [Revelation 22:5 – in the Holy City] That’s a physical Fact. So if there’s no night there, it will be always Day, always, always, always!

**Exodus 19:18-21**      *“And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. 19. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice...”*

You can see that The Perfect Day had been broken. This is the relationship: God descends on a mountain in a fire; and the trumpet sounds and the mountain quakes and only one man can talk with God – what a terrible tragedy.

**vs20-21**      *“And the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.” This is not the Fellowship of that Perfect Day – “21. And the LORD said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish.” – the barrier was up, Man had put it up by his sin.*

**Exodus 20:1-2**      *“And God spake all these words, saying, 2. I am the LORD thy God – the same Lord and God who made Adam in the beginning – I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me – they hadn’t when that Perfect Day started. “God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it”.*

I believe He looked forward to that. When He rested from all the Work that He had made, it didn’t mean He didn’t want to look at it any more. He was glad that now He could give His time to what He really wanted to do – **have Fellowship** with the first two children of the Family. And so He was until the Fellowship was broken.

**vs8-10**      *“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10. But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God...”*

Oh, what rubbish has been talked about this Sabbath down these ages! Isn’t that so? What heresies, what blasphemies, what error! And the Church of God has no part in all that. ...  
*in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates – and here’s the reason – v11. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.”*

### **Holiness Joined With Holiness**

He set it apart for Himself to have Fellowship with His people, with His children. And that was the idea. They were not to work in order that they may have **more time to concentrate on their God**. This was the result of **sin**; the toil and the sweat and the labour of earning our daily living interferes with so many things that we could do and want to do and perhaps ought to do in fellowshiping with our God. And so many of us make the wrong decision, and we put money and jobs and chores and personal requirements before that Supreme Blessing – **Fellowship with Jesus Christ**.

**Hebrews 4:1-16** *“Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.”*

And so the Rest of God is here represented by that Perfect Day.

**vs4-5** *“For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works. 5. And in this place again, If they should enter into My rest” – into that lovely Fellowship with Me – no recriminations, no reproach, no revilings, no resentments, no rebellion; no sin.*

**vs6-7** *“Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: 7. Again, He limited a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.”*

So for us it should always be that Day, **a day of rest**, the day when we started our lives in Fellowship with God. The Church of God is a sanctified body; *“we are sanctified”*. Fellowship with God is only possible with two sanctified people; to a blameless, innocence, holy, spotless, pure body or an individual, because God is all those things. He has no motive except that you live with Him as He is.

**vs7b-10** *“Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. 8. For if [Joshua] had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day. 9. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. 10. For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His.”*

In that Rest, in that Fellowship, Man is concentrated on God, and God on Man. God manages very well to look after Creation, and to look after all our affairs! Jesus suggested that when He said, *“for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness”* [Matthew 6:32-33] – get into His Fellowship; enter upon His Rest – not your rest – get into that Eternal Day; that Perfect Day.

It is an Eternal Day, but call it Perfect – the Day that God had made, especially for Himself and Man. Not for His Creation; that Creation had to just fit in. It was made to **suit this life together**. It wasn't made to intrude and cause God and Man to break up the time together to have to spend managing Creation!

God's Creation functioned properly according to God's Word – the stars, the sun, the moon, the waters, the seas, the waters above the earth – all in perfect harmony, in obedience to God's Word. So they were not the cause of our troubles; no, we broke the Fellowship, *“by one man sin entered into the world”* [Romans 5:12] and spoiled that Day. It was spoiled for God as well as for Man. Sin is a spoiler, a killer of joy, and a killer of life and of purity; a destroyer, and an adulterer of the things that are **holy** and **pure** and **clean**, and **blameless**, and **spotless**, and **innocent**, and **lovely**.

**v11** *“Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest...”*

We are to labour to enter into that Rest! – the Work of God.

Jesus said, *“This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He hath sent”* [John 6:29]. So many people minister God's Word in so many ways by evangelists, preachers and teachers, and yet the way it is done today does not indicate this sort of Fellowship, this Rest. It often indicates a sort of anxiety to establish oneself, build up a work and a following, to justify one's existence, instead of having that limitless Joy, that free abundant, extravagant goal to **proclaim this holy God...**

Prior to the six days, that God did His creative Work, "the earth was without form and void", it is written, "and darkness was upon the face of the deep" [Genesis 1:2], but now Christ had finished all His work of making the heaven and the earth. Then it says, vs31, "God saw" – He inspected everything that He had made, and "it was very good". When it says "God saw everything", it means that He looked at it all closely, to see that it would suit the Family and suit Him; to see that it had been made with that objective in view – that it would suit this holy and clean, innocent, blameless, spotless Fellowship together with the man He had made on the sixth day, a living soul, and the woman. So on the sixth day Christ was very satisfied – and so was God – that everything He had made according to the Will of God the Father. Christ Himself was the Creator...

**Colossians 1:16-19** "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: 17. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. 18. And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence. 19. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell."

"In the beginning it was written [John 1:1-3] was the Word – that same life-giving creative Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God – of the same substance, equal with God, with the same Power. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made." So the whole list of created items in the first Chapter of the First Book of the Bible [Genesis] was **made by Jesus Christ**. And all those things that you don't know about were also made by Jesus Christ! There are many things in the Universe we haven't seen, "visible and invisible", He made it all. Everything God wanted done, Jesus Christ did it for Him.

**Ephesians 3: 8-12** "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; 9. And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God..."

because from the beginning of the world Man broke that Fellowship, with Satan's encouragement and instigation

...hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: 10. To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God" – as it is in Jesus Christ.

**vs11-12** "According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: 12. In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him."

The Person responsible for everything that God wants done, **perfectly, properly, entirely** as God would like it – every single thing made perfect, holy, clean, pure, spotless – that's what **sanctified** means – because **God** is holy, clean, pure, perfect, spotless, blameless. Only Christ, the Holy One of God, can make what God wants made. If God wants it made perfect, only Christ can do it; if God wants a holy Place, only Christ can produce it; if God wants a holy person, only Christ can produce him! 'Hallelujah, what a Saviour!' we sing!

**Isaiah 40:25-31** The whole Chapter is worth studying. "To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One" – Christ speaking, vs26, "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things" – it doesn't tell you to look at the things, but at Who has created them. We best understand Creation when you look at the Creator! That is why God is so particular to tell us Who is the Creator; Who has done all these things. So Christ reminded His very dull and blind people – dull through unbelief and blind through their continuance in their doubtful disputations –

*"Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number..."* It is not necessary for us to know how many galaxies of stars there are to know the greatness of God. We know how great God is when we know Jesus Christ! – because beyond the galaxies of stars there is much more; there's Eternity! *"...Who hath created these things..."* – Who indeed! *"...He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power..."* Not a lot said about the Creation, but quite a lot about the Creator! *"...for that He is strong in power; not one faileth."* – that's all that is necessary for us to know, that the whole of the heavens continues on an ordered course, by that Word keeping it going; that Word that comes out of your Saviour, the Head of the Body, the Church.

*vs27-28* *"Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God?"* – unsanctified words; unholy statements; full of blame, and guilt; for which an account must be required.

An account must be required of all men who disbelieve, distrust and disobey the Word of the Creator. *"28. Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding."* The Church is holy, because God is holy, and we only see Him as the Holy One when we accept our Position in the Church as a sanctified person – as a person made holy, made pure, made blameless by this same Creator God. A blameless person in God's sight will see that Christ is in control of everything. An innocent person; a holy person in God's sight, relies on Christ all the time; takes it just as a Fact as real and necessary as breathing that Christ cannot faint nor be weary and He manages everything.

*vs29-31* *"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. 30. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall."*

Creation is only important when you see Who the Creator is. That's all you need to know about infallible man, that they faint and grow weary and fall, *"31. But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."* See Christ's Eternal Strength; Christ's effortless Energy mounting up with wings as eagles; Christ's boundless enthusiasm. *"They shall run and not be weary"* – enthusiasm to do what God wants; *"and they shall walk and not faint"* – Christ's exhaustless Patience!

### **Christ' Perfection In The Church**

The Church of God then, is perfect. It waits upon its Lord. A sanctified person, that is, one made holy by God, made pure, made blameless, made spotless, made innocent, will wait upon God. Of a truth, that person must wait upon God, in order to maintain that Position of Holiness. And so the Church of God is perfect – you are perfect if you have Christ's Eternal Strength, Christ's effortless Energy, Christ's boundless enthusiasm to do what God says, Christ's exhaustless Patience! We are told that patience can have its perfect work, *"But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing"* [James 1:4] for the Church has everything; it's waiting on the Lord.

The Church of God then is perfect, because Christ did a Perfect Work. We have already read of how He made a perfect Creation. He saw everything that it was very good. He examined it; He inspected it and found it very good! Oh, that it would be possible for us to remember that that is what The Church, the Church of God does; it invites its Lord to inspect everything that its holiness can be tested by that Eye of holiness. *Revelation 1:14* says, *"His eyes were as a flame of fire"* because that's a sign of what's in Him, that Holiness. Your eyes, it says, [Matthew 6:22-23] always show what's in you and His certainly did! *"A flame of fire"*! He did a perfect Work to present to God a perfect Church.

**Hebrews 9:12**     *“Neither by the blood of goats or calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”*

These verses include that word **“once”**, which simply means **complete**; not necessary to do it again; never to be done again – **one complete whole Work**. The Church of God is that; Creation was that, but the very man and woman that God made spoiled it. But no-one can spoil the Church of God! Its Position is fixed as sanctified by **“the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all”**. No more – once. Burn that word into your heart. We have to do the burning in; God is giving it to us. We must bury it in our hearts. **““Once”**, we must say, **‘once it happened.’** **Use that word to destroy** Satan’s advances and Satan’s subtleties; his presumptions to tempt the Church, and **to destroy** demon powers, saying ‘once you have been cast out of that body, you shall not come in again – that’s enough; **once’**. God’s Work is a complete Work – **“once for all”**.

**v26**             *“For then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”* – not the end of the world physically as it is, but in God’s own reckoning. It was the end of the world in that now this amazing Body called the Church of Jesus Christ was going to function.

The end of the world in God’s sight began the Church Age – the Age of Revelation, the Age of Redemption; the Age started by the Resurrection from the Dead of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Oh, it’s a great Age which will also see the Re-turn of the Saviour, will it not? We are in a good Age – see that we enjoy it; see that we live it out!

**vs27-28**       *“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28. So Christ was once offered – final; the Church does not need to look for another sacrifice; or continually to be cleansed from old things put away before it even knew that Christ had died for the sins of the world – to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin...”*

The Work is **complete** so the Church says **“without sin** – Christ has to be perfect and do it well because God wants it done well and only Christ could do it; that is why He is God’s Chosen One – ... **unto salvation.**”

**Hebrews 7:26-28** *“For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled – different words, but meaning the same thing; sanctified – separate from sinners – clearly seen, clearly noted as being different; sanctified. The Church is different because the Holiness of God makes it different – and made higher than the heavens; 27. Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this He did once, when He offered up Himself. 28. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath – God’s oath – which was since the law, maketh the Son – with no infirmity – who is consecrated for evermore.”*

**“Maketh” Him** – you can add, ‘that High Priest that God has sworn He was going to have forever; perfect’. Everything Christ did is perfect – He’s the Perfect Offerer, the Perfect Offering, the Perfect Sacrifice, the Perfect High Priest – all according to God’s Holy Word. **“Made perfect”** ... **“sanctified”** ... **“once”** – **one complete Work**.

**Isaiah 53:10**     *“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him  
– in spite of the fact that He was sinless; in spite of the fact that He had proved that He is a Man without help from God, but under the Spirit’s control had lived a blameless Life ... in spite of all that – it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand”* – a perfect Work.

The Church of God is perfect because Christ did a perfect Work for a perfect God. It's marvellous when you come to think of it. Spend hours – take hours out of your day, and not just enjoy it, but drink it in, these simply truths, which you know so well, and then go out and live it in the sight of your God!

*v11* “He shall see of the travail of His soul – Christ shall, the prophet said – and shall be satisfied:

– He was satisfied on the sixth day when He had made all His works; very satisfied! He had to be, because He examined it all – nothing blind or broken or maimed [reference to *Leviticus 22:22*, offering unto the LORD]; nothing wrong was made by God, by Christ. He saw it was very good, and He saw the travail of His soul, His other Work He performed in another way, but just as perfectly – and shall be satisfied: *by His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.*”

**Isaiah 55:10-11** “For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: 11. So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void – ‘do a perfect Work, as I want it done’ – but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” – pronounced clean: “we are sanctified”, proclaimed holy, made perfect, blameless, innocent.

The Church of God then, has a clean Body; it has a clean conscience, because it is concentrated on **Christ Crucified** and not on sin. The ‘modern Christian’ looks too long and too hard and too much at sin, to their continual failing, and therefore perhaps to the great damage of the heart and life of the lookers-on. The heart and the vision go together. The eye is supposed to be single, and then the whole body will be **full of light**. The argument that I should not ignore what is wrong has no bearing on this truth at all. If you are looking at Christ, you will know what is wrong, and you will do what is right – for yourself and for the wrongdoer, with a heart and conscience that is clean.

**Hebrews 10:1-2** “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of those things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect

– quite right, they couldn't do, the Law couldn't, because it was based on those sacrifices and every one reminded the sacrificers of sin. It reminded the offerers of sin; it reminded the priest of sin. It was a **reminder** of the sins they had committed, so how could it make them perfect? – 2. *For then would they not have ceased to be offered?* – what divinely simple logic – *because that the worshippers once purged* – in their conscience, from the consciousness of being full of sin, from the consciousness of having to look at sin – *should have had no more conscience of sins.*” Now concentrated on their Saviour, but that was not possible when each time the bullocks and the rams and the goats, and the doves and the lambs were brought and slain for their sins, each time, each time...

*v3* “But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.”

The Day of Atonement was a confession of sin; otherwise there would have been no atonement necessary each year. Every year the nation had to be cleansed from their sin – once a year. A great ceremony, a great day; but every year it was the same. God couldn't just patch it up, and say, ‘no more of sin, why are you doing this?’ He couldn't – till Jesus came; until the Great Creator, who has made everything perfect for God, whom He loved. For Christ, God must have the Best, and so must the Church – so Jesus came.

*v4* “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins”

Of course not! It was only a point of contact, to bring the people to the point of realising that their Deliverer had to be Divine, and only in that way could they leave their sins. Mankind couldn't go on and on and on killing bulls and goats and rams, and turtledoves and lambs; we could not, there had to be an end to that.

*vs5-8* "Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me: 6. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sins Thou hast had no pleasure. 7. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me,) to do Thy will, O God. 8. Above when He said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin Thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law

- for the reason already stated: they didn't put away sin. It was the Will of God; His driving Passion, that He should have a Family, as He wanted; holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, innocent, blameless, spotless in His sight, able to walk with His Son, and talk with His Son; able to give His Son pleasure, as the Son gave God the Father pleasure. Hallelujah!

*vs8b-9* "Above when He said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin Thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; 9. Then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second."

So only in that Submission, only in that acceptance of the situation, and what was needed, does Man find any Hope. Man ruined His Creation, and the Creator came Himself! - to make a better Creation - Oh, Hallelujah! Just fancy that!! Out of it all has come Perfection - **a perfect Church**, not someone just made sinless, but someone who knows how to live sinless - that's a different proposition all together!

Adam was made sinless, and fell into sin. The last Adam was made sinless and stayed sinless, and rose out of that shambles and agony and death as a Perfect Man - God's Creation realised at last. It is the point of contact, of Hope for everyone. Everything is going to be gathered together, as it is written, into one, even in Christ. He is the Real Hope of the Universe; He is God's Hope; He is your Hope. He is the Creation's Hope - it's been travailing in pain together until now [*Romans 8:22*] waiting for the Creator's voice to shutter it down and take the sons of God from out from there, to be changed to be with Him There!

All Creation will join in that great fundamental Change. It's waiting for that; waiting for the physical redemption, the physical salvaging; the physical rescue operation! the bringing out of a Body of people, once for all, a sanctified work, and given bodies to suit their sanctified living.

*v10* "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all".!

### **A Clean Conscience**

The Church of God has a clean conscience, **because it is concentrated on Jesus Christ**. We have to accept that as the Bible puts it. If you work that into your life, you will find such a great change in your whole bearing, your outlook; your whole life will be changed. For one thing, you will avoid that serious crime of unsanctified living that the Israelites indulged in - "*they do always err in their heart*"; they murmured; they complained.

The Church is a sanctified Body; it cannot complain, as it has nothing to complain about. It can't complain about Christ; that's their whole concentration! So, it really will change your vision, if you take it, seriously. It's time we did!

It's time we saw what the Church is in God's sight and what we are in our own today. Not everyone that says, 'Lord, Lord', in church will be raptured, because it won't be possible [Matthew 7:21]. How can I, absorbed in my own self, my own affairs in the world, and in my own life, without concentrating on Christ, living that Holiness; how can I hear that Shout? I'll never hear it. The conscience would be too troubled with other things. Choose the good path today, and it shan't be taken away from you. You'll see Him some day. And then the Church of God also, in concentrating on Christ, of course, is concentrated on His Word, not on the world.

The Church has a clean conscience; its concentration is **First** on Christ, not on itself, which means not on sin. Because we have sin in us, in our self, our self is full of sin. We have to take our eyes off it, and not feed it, and indulge it and look after it, instead of doing what we are supposed to do by the Spirit, "*mortify the deeds of the body*" [Romans 8:13b] - crucify the flesh, which we can and do by the Spirit, not by our own will.

Then **Second**, it has a clean conscience **because it is set on God's Word** and not on the world. When it indulges in the world's affairs, it's really looking at things from men's points of view and that dirtys the conscience - the Christian conscience, the Church's conscience.

**John 17:9-15**     *"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine. 10. And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them. 11. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world and I come to Thee. Holy Father*

- that's a good description of what we're talking about; blameless, innocent, right in everything, pure, spotless - *Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one as We are. 12. "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name: those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13. And now come I to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves. 14. I have given them Thy word;*

- nothing to do with the world; the source of all your life is not from the world. We're under no obligation to the world - all our issues are from Heaven - *and the world hath hated them* - obviously - *because they are not of the world* - the Church has a clean conscience; it is not bothered about men's hate to wonder if it was the wrong thing to speak about the Lord in certain company.

Its conscience is clean, because it's concentrated on its Lord and it's concentrated on its Lord's Word - *I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them* - because the Word is God's Word - *because they are not of world, even as I am not of the world. 15. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil [one]* - is that prayer is not answered? Do thousands of us who go into the world to work for our living go in our own strength, exposed to all the filth of the world in our own power? **He** said, "*I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil [one]*". The direct people involved were His disciples, but then we find He was praying the same prayer for others to believe on Him, through the word of those men He was praying for! That prayer goes with you, it covers you!

The Church has a clean conscience; it's not troubled about things because it's looking up on Jesus. Practically speaking, that's a very good way to live in this world; to remember Christ's activities before you get troubled about your own. "*They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*" - the truth - so the Church is a sanctified Body; a holy Body, a harmless Body, an innocent Body, a perfect Body, and it's a blameless Body, because **it is living by that Word**. The Church of God then has a clean conscience because it is a sanctified Body. The Church of God also has no doubt about its innocence, about its perfection, before God and man. It must be said that way - before God and man.

**Hebrews 10:11-14** *“And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:*

– that’s religion, and it creates no confidence in a man’s innocence before God and man. But the Church of God, that sanctified, blameless, harmless, perfect, spotless, holy, pure Body is quite confident, with no doubts about its innocence, its rightness, before God and man. –

*12. But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13. From henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool – He has finished the Work that perfects the Church – 14. For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”*

Looking at this Word with God’s eyes, we see that Christ does not have to do the same work again, **ever**. Once is enough.

He didn’t remake the mountains, or the rivers. He once fixed water above the firmament and something kept up that terrific weight of water! No-one has ever said they experienced being submerged by waters breaking loose from above the firmament. The only time that happened was when the same Creator deluged the whole earth and drowned it so to speak - and we know that was done by Him; and never has it been known that any of those waters escaped from where they are supposed to be and destroyed any part of this earth. **Once only He does it**. Hallelujah!

*“For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.”* Holiness cannot be destroyed. Holiness cannot be defeated. Holiness cannot be overcome. Holiness cannot be deceived, or deluded, no, no, no!! We know that; we’ve got the Answer already – of course it can’t. And of course the Church can’t ... Holiness... And so the Church has no doubts about its innocence, its ability to remain innocent. No doubts at all; the Work has been done. It relies entirely on that Work. If we live by that Work we will continue to live by that Work! We won’t go down in defeat. The Church of God does not know defeat. People might, but the Church of God does not know defeat – it is part of a holy Family.

**Hebrews 2:11** *“For both He that sanctifieth – Christ – and they who are sanctified – the Church – are all of one – one Father; all one holy Family – for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren”.*

Now I put it another way: How could Christ claim that He is not ashamed to call people “brethren” if He thought they could not live an innocent, harmless, holy, faultless, undefiled, perfect life? Because He is not ashamed to call them “brethren” He expects to meet them some day, physically.

**Ephesians 5: 26** *“That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word – Holiness springs from Love – of God. Out of that Love comes Holiness. “Love worketh no ill to his neighbour” [Romans 13:10] – Holiness is not accustomed to working ill to its neighbour; it’s Perfect and pure.*

Then this Church, this sanctified Body of Christ on earth, is conscious also of its ability to serve God as God wants. That is, to do His Work in a holy way – His holy way, His spotless way, His blameless way, in the sight of God and man. Not for the Church the Scripture records thus: *“did right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart”* – that is not written of the Church.

**Hebrews 9:13-14** *“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: 14. How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”*

God's Church is conscious of its ability to serve God, a holy God, a blameless God, an innocent God, a spotless God, a perfect God, in that way - in a holy, harmless, blameless, spotless, perfect way. So that remark was made if religious observances could make a man outwardly do certain righteous things, "*sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God - that too was spotless - purge your conscience from dead works - that is, spotted works; works full of blame, works not perfect, works that are guilty before God, wrong motives, wrong reasons, wrong ambitions, wrong loves, wrong desires. Many, many Christians indulge in those works not of God - to serve the living God?"*

God's servants working for God in the Church will see in themselves if what they do is genuinely what God wants done. That is having a clean conscience before God. They are not restive, or uncertain, or distressed in themselves, speaking about bearing difficulties, but as servants of God, what is in their hearts with God. They are not guided to know whether they are right or wrong according to their measure of success or failure, but when they know in their clean conscience that they are doing what God has called them to do, then they are serving God and they do a successful Work. They are not perturbed by what goes on around, because they are not looking at what goes on around to estimate what they are doing, whether it's right or wrong, they are looking at the Christ, and they are concentrated on His Word.

The whole twenty-five verses of Jude are worth reading. They are pure rivers of Salvation, a great blessing to the soul, after the way our thoughts have been going through these meditations. But let us first be reminded that the beginning and the end *verses 1 & 24-25* indicate exactly the Position of the Church of God...

*Jude v1* "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father - according to the will of God - and preserved in Jesus Christ, - by the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant, if you like - and called:"  
- now that's the Position as stated. Jude is as precise as his Saviour and he's stated exactly the type of person he is writing to: the Church of the Living God - sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ - and he finishes up in the same way...

*vs24-25* "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, - they are still preserved in Jesus Christ; they're still sanctified, they're still the Church of the Living God - and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, 25. To the only wise God our Saviour, - who else could it be - be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

The Church of God; it has no doubts about its innocence - Jude didn't; and in between those verses you read the most terrible story of sin. His short message ranges from Eternity to Eternity. It covers all Salvation and all sin; we just covered Salvation, Hallelujah! But all that about sin has no effect on the Church.

*v3* "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

People preach on that as though we are in a terrible state, but it's only to tell you what the Church should do; it isn't intended to send the Church cowering into a corner! Don't forget the first verse! "*to them that are sanctified by God the Father*" and the last two verses, "*Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling...*" Don't forget those verses! Read those two verses first. This is one story where it is allowable to read the end before you read the middle.

Read the beginning first, then the end, then read the intervening bits. And there you get, not the struggle, but the victory – the more-than-conquering Life of the Church!

*vs4-5* “For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. 5. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.” And so on it goes...

If people fall into the snares of that type of person, then they are obviously not sanctified, they are obviously not maintaining their Position; they obviously have doubts about their innocence, and they are obviously not concentrated on Christ and on His Word... And the sorry story goes on ... the angels, the sodomites and the people of Gomorrha, those gone the way of Cain, the error of Balaam, the gainsaying of Core. And then he says this is the type of people they are, whom he compares with all these:

*v12* “These are spots in your feasts of charity  
– these are the Scriptures from **God’s point of view**, and here is a man of God perfectly confident that he has God’s Vision of those who are sanctified by God the Father, who are able to be kept from falling until that glorious Perfect Day arrives, and he tells them where the spots are inside their feasts – “when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water”.

Has it ever occurred to you that if Jude could find it out by God’s Spirit, can’t the people to whom he was writing these things find it out by God’s Spirit too, already knowing this? It’s easy really to deal with sin; with evil, if you have this Vision of the Church – a perfect Church, a holy Church, an innocent Church, a harmless Church, an undefiled Church; not looking at sin, but at Christ. A person looking for sin will never succeed in the Church; they won’t know who is doing what, that’s for sure!

But you take a long, good, hard look at Jesus Christ and you’ll be able to deal with the wrong, perhaps even as skilfully as your Master and your Lord, that no-one will be hurt, and the person will be healed of the desperate malady that afflicts him or her.

Local churches that are members of the Body of Christ, the Church of God, do not have anything to fear. They must be watchful; they must concentrate on Christ; they must have God’s Word saturating their lives, and their innocence will reveal everything. God is able to work on that sort of life. Innocence is unbeatable; it cannot be deluded. And where there is light, darkness must be seen prominently there. These are the privileges of the Church of God...

*v12b* “Clouds they are without water, carried about of winds  
– these descriptions again for us to know that the Church can find it out! That is what it is written for; that the Church has already started to find it out, so if they found it out, we will too! How did they know they had found it if they were not sure that they were sanctified by God, and they were able to be kept from falling and to be presented faultless... If we don’t find it out, if the Church couldn’t, these things wouldn’t be true...

*vs17-19* “But, beloved, remember ye the words – Jude concentrates on what really matters. He’s given his thoughts because God told him to, but he’s not going on about it, he now comes back to what is **the solution**, so that all the Church after him could do that very thing.  
“... remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ – they have to be the Lord’s Apostles – 18. How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. 19. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit” –

He's given you a clear blue-print of how to operate.

So the Church of God is not taken out of its Position, to descend into the realms of fear and panic and gossip and searching and criticising and using its own mind; it doesn't do that – it is innocent. Christ has to tell His Church what is wrong, because it doesn't know. The Holy Spirit is in the Church for that purpose, and Christ knows that – that's why He got Jude to write it!

*vs19-20* “These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not – what? – the Spirit” ! It is clearly revealed: “having not the Spirit. 20. But ye, beloved – again, it is a separation, “**But**”. The Church is now being spoken to – ye beloved – He still calls you “beloved”, so the Church even with all these terrible dangers is still “beloved”, still “sanctified by God the Father”, still “preserved in Jesus Christ”, still, **booked for Heaven**, able to be kept, able to be preserved, to be presented faultless. So he writes in that easy, lovely way:

*“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost....”*

In the previous Study we looked at how we have to pray. If we are going to believe how much Christ loves the Church, we have to know it **by the Spirit**. We can't know it by our flesh, we never will; we are all fleshly people. It says that: “dreamers”, “filthy dreamers” [v8] all of the flesh – “having not the Spirit”. But you have; that's what he means, ‘but you, having the Spirit, “beloved, building up yourselves” – you that have the Spirit, who are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called into this Church, build up yourselves *on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God*”. Jude would not have been permitted to write this if it were not true.

The Church of God is a sanctified Body, not doubting God. [NB. *Romans 14:23*]. If your soul doubts God's Word, you are not sanctified. We must be rid of all doubt, and step into the Church of God, believing everything that is written in this Word. The holy Scriptures are able to make you wise unto **God**, the God that is coming for you – so you know what is all around you and how bad the danger is, but you know Him, and when He wants you out He will deal with it – we are innocent!

*vs21-23* This is how you will know that Christ loves you, by concentrating on that Love, by believing it – “Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”

And here is the work: “22. And of some have compassion – obviously such a Church must be able to know how to deal with that – of some have compassion, making a difference – completely in control of the situation – 23. And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire – in each case, success is the result of this sanctified Church's operation, whether by having compassion and making a difference or by saving with fear and pulling out of the fire – *hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.*”

And we'll end with that note again: Jude's Vision, because he was sanctified; Jude's fixed conviction because he was sanctified, because he was innocent, harmless and blameless:

*vs24-25* “Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, 25. To the only wise God our Saviour – and we'll add: **Jesus Christ, the Righteous** – be glory and majesty, dominion, and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

(end of morning session)

(afternoon session)

## The Positive Clean Position of The Church of God

The Church of God is only visible in its glorious Position by the Spirit. And we have seen the glories of its perfection in that the Church of God is a holy Body, because it is the Church of God and God is holy. We see that it is a sanctified group of people, clean in God's sight, pure, blameless, innocent, harmless, perfect, spotless; called "*saints*". The Church of God has a clean conscience because God has a clean conscience; therefore it is able to concentrate on Christ Crucified. If to concentrate on Christ keeps the conscience clean, it is only as one keeps that clean conscience that one can see Christ by the Holy Ghost. How otherwise can the Holy Spirit get through to a conscience with these glorious visions when it is anxious and troubled about many things? The Church of God is more concerned with the Word of God than with men's words. If only we could believe that! It is true of The Church. It is not interested in men's view of things; otherwise its conscience would be sullied in a minute. It is settled on God's Word. That is what keeps your conscience clean from fret and guilty fear, because you are doing what God says. You are confident that is right!

Then we see that such a Church has no doubts about its Position of sanctification – that is its innocence and perfection before God. Such a Church is conscious of its abilities to serve God as He wants to be served. We are seeing that in that service as **Jude** presents it by the Holy Ghost in his letter in the Scriptures: that the Church can deal with every situation. Even with deadly dangers in its midst, in the shape of evil men masquerading as Christians, it can remain holy; it can maintain its Position of holiness, spotlessness and blamelessness.

We are seeing how that Question was asked: "*What fellowship hath light with darkness... and Christ with Belial?*" The Church has the answers to all these questions. No amount of justifying of actions will keep the conscience clean. Actions are only to be measured and standardised according to the Word of God. That is the check of what is right and what is wrong. That is why you find that The Church has a clean conscience. It is a very practical thing to say that.

It cannot find the necessary mental and spiritual time to be prying into other people's faults and failings; always looking at them and so sullyng itself. It is too absorbed in delivering people from those things. It concentrates on Christ and not on sin. It concentrates on God's Word and not on men's words. It is quite clear on its **Position** as a sanctified Body of people. It is quite confident and conscious of its ability to serve God in the way God wants its holy, spotless, blameless service.

A conscience like that is not troubled, but if one serves God in a dubious fashion, doing what He wants and doing other things that He doesn't want, surely the conscience cannot be clean. So The Church is not like that; it has the light of God in it. We read in *Jude 1* earlier that the Church remains undefiled, "*to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ...*" and able to build itself up, "*But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*" [vs20-21].

Then again, the Church is "*sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*" [Hebrews 10:10]. We saw that it does not need any more Offering. It does not need any more Offering or work on God's part to assure it that it has been cleansed. Such a Church, the Church of God, is just as God is. It is afraid to sin. "*The fear of the Lord is to hate evil*" [Proverbs 8:13] and so This Church is in the same Position, that is, it is afraid to come out of its holy Position, which is what the sin would do.

**Hebrews 10:26-27**      *“For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27. But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”*

The Church maintains its Holy Position. It is not in this dubious state.

**vs28-29**      *“He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?”*

It does not necessarily mean that such people are doing awful sins. If it is the habit of someone professing membership of such a Church to always be troubled about life; over-charged with care – that could be the case – then the Son of God is not worth very much to that person. The Blood of the Covenant assures that person that God has the matter in hand, and that it is not necessary to be troubled. The conscience can remain clean, untroubled – not anxious – and then that person could be all right. One can sin wilfully along those lines, and not consider it to be a sin. That is why it would be wilful to continue to do it.

*“And hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing...”* God says we have a clean conscience, so we need not be troubled about unresolved problems. He will assist; He will get them done. If I continue to be troubled, then really I am not regarding His Assurances. The Chief Assurance to the Church of God that its conscience has no need and has nothing in its life to make it troubled, is the Blood of the Cross.

If I continue to be troubled, it could be said from God’s point of view to be trampling Christ under foot; making the Blood of the Covenant an unholy thing. Because the Blood of the Cross makes me holy, and holy people are not troubled with the tribulations of this life. They suffer them because they are in this world, but it doesn’t affect their relationship with God or with Christ. It doesn’t affect the Power God has given them to use day by day. It doesn’t affect their ministry or their ability as the Church of God. They deal with every situation as they know they can deal with it. They are not either paralysed with fear or preoccupied with doubt. It doesn’t affect the giving of themselves to God’s Work!!

**vs30-31**      *“For we know Him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge His people. 31. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”*

The Church is afraid to sin in any way, to come out of its holy **Position** of security and safety; out of its **Position** of cleanliness, where there are no dark shadows of doubt, and the stench of unbelief. It knows that this holy Position of sanctification and innocence is what God desires, so it holds on to it.

**Galatians 1:3-5**      *“Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, 4. Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: 5. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”*

Such a Church is untroubled. It has the Grace and the Peace of God. It has the deliverance of the Lord Jesus Christ from this present evil world.

**1 Corinthians 1:30-31**      *“But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31. That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” “But of Him”, that is, of God the Father, “are ye in Christ Jesus”. The Church has its Position.*

Just as Christ is specifically located on God's Right Hand, the Church is also located specifically on God's Right Hand. In Christ, all the Church's needs are met. It is obviously a point of contact. It maintains its Holiness; it is confident of its blamelessness because it knows where to locate Christ. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God", says Colossians 3:1.

**1 Corinthians 1:30** means that as we by the Spirit of God concentrate on God's Word and therefore on Christ, we will see the sense that God makes of it – that God deals with us on that basis of having possession of the wisdom, righteousness, the blameless innocence, and that freedom from all the trammels of sin, that is in Christ Jesus. He shows us that we have the same characteristics. So if we do not maintain that Position through God's Word, we cannot maintain it any way, so one would fall into doubt and disputations and just an idle religious life. Idle in respect of God; perhaps very involved otherwise, but we are seeing the Church of God, and to what profit is it then to build again the things which were once destroyed? [Galatians 2:18]

**1 Thessalonians 4:1-6** "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. 2. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. 3. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: 4. That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; 5. Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: 6. That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified."

It is maintaining the Position we have been given. The Church of God is holy because God is holy. If that soaks into members of the Church then they will be holy too. They will know they are blameless and they will live it. Accusations, charges and temptations fall away. They fall off them. They do not affect the life at all.

v7 "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

Many activities come into the category of uncleanness, not just only carnal offences or immoralities from which the Church, all those who call themselves Christians would quite rightly flee from, but anything that does not promote the glory of God purely in your life might well be included by the Holy Spirit under the category of "uncleanness", because there is only One Spirit who is holy. All other spirits are unclean. That means if I am not doing something that God wants, obviously I am not following the Holy Spirit – so then what spirit am I following? The Church knows that its holiness is what God desires from it.

**Matthew 26:37-54** is one of the records of Christ in Gethsemane. It tells of the great contest waged with the flesh. His flesh was sinless flesh; ours is sinful – but the flesh is the flesh! He said: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" [John 3:6] and He was born of flesh and blood. So He said to His disciples, 'I know the flesh is weak; the spirit is always willing' [v41]. A good spirit is willing in a man, but the flesh is a weak thing; it cannot really live up to God's Call. So here is the Contest between the flesh and the spirit, knowing that the spirit has been put into a Position of holiness by the Lord. "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." God and Church both holy.

"It is finished" [John 19:30] – not to be done again. Holiness has not been arrived at for the Church, and so any contest between flesh and spirit must issue forth in Victory for God. So we see that three times the Lord Jesus Christ spoke to God on the matter of the Cross, and three times He came away having stated His Decision. It is not recorded that God gave Him any answer. The Church of God knows the Holiness that it has is that which God desires.

God does not wish to change the Position at all, so whatever circumstances, in the case of Christ, it was this Work He had to do; dying for the sins of the world, and the flesh doesn't like to die. This was the Contest – inevitably the spirit won.

v39           *“And He went a little further, 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.”*

v42           *“He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.”*

These Decisions have far reaching effects, because the Church of God is very influential with God, and what it does is important to God – so here we are! with the Head of the Church, the Foundation of the building! He acknowledged that the Holiness that He had as God manifest in the flesh had to be lived out; had to be maintained. We have to work it out in our lives, that is, maintain it. Holiness is not really an attitude; it is a characteristic revealed by an action. It is part of God's Character to be Holy, that is, to remain holy under all conditions, which obviously involves actions – positive actions at all times. Even if there were no sin, the positive action of Holiness would be in its unchangeable Love; the Purity of the activity producing the Blessing.

vs 52-53      *“Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. 53. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels?”*

He had considered that possibility, and He had put it aside.

### **Maintaining The Position of Holiness**

Holiness must maintain its Position. The same contest went on when Satan said to Him, ‘See all the kingdoms of the world...’ [Matthew 4:8]. He waited to show Christ the whole lot, not just the earth and the mountains and rivers and so on, but the world of men and women – the Kingdoms of the world; the people Christ had come to die for; thousands and thousands of them. And Satan said, ‘All this is mine’ – and it was. How? Men were all following in their hearts this evil person. Their hearts were not with God, so Satan said, ‘It is mine to give if You will acknowledge that fact. If You fall down and worship me as I have the superior part over You in respect of the world’. Jesus maintained His Holiness. He would not have maintained His Holiness if He had destroyed Satan at that point with the Word, saying, ‘You really are being foolish’ – that would not have displayed Holiness which is to do what God wants done, knowing that you are pleasing God.

So He went to the Cross and said to Satan, ‘Your business is not to tempt God but to serve and worship Him all the days of your life. He went on with that statement – to do the same thing; not to speak and discuss, or even stand up for His own right or even exercise His own proper Power to deal with Satan. He went on to the Cross. That is Holiness. That is the Church's Holiness; its spotlessness. So then the Church prays that it shall be kept in this Holy Position, this blameless Life, this innocence, this purity before God, this spotlessness until Christ comes to gather it Home!

**1 Thessalonians 5: 14-25**      *“Now we exhort you, brethren – we encourage you; we call you; we invite you to come near to your Head, your Holy Head – warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded – these are all Commands. ‘Did you do that?’ would be the question asked at the Judgment of the Church – support the weak, be patient toward all men.”*

This is Holiness in action.

**v15**        *"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good – that which is of God, obviously. The Church of God will only be concerned with ministering the things of God – both among yourselves, and to all men."* The rules go on; the Holy Rules...

**v16**        *"Rejoice evermore."* Just fancy if that was a rule of admission to a local church! We are expected always to be rejoicing. That is a Rule of the Church of God!

**v17**        *"Pray without ceasing."* How about that for another rule?! It is a Rule! That is why we have not made rules! All we have to do is to keep to the Rules from the Scriptures themselves. It saves time and argument, and in this way you can see that is what God has written to you as the Church of God. One couldn't write that to an unholy community. One couldn't write to them, *"Rejoice evermore"*. What are they going to rejoice in? – the lusts of their flesh? It doesn't last very long! To whom are they going to pray? – their own idols? They get tired of that!

**v18**        *"In everything give thanks – it is a Rule of the Church of God.*

Only a holy Body of people could do that. Only a clean conscience could always say, 'Hallelujah, Lord! I know this is difficult, but I'm so happy that You know it too'. That is what the Church of God understands that they wouldn't be in that difficulty if Christ didn't think they would get out of it. He wouldn't let them get into it.

*"God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able"* it is written in 1 Corinthians 10:13. Holy people understand that.

*"In everything give thanks – it means that the Church of God is saying, 'I have no cause to complain'. It is only when you have something to complain about that you stop being thankful! Obviously! – for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*

In the previous Chapter, 4 v3: *"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification"* – by this Word, because it is His Purpose that Christ give His Body to the Cross that we should be made holy, blameless, innocent... A person who is as innocent as God would be giving thanks in everything; and as innocent as the Lord Jesus would realise that. To give thanks to God is the obvious thing to do – God is not giving cause for complaint. In fact, the reverse: He is giving cause for Joy every time! He delivers you from the cause for complaint.

**v19**        *"Quench not the Spirit."* We can really cloud the activities of the Holy Ghost by carnal living; by not maintaining the Position of Holiness. The Holy Spirit works with a holy people. It is only through the Church that the Holy Ghost convinces unholy men of their unholy and that Christ can save them from it.

**v20**        *"Despise not prophesyings."* To hear the prophesy, the statements, the outgoings of God, what we should do, what will happen if we don't do it, what will happen if we do do it – to hear these things is to obey. To take no notice is quenching the Spirit. That is another Rule!

**v21**        *"Prove all things – go to God's Word. A holy Church will always go to God's Word. It will not have truck with people's discussions on the matter, unless God's point of view is taking the centre of the discussion – hold fast that which is good"* – that which is of God.

**v22**        *"Abstain from all appearance of evil."* Abstain from it; don't get into it and then get out of it. This can only be written to a holy Body.

**v23**            *“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly – isn’t it a complete work! (“Once for all”; sanctified by the Blood of the Cross. “...sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all”) –*

*and I pray God – this is the prayer of the Church – your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Up to that time is what you need – sanctified, holy, innocent, spotless, pure, perfect, saintly. It means all that.

**v24**            *“Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.”* The Church prays that it shall be kept in its holy Position.

**Luke 21:33-36**            *“Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not pass away. 34. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, (too much) and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. 35. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36. Watch ye therefore, and pray al ways, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”*

The Church which is made holy, sanctified, made pure and blameless, innocent and spotless, is acutely aware that its Position of holiness before God and man is dependent on Christ Crucified only. We remember how it works...

The blameless character, the Position of the Church, its innocence before God is maintained, because the Church, being holy, can get this help. It realises that its only help is from Christ Crucified, so it sees its Position more clearly, the more it looks at Christ Crucified for help.

The following verses show that the Church, being holy, has no part in this world’s teaching:

**Hebrews 13:9(-15)**            *“Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; –*

*“With grace”, that is, with the help of Christ Crucified which comes from the other World. It is not located in this world; it has nothing to do with men’s teaching as such, men’s doctrines, men’s precepts, statutes, ordinances –*

*not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.”*

*“Not with meats” – it is nothing to do with the flesh or the senses. The Church of God is holy, which Church you are, and so it has no part in this world’s teaching.*

**1 Corinthians 1: 19-21**            *“For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. 20. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21. For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”*

The Church gives no time, no thought, to the world’s views, because God is not in the world’s views, thoughts or objectives. So, obviously, it has not the slightest interest, value or profit to the holy Church of God.

**1 Corinthians 2:7**            *“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.”*

Its teachings are quite different. The Church has holy teaching.

*vs6-16* "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought... 8. Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. 10. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God..."

The Church has to maintain its holiness to get these messages; to allow the communication of the Holy Ghost to penetrate its being and direct its course. Otherwise how will it stay holy? It cannot take the world's help; it cannot maintain its holiness that way. To maintain its holiness, the Position it has been given by God, it has to go to the Word of God by the Spirit of God.

*Hebrews 13:10* "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle."

The holy Church has no part in this world's religions. We can't mix light and darkness; Christ and Belial; a believer and an unbeliever. So in local assemblies where they tolerate such things, where they know members are unbelievers, how can that be? How can we possibly have a part in a worldly religion?

In *Galatians 1:6-9* Paul stressed the fact that there was no other Gospel. Only one Gospel, the preaching of the Cross – that is the Gospel, says *1 Corinthians 1:17* "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect". What truck has the Church of God with other Gospels? It doesn't know another.

It is Good News! It is the News from God that sin has been put away, and that Christ demands our immediate presence to His Word and obedience to His Spirit – that is the Good News! The Church has no part in this world's works. The only work that the Church of God knows is Calvary – the Cross of Christ. No other work. One can see that the Scripture in the opposite way is true. For instance, many Christians mingle with non- and nominal Christians to see the sights in Jerusalem, where Christ is said to have been crucified and buried. But the Word distinctly says that is not anything to do with the Work of God. The place cannot possibly keep you holy. In any case, it is going to be obliterated!

*Hebrews 13:11* "For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp."

All sin put away. That is the Work of God that interests the Church.

*v12* "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate."

That is **the Principle** behind that Word, not where He was crucified or what place He rose from the dead; that doesn't matter. The Fact is He did rise from the dead and that He was crucified first, and that put away my sin. So we can see that the Church, in maintaining its holiness, in actually living in that Position of blameless innocence before God, has no truck with the world's teachings, religions or works.

*Hebrews 13:13-14* "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. 14. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

The Church is destined for God's Home; it is a holy Body. Anyone who has the holiness of God in them must be destined to live with God. They are not for this unholy world.

*v15            "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name."*

The Church of God, a sanctified Body because a holy God has made it holy, is always **filled with gratitude**. It is always filled with thanks to God, because it is innocent before God. Always ready to be grateful to God; always without complaint. It is always full of praise to God because it is blameless before God. So it finds itself not only able and willing to, but wanting to *"offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name"*.

*v17            "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."*

Again, this is written to a holy, sanctified group of people; to an innocent, blameless, harmless, pure, spotless, perfect, saintly Body of people, just as Jesus is.

*vs18-20      "Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly. 19. But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner. 20. Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,..."*

Only a holy person can be at peace in body, soul and spirit at all times.

*v21            "Make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."*

## DAY 8

**Daily Readings: Isaiah 55:6-9; Hebrews 1:1-4; Isaiah 53:1-6; Revelation 21:22-27**

### SCRIPTURES FOR THE DAY'S STUDY

Acts 2:37-47

Acts 10:44-48

Acts 8:14-17

Acts 11:12-18

## Revelations from the Scriptures SEALED WITH THE SPIRIT

**Ephesians 4:30**      *"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption"*

### Sealed For God's Purposes

The Church of God, the Church of the Living God, every member of it is sealed, marked or stamped with the Holy Ghost, by Jesus Christ, to **secure** them and **preserve** them until He comes to take them out of this world – to catch them up to Himself to meet Him in the air. **That is its Purpose.** *"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."*

To seal simply means to stamp with a private personal seal, to secure or to preserve the object which is stamped. It is also a mark of authority, authorizing the position in place of the article sealed.

To seal in the Scriptures also means that one is stamping something as genuine; what it is claimed to be. **That is important to God.**

And to seal also means in the Scriptures to close up, to make an end of something, to indicate that that is the complete substance of the matter.

**John 3:31-34**      *"He that hath received His testimony hath set to His seal that God is true", v33.*

This is Jesus Christ. He is sealed by the Holy Ghost as a mark to the genuineness of His claim to be not of this world – *"He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: He that cometh from heaven is above all."* v31 – to be speaking only what He has seen and heard – the Words of God – *"And what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth; and no man receiveth His testimony. 34. For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him."* – vs32, 34. Those who received Christ's testimony acknowledged that. After all, what He was stamped by showed Him to be genuinely what is claimed for Him by that seal.

**John 6:27**      *"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give you: for Him hath God the Father sealed."*

God marked or sealed Him with the Holy Ghost that men may know that He gives them what He claimed He could. He is the true Bread from Heaven; He will give them everlasting life – “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” v51 – The Seal of the Spirit, on a person, in a person, indicates that what that person stands for, what that person’s life reveals is genuine – he is of God, speaks of God, from God, and lives by God and for God.

**Romans 4:11**            *“And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.”*

Abraham had faith. So God told him be circumcised and everyone with him. It was a mark, a sign, that God accepted Abraham’s faith in Him, that is was truly genuine, and therefore it was a mark of the righteousness of God which Abraham believed in, and was now imputed to him, showing him to be a true believer in God. Isn’t it amazing; the deterioration from that Position where men were circumcised with the intent that they should be marked out as true believers in God at that time, and yet they were not ultimately...

Abraham’s descendants didn’t believe. That’s what Jesus said, ‘If Abraham were your father you would believe Me’. [*“If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham”*, John 8:39b] Circumcision was the mark of a true believer; a man who believed in the only True God.

**1 Corinthians 9:1-2**    *“Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? 2. If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostle-ship are ye in the Lord.”*

They were the sign, the mark, the fruit of his authority; the testing to the genuineness of his claim to be an Apostle of Christ. If he wasn’t he wouldn’t have that fruit. So a seal in all cases is intended to be a test to the genuineness of the claims made for the article sealed. It is stamped. This gets us familiar with the language of Scripture in respect of this word “seal”.

**2 Timothy 2:19**            *“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”*

This is the seal, mark, or stamp, the testing for the genuineness of the claim, respecting the Resurrection of Christ, and that great Resurrection Day. Obviously, for those who believe in the Resurrection of Christ and in the Resurrection of the Church from the dead and those living, that sign will only be manifest when that happens! It will be proved! The Seal will be the sign that the thing marked was genuine.

**Romans 15:28**            *“When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.”*

Paul stamped their act of giving money to the poor saints at Jerusalem as right, genuine. He authorised it to be the right thing to do. The stamp of God that what was of God was genuine and wanted by God, resulting in God’s purposes being achieved.

**Revelation 22:10**            *“And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.”*

God does not want the Book to be sealed up; kept secret. A seal could indicate that, so he [the angel] said, “Seal not”.

It is very important when that word is used, because sealing in the Scriptures does mean to close up, end it – that is the end of the matter. “*Seal not*” is the very opposite to closing down. This Book [of *Revelation*] must be given out, and out, and out...

**Job 9:7** “Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the stars.” God orders their goings according to His Word. He authorises them. A seal is a mark of authorisation and they were authorised to proceed along a certain course. He closed them up in their functions in the heavens. They had to proceed along a certain way, and that was the end of the matter!!

**Job 33:16** “Then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction.” God made an end of His Commandments. He completed His orders to men, authorising them to know He has nothing more to add to His Word. He seals up their instructions to authorise them that they must be followed.

In the world today there is a tendency to indulge in ‘Systematic Theology’ – the building on the Scriptures and finding experiences and activities said to develop the original thought. However, the Word of God does not permit anything else than what it says! The Instructions which God has given will stand not only through time but through Eternity.

Men will be judged by what is written not by what men develop in theories to suit different ages. It is not developing religion. Jesus Christ is the same, it says, “*yesterday, and to day, and forever*” [Hebrews 13:8] and His Word is *as it is given*. “*The Son of man goeth as it is written of Him*”, Matthew 26:24. And as it is written we shall go...

**Job 37:7** “He sealeth up the hand of every man; that all men may know His work.” God sets boundaries, limits, to Man’s activities, authorising him to go no further, not to proceed beyond what He has laid down, that he may know He is God; that He alone can go beyond what Man can do.

### **The Church of God Will Not Grieve The Holy Spirit**

“*And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*” The Church of God does not hurt, distress, make cause for sorrow or grief to the Holy Spirit. When Paul, Christ’s Apostle, wrote a command like this to the Church, “*And grieve not the holy Spirit of God*” [Ephesians 4:30] it was not on the assumption that the members of the Church were grieving the Holy Spirit. It was to ensure that they never did – that how they started, so they continued and ended. “*And grieve not*” – the Church of the Living God does not allow for it. It does not entertain it. It concentrates on Christ, **Christ Crucified**, not on sin.

So the Church of God does not hurt, distress, or give cause for sorrow to – which is what grief means – the Holy Spirit, who Himself is Christ’s Seal. The Spirit of God Himself is the Seal, the mark, upon you, and in you, assuring you that you are genuinely Christ’s own possession in this world. If one believed that, as the Church of God does, there would be no need to grieve the Holy Spirit. There wouldn’t be any intention or purpose, or thought, or desire. The flesh would be kept well in subjection to the Spirit. To grieve the Holy Spirit is to respond in any way to your own nature.

Paul says, “*Are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*” – while there was envying, strife and divisions among them [1 Corinthians 3:3]. “*Walk as men*” – according to man; not walking as the Church of God. The Church of God does not walk as men do, though it contains men. They walk by the Spirit – that was the constant Command. They live in the Spirit, walking by that same Spirit. They are led by that same Spirit and not by their natures.

**Ephesians 4:17-19**

*“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18. Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19. Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.”*

You see the old man, the human nature, which God has discarded. God puts it out of His reckoning when He deals with men. He does not deal with us *“after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities”*, [Psalm 103:10]. He has finished with it. It is **an old man**, and he has gone! Finished. He died and was buried with Christ, and a new man has come out!!

*vs20-24 “But ye have not so learned Christ; 21. If so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22. That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23. And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24. And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”*

We now present *“the new man”*; **v18**, is now finished! – *“Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:”*

*vs25-29 “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. 26. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27. Neither give place to the devil.”* – the new man’s nature. His conduct is that which does not grieve the Holy Spirit of God.

In these last days it is essential that we take the Scriptures as they are given and refuse to have the attitude of modern Christians who seek ways and means to divorce themselves from the Cross-life. They release themselves from the obligation to serve God by His Spirit, and grieve the Holy Ghost.

*v30 “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”*

This is a very brief but startling summary of the old and the new man :

*vs31-32 “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: - the old man finished with - 32. And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you”* – the new man. So God for Christ’s sake has forgiven you and sealed you with His Holy Spirit. Isn’t that marvellous?!

*v30 “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”*

You are sealed, by Christ, with the Holy Spirit Himself, who is the Seal. Perhaps we in Pentecost will behave better and not treat the Baptism with the Holy Spirit as something to express our own words and ways. Remember, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of God unto the day of Redemption.

It is very likely that a wrong attitude to the Holy Spirit in Pentecost is responsible for so much stumbling in those who really want to be filled with God, and who really know that God is holy, but see people Baptised with the Holy Spirit behaving in an unholy way... *“And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”*

## Sin Alone Brings Grief and Sorrow

In the Scripture, that is, according to God, grief and sorrow belong to sin. They either indicate a state of sin or the result of sin; the result of sin to sinners, or the result of sin to those who do not sin. Grief and sorrow are a direct result of sin, for they belong to sin; the results of sin working in men.

*Isaiah 53:4* "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" – the results of sin. He bore them. Sinless He was, but the griefs and sorrows of the damned, doomed and lost, He bore away, that we may be sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise. No more do we need to bother about the sorrows of the doomed and the damned which were our sorrows and our griefs – all arising out of that sin in the lives of all mankind. The sorrows and griefs that started the very moment Adam and Eve stepped out of that Life of Love, Joy and Peace...

*v10* "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief." The grief, the shambles, the bitter shame, agony and the grieving that the Cross brought was all out of sin. God put Him to grief.

*v3* "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not."

These were sinful men's sorrows. He was not a sad man; a gloomy man, but He was a Man carrying men's sorrows to Calvary, where He extinguished them in His Blood. There He took with Him all your sins and the result of it all. This is such a matchless Chapter in its simplicity, showing to us the great deliverance that is ours!

*v5* "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."

The whole range of that glorious deliverance! That is why He is called "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief". There is no grief in Heaven! God is not used to crying, but Christ cried here! He who has all things, who made all things, who has the Joy of His Father, His confidence and approval, He cried and wept... That is the result of sin.

When the women were weeping when they saw the Lord staggering along and dragged up towards the hill of Golgotha to be crucified, He said, 'Don't weep for Me'. He could have said, 'I have no sin to weep for', but He said, "Weep for yourselves, and for your children" – for the terrible sin of unbelief; Christ-rejection – 'for the day is coming when they shall say, Oh what a blessing those women have who haven't had a child to see the horrors coming upon them', [Luke 23:27-29].

*v30* "Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us." Those are the sorrows. That is what causes weeping – Sin ... Sin ... Sin...

If only we could stop being occupied with our self. Self is full of sorrow and it is full of sin and if we become occupied with Christ, and leave our desires alone, and delight ourselves in the Lord, we will get what we need to have as a child of God. Our desires will be properly given in a most beautiful way that we could never realise, but Christians go on and on hankering, niggling and looking, but are never happy. That is a sin. That is grieving the Holy Spirit of God. We must be sure we are out of that now! Remember **the Position** we are in. The Man of Sorrows has given us Power. He is no more a Man of sorrows. He had such a responsibility that men despised Him. They couldn't cope with such concentration on God, but they left Him to their sorrows. They didn't leave their sorrows to Him; they were indulging in their sin...

Obviously the world is a sorry place, but how many people professing themselves to be Christians are always sorry, sad and miserable because they do not believe these things. They have the world's sin and they hanker, covet, desire, lust after and look at those things. *"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."* He is not entitled to grief! The only thing that will grieve the Holy Spirit, obviously, is something wrong.

**Psalm 18:20** *"The LORD rewarded Me according to My righteousness; according to the cleanness of My hands hath He recompensed Me."*

Only Christ could say that! (*vs 5-21* should be read to see how not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God.)

**v22** *"For all His judgments were before Me, and I did not put away His statutes from Me."*

Yes, all God's Judgments. Christ was a Man of sorrows – our sorrows and the sorrows of our sin – acquainted with our grief; the grief of not obeying God; the grief of wanting other things than God – and this Man came and took our sorrows, and took our griefs ... and all the prophet could say was, *"with His stripes we are healed"* [Isaiah 53:5c]. We are completely delivered now! **'Off you go and enjoy the Lord your God!'**

**v6** *"In My distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto My God: He heard My voice out of His temple, and My cry came before Him, even into His ears..."*

This shows us the tremendous activity involved by God in raising Christ from the dead. The terrific violence of sin demanded terrific action by God. It is a very thrilling story, not of sin but of Salvation; of God's Deliverance.

What a tender Scripture that is, *"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God"*. The Church of God does not grieve the Spirit of God whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption. It doesn't do that! Let us ensure we are placed in The Church today whatever we were in before! Then we will see that we cannot grieve the Holy Spirit of God.

**Psalm 69:29-32** *"But I am poor and sorrowful: let Thy salvation, O God, set Me up on high. 30. I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving. 31. This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs. 32. The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God."*

This is the same Person who said, *"The zeal of Thine house hath eaten Me up"*, **v9**, and *"They gave Me also gall for My meat; and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink"*, **v21**. He took the sorrows of the damned, the sorrows of the diseased and the dead in their sin.

**v30** *"I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving."*

This is because He is doing that Work of putting men's sorrows away – the sorrows of their sin; the deserving results of sin, sorrow upon sorrow. That is what Hell and the Lake of Fire are said to be, where there is *"weeping and gnashing of teeth"*, *"where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"* [eg. Matthew 8:12 and Mark 9:44, 48]. Always Jesus said that.

The condition of men was one of deep unavailing inescapable sorrow. *"Weeping and gnashing of teeth"* – bitter regret. All bitterness has been put away from you; clamour and ugly speaking has all been put away by the Cross of the Christ of God. **It is finished!**

The Position has been established for you and me. *"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God"* we understand from the Scriptures, *"whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption"*.

v32           *"The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God."* He is including His Church now...

v33           *"For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not His prisoners."*

Out of the prison houses men came, delighting in this God who put their sorrows away. *"The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink"* – that is why so many Christians are full of their sorrows, grief and depressions, because they have become carnally minded. But the Kingdom of God is not carnally-minded, but it is *"righteousness* – that is, the characteristics of God are visible in that Kingdom – *and peace* – that is the conduct or the relationship of God to the Church and to all mankind – *and joy in the Holy Ghost"* [Romans 14:17]. Not sorrow, not grief, depression or fear; they have been put away from you... *"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."* [Ephesians 4:30]

**Matthew 26:37-38**       *"And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. 38. Then saith He unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with Me."*

Did He feel sorry for Himself, or depressed? No; the sin of the whole world upon His shoulders made Him sorrowful and very heavy – one of the literal meanings of grief. To grieve is to make heavy. Grief makes people look as though they can't move two steps easily. *"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God."* The Holy Spirit has nothing to do with the sorrows of sin. He has come to bring us the Joy of our Salvation, to fill us with a Vision of Christ, to make your cup of blessing run over so that others may benefit and be delivered also from the shambles of their unavailing grief.

Of what avail is it to grieve for your own mistakes and faults and your own sins? No good at all! It doesn't blot them out and make you right. Repent; finish with it all, and come into this joyous Kingdom of God and the Joy of the Holy Ghost. That's what we read in *Acts* that the Church was *"filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost"*! [Acts 13:52]. Should we not see the same thing today? The Holy Spirit is the same! And Salvation still holds good!

**Mark 14:33-34**       *"And He taketh with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; 34. And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch."*

He, the Eternal Delight of God, was amazed at the terrible burden of sin; at the terror of it all, because He was *"made to be sin for us, who knew no sin"* [2 Corinthians 5:21] and the sins of the world were laid on Him. If we don't understand it, the Holy Ghost does, and He is here to tell us. You ought to understand, so that you never get depressed, and never feel despairing or discouraged. They are sins. The Israelites, who got discouraged, saying the way was too hard, fell in the wilderness because they had God with them, and God with them meant there was no need for discouragement at all in their lives. God was their meat and drink. Hallelujah!

v35           *"And He went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him."*

*Psalms* 89:19 says, *"I have laid help upon one that is mighty"*, and this Mighty One fell on His face to the ground. Not because He had become weak or helpless, but He was now being held responsible to answer for **the sin** of every man of every Age, of every hour of every minute of every second of every day of every year the world has ever known... He fell on His face at the amazing weight of sorrow it had caused – the unavailing regret and the anguish.

The Church is meant to carry on what He did, and relieve men of the burden of their unavailing sorrows; to show them that their sin was put away, that all they need to do is to repent of not enjoying God; to take Christ as their Life, and turn away from all their life. Your old life, the life of the flesh, the old man, has only sorrow in it. To please your flesh only brings grief to the Holy Ghost. This is the awfulness of sin...

### **Christ's Suffering For Sin In Prophecy**

**Psalm 6:7**        *"Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all Mine enemies."*

That is how Christ died. He gave Himself to death. He could have lived with His Eternal Life. His eye would not have waxed old; it couldn't have been consumed with grief, but He died under the weight of that sin. He died on that Cross. He put every sin away and then He went - as it was written of the Son of God...

**Psalm 31:5**        *"Into Thine hand I commit My spirit: for Thou hast redeemed Me, O LORD God of truth."*

In the *Psalms* you get the prophetic vision of what was never humanly heard from Calvary's Cross...

**vs9-10**        *"Have mercy upon Me, O LORD, for I am in trouble: Mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, My soul and My belly. - consumed with grief - 10. For My life is spent with grief, and My years with sighing: My strength faileth because of Mine iniquity, - the iniquity of us all that were heaped upon Him - and My bones are consumed."*

He wasn't a sad Man. He wasn't sorry because He was going to the Cross. There was no repentment or regret in it. All the sighs, the groans, the tears, the anguish, was all because of my sin. Sin is the only cause of grief, sorrow and tears.

**Psalm 78:40-41**    *"How oft did they provoke Him in the wilderness, and grieve Him in the desert! 41. Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel." - the Israelites' wilderness activities.*

Christ has not been spared anyone's grief. So the prophet by the same Spirit said, *"Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" [Isaiah 53:4a]. He couldn't be carrying His own; He had nothing to grieve about; nothing to be sorry for. He has no sorrows in His Life - it is clean, lovely and transparent, full of Love, Holiness and Purity. It can be examined - all men can see that Life!*

*"How oft did they provoke Him in the wilderness, and grieve Him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel." So through Paul He said, "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."*

**Psalm 119:157-158**    *"Many are My persecutors and Mine enemies; yet do I not decline from Thy testimonies. 158. I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not Thy word."*

Those are the ways that the Holy Ghost can be grieved. If Christ is grieved, the Holy Spirit will be grieved, and God the Father will be grieved.

**Psalm 139:21**        *"Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate Thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against Thee?" Always sin is the cause of all grief. It is a terrible thing. We are not to take it in our stride.*

We are to repent of the fact that it is sin that has caused that grief. The sin that has been put away ... and so here is the appeal of the Holy Spirit for us not to grieve God...

**Psalm 95:1-2** *“O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. 2. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.”* We can do that because sin has been put away.

**vs3-5** *“For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. 4. In His hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is His also. 5. The sea is His, and He made it: and His hands formed the dry land.”*

If He can do all this, He is quite capable of meeting all our needs including the removal of our sin!

**vs8-11** *“Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9. When your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My work. 10. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known My ways: 11. Unto whom I swear in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest.”*

He looks back to that dreadful time of provoking. This is the Spirit of God talking on God's account. The Holy Ghost was there, so He knows!

**Hebrews 3:7-11** *“Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear His voice, 8. Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9. When your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years. 10. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known My ways. 11. So I swear in My wrath, They shall not enter into My rest.)”*

The same invitation is made because men are the same – the same human nature working in us. We are all the same, only it erupts in different ways, but it is the same in its attitude to God – stubborn, rebellious, ungrateful, unthankful, unholy.

### **The Same Appeal To The Church**

**v12** *“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.”* –  
*“And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”*

That is again what the Holy Spirit said through another man hundreds of years later, about different people, but the same appeal, making it more to fit the case for those to whom the writer addressed...

Any sin then would be a grief. Any wrong look, thought, motive, desire, and act by the Church of God is a very great and grievous affront to the Spirit, who with Himself in a member is God's Evidence, God's Seal, stamp.

The Holy Spirit is the stamp. He is Christ's Seal upon you, on your body, and in your heart, and in your life, that you are genuinely Christ's own personal possession.

So if this Person who knows it well is the Evidence, Christ's Mark of approval on you, surely He is the One who is immediately sensitive to how you are going, how you are.

**2 Corinthians 1:18-22** *"But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. 19. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in Him was yea. 20. For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. 21. Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; 22. Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."*

God has verified that all that is in Christ – every Word of God – is **Yes** to you and **Amen** in Christ. God has authorised you to believe that **by putting His Spirit into your hearts**, indwelling the Church of God. By stamping you with the Seal, the Holy Ghost **as your authority**, you can tell each other, 'Every Word of God is a wonderful Blessing for you'.

Every Word of God is pure, so it must be a Blessing [*Proverbs 30:5*] – the Holy Spirit talking through you and to you – not just on Sundays or in a Bible Study, but all the time, because the Holy Ghost is all the time, being God Himself...!

So hearing these Scriptures, one can see that the situation described in *Acts 2* is explained – that is obviously the result, that the Church of God must be such a Body that is sealed off, stamped by Christ with the Holy Ghost – so the first thing we read about the Church is that *"they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance"*, *v4*. Because people down these years have only stuck at speaking with other tongues we have stuck there ever since, instead of saying, *"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance"*. Instead, they say, 'Do you speak with other tongues?'

Oh let us be away from such foolishness. *"They were all filled with the Holy Ghost"*. The question in the Scriptures asked by the Church is this, *"Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?"* [*Acts 19:2*] That question has been asked, and answered by God! *"They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."* They were sealed, stamped; God authorised them to say, 'We belong to God. Christ is our own Possession'.

Now you are beginning to understand the language of the early Church. *"There is none other name"*, they told their relentless foes to their very faces, *"under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"* [*Acts 4:12*]. Hallelujah!!

### **The Promise of The Holy Ghost**

So being Baptised, being filled with the Holy Ghost, it was inevitable that Peter had to bring this out as the direct Result of the Crucified Christ's operation.

**Acts 2:29** *"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day."*

That disposes of David!

**vs30-33** *"Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; 31. He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption. 32. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. 33. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."*

That is what was necessary to stamp them with the Seal of God's Authority – the Holy Ghost coming down upon them; sent by God after Christ had gone up, having done all that was required of Him. The Promise was that the Holy Spirit would be sent out when Christ had fulfilled the Covenant of Death, of Blood.

v33           *“Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.”*

The Holy Ghost was given so that the Church may live the Life of God as intended in this world – to live it and be able to explain it and manifest it, expressing it in God's Words in human language – not just to come to 'church', speak in other tongues, say 'Hallelujah' and sing well. It is the Life of God for the Church of God given by the Holy Spirit of God.

*“And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”* The Spirit of God dwelling in the members of God's Church is God's Seal, or mark, or assurance, **that they will not be tampered with in Christ's absence**. Christ is away, but the Holy Spirit is here, and the Church of God is Christ's possession, for He is *“God manifest in the flesh”* – and the Holy Spirit is here as an Assurance that the Church of God knows what church it is and to whom it belongs. It is a very wonderful Salvation!!

*Ephesians 1:12-14*           *“That we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ. 13. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14. Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.”*

Yes, because we are His purchased possession! We are to know it. The Church of God knows that it belongs to Jesus Christ and to no one else. God has given this Body to Christ. It is Christ's Body, and God will see to it that Christ has His Body with Him when all those *“things”* [reference to *Revelation 1:1*] are done according to His Plan.

The Church of God knows all this; it operates in its ordinary daily life under that Banner of Love, under that mighty Assurance. We have *“this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His.”*[2 *Timothy 2:19*]. How can we say that? – because you are stamped with God's Seal of Authority, the Holy Ghost.

You are beginning to see the sense in it. How is the Holy Spirit called *“the seal”*? It is not a term of disrespect; it is calculated to put the greatest assurance into the Church. ‘I speak by the Holy Spirit’, the Church says, and so it doesn't have regard to men's ways of thinking and men's ways of working things out. It speaks from God with that Divine happy Assurance. ‘We are Christ's’, it says, ‘We belong to God. We are His purchased possession, Christ's very own Body, so what we speak is what we are told to speak. It is what we believe we should speak, and what we know must be spoken.’

*vs 13-14*           *“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14. Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.”* –

The Spirit of God dwelling in the members of the Church of God is God's Seal, mark or assurance **that they will end up with Christ** and still be in His possession. Sealed by *“that holy Spirit of promise”* they are guaranteed **an exit** from this life in God's Way and **an entry** into Heaven by God's Way – guaranteed.

The Holy Spirit is the Seal, the mark of Authority, the Proclamation that the Church is the genuine Body of Christ, the possession of God who purchased it with His own Blood [Acts 20:28]. They are all what they say they are and only the Holy Spirit in the Church can make it so. He alone can really make us to know it and to express it, because we must confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord!

The Spirit of God dwelling in the members of the Church of God always is Christ's Seal, stamp, mark upon every member of the Church **that He will come for them in the Time appointed**. There is no uncertainty in the Church of God in this matter! They know not when, but they know that He will come. That knowledge keeps them in the Way that they ought to go. It is so essential to be filled with the Holy Ghost. Do not any more aim just to speak with other tongues. Say, 'Lord, fill me with your Spirit'. Without a doubt you will have to speak with other tongues or you might burst! You have to give expression to the God who is sealing you, and have an outlet to the God by which you are sealed...

God's Spirit is the Seal, and God the Son stamps you: 'that is Mine; you belong to Me'. See the confidence of the early Church! They couldn't be destroyed by Satan, demons, men, diseases, death, unless God said, 'Away you go'. James was killed with the sword; Peter died on a cross; Paul was executed, but until God said so Paul stayed [in Rome] and ministered God's Word by the Spirit of God all that he needed to do because he was God's - marked off to see God some day. That is the end of the matter! We do not need more revelation outside this Word with the Holy Ghost filling us. All we need to do is understand that within the pages of the Bible is contained all the Divine History of the Church of God - sealed off as Christ's very own possession; Christ's own Body.

In the Old Testament it was said several times, "*Touch not Mine anointed*" [Genesis 26:11; Psalm 105:15; 1 Chronicles 16:22]. When David had Saul at his mercy, when Saul was completely backslidden and hunting him, even though one of David's faithful commanders said, 'Let him have it, you have been anointed king in his place already', David replied that Saul was still king, anointed of God, and he dared not touch the anointed of God. That was in those days. What have we to fear from evil? You will have tribulation but what can overcome you? You have been stamped by Christ. If Christ says, 'that is Mine' He wants everyone to know it. If you believe you are His, that is how you will live.

**2 Corinthians 1:21-22** *"Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."*

"*The earnest*" means that the Spirit Himself is **the Reality** of what you will see when you get there! The Spirit Himself is the foretaste of the Glory that awaits you - He makes real the Fact to you that Jesus Christ is coming for you personally. The Spirit Himself makes **real** that you belong to Him, and whatever evil men do and wicked men think, God will keep you in that wickedness and in that evil and in all your tribulations as His very own! He said that He would. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Promise. God has "*given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts*" and Jesus said, "*He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you*" [John 14:17b].

**Ephesians 1:13b-14** *"...that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory."*

When you see Christ as He really is, you will not need the movings of the Spirit in you - you will see Christ face to Face; you will have arrived. Here our bodies have to contend with that human nature, that filthy thing we call 'self'. The Scripture says "*Mortify*" [Romans 8:13, Colossians 3:5]. We must mortify the flesh, by that same Spirit in us. Don't say, 'I won't do it' or 'I will do it'; just, 'Lord, You can do it if I let you' - that's the better Way. Then you are more genuine, because by your own will-power or might you will not manage it.

**2 Timothy 2:19** *“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His.”*

Only by the Holy Ghost can we say, *“The Lord knoweth them that are His”*. ‘That is me’, I could say, by the Holy Spirit, not by my own wishful thinking. Then I know of a surety that God will keep me because I have this Seal. His Seal is His stamp of **personal possession**; His own private Stamp. It is the Holy Spirit! No other spirit; and He has been sent only by God and Christ.

Since Christ died, God poured out His Spirit. You cannot receive the Spirit of God because you wish to have Him! You get the Spirit of God because God wishes you to have Him, and God intends you to have Him. Christ desires passionately that His Church should know that they are His; that they have all Power which is given to the Head in Heaven and in earth; that they are the light of this world; that they are the salt of this earth; that they are the Temples of the Living God in which God moves, and talks with them; walks with them and takes them from Glory unto Glory. Only through them can men come to be born again – no one else. All these things are known by the Spirit of God *“which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own”*. [1 Corinthians 6:19]

**Romans 8:9-11** *“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. 10. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.”*

**v10a** *“And if Christ be in you, – **by the Spirit**. How do you know that? – by that Seal, the Stamp of God’s Authority in you, on your life –  
the body is dead because of sin;...”* (*“Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”*)

**v10b** *“...but the Spirit is life – He witnesses that you belong to God –  
because of righteousness.”* So the Spirit of God dwelling in all members of the Church is **Christ’s Seal**, mark, stamp upon them **that they are His and that He will come for them**.

**v11** *“But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.”*

You can see that it is by the Spirit of God that we can easily grasp that we can be raptured – we can be caught away, taken out of this world, as a thief takes away what is valuable to him! It is easy to conceive such a thing happening at any moment! It is easy to break up all the events relating to the Coming of Christ when you are marked off and sealed off by that Spirit!!

So Jesus Christ said, *“Take heed to yourselves ... Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man”* [Luke 22:34-36]. It’s **by that Spirit**, because by the Spirit of God Christ knows who are His; who will go...

**John 10:27** *“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and **they follow Me**.”*

*“And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed **unto the day of redemption**.”*

## DAY 9

**Daily Readings: Isaiah 55:6-9; Hebrews 1:1-4; Isaiah 53:1-6; Revelation 21:22-27**

### SCRIPTURES FOR THE DAY'S STUDY

Psalm 9:13-20

Luke 24:13-27

Luke 24:45-46

1 Peter 4:1-19

## Revelations from the Scriptures SUFFERING FOR CHRIST

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

### Expected To Suffer

*"But God forbid that..."* 'If God forbids or stops it and prevents it' – if that is the prayer of the Church then surely the Church accepts God's Call and God's expectation of suffering. The Cross means that Christ **suffered**. It does not mean the pieces of wood on which our Lord Jesus was nailed, but the Cross is equated with suffering in the Gospel of God. The only Cross that is talked about; the only sufferings that produced what God wanted, was when Christ was nailed to the Cross at Golgotha.

'God, please stop me from expressing satisfaction or pleasure, excitement or honour to **anything** before I first acknowledge freely that great Work of Suffering ... before I acknowledge my appreciation of it; my understanding of that Suffering – for by God's Spirit the Church of God can understand the Sufferings of God.

**1 Peter 3:18**      *"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."*

It is clear from this that Christ did not need to suffer – *"The just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God..."* We take it for granted that He had to do this for us, but it is a great and lasting shame that we have to be brought back to God. The Fact that He has brought us via that suffering is a matter for great glorying and rejoicing, of much encouragement, and therefore much obedience to God on our behalf.

It is not a matter to be taken lightly, or as our due ...*being put to death in the flesh.*" Suffering that wasn't necessary, except that the Sufferer took it upon Himself to achieve God's objective. That is the keynote in all the sufferings the Church experiences for Christ's sake: for the Glory of God. Then it is that suffering that Christ expects of His Church, and calls His Church to. *"But God forbid"* – 'Stop me from putting emphasis on anything greater than on This Work of suffering' – for a Man, Christ Jesus, suffered that day.

So then Christ expects His Church to suffer in this world also, because the Church of God is the Body of Christ, so suffering for God should be its portion.

*"We are members of His Body, of His flesh, and of His bones" [Ephesians 5:30].* The flesh (sinful flesh) recoils at suffering – it does not like it. (Even sinless flesh recoiled in the Lord Jesus Christ.) But what **God** wants done the Church of God does. What **God** wanted done Christ did and it involved suffering. It was done because He suffered. God expects the Church to suffer in this world for His sake.

**1 Peter 4:1**        *"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."*

Because of sin there is suffering, and so Love will suffer as long as sin has to be dealt with. The sin that the Christian deals with is the sin that is ingrained in his flesh; his nature. That is where the battle is joined.

**Psalms 51:1**        *"Have mercy upon Me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out My transgressions."*

There is no appeal made to God based on anything in the Man – being made sin for us there was nothing there to merit God's kindness.

**vs2-4**        *"Wash Me thoroughly from Mine iniquity, and cleanse Me from My sin. For I acknowledge My transgressions: and My sin is ever before Me. Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight: that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest."*

He is isolating the flesh from the spirit and from God. It is in the flesh that the sin bubbles up, and drives onwards to have its way, encouraged by Satan. [Only Christ could appreciate that; He stated it prophetically.]

**v5**        *"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did My mother conceive Me."*

He suffered in human flesh.

**v6**        *"Behold, Thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part Thou shalt make Me to know wisdom."*

God wouldn't desire truth in the inward parts if it was there! He would say, 'I am glad to find it there'. But the Speaker obviously is quite clear that God desires that Truth to be there, which is not there while there is sin. The flesh with sin in it does not have any knowledge of the Wisdom of God. Wisdom is first of all **pure**, so it cannot know that. The wisdom of the flesh is *"earthly, sensual, devilish"* [James 3:15]. All of the senses, the Devil and this world have nothing from that glorious Place where there is no sin.

*"He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."* It is the same suffering in another context, under different conditions – the Cross. [1 Peter 4:1]

**Romans 7:12**        *"Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."*

We always have to start on that basis, that **God's Word is completely correct**. There is nothing wrong with it, for God's Word doesn't cause trouble. It is the fact of having to obey God's Word in the midst of Godlessness – and much of that Godlessness is in our own life, in the flesh.

*vs13-18* "Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. 14. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. 15. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. 16. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. 17. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 18. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."

So the Church of God, the child of God, accepts God's Call, and realizes it was reasonable for God to expect suffering for this very reason – "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing". There must be suffering, but it is the suffering that is caused by the Church's great desire to do what God wants done in this present evil world – because here it is written!

*vs22-25* "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25. I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

God does it by Jesus Christ. "With the mind I myself serve the law of God – but if I let the flesh rule – the law of sin".

So it is the curbing of the flesh, the crucifying of the flesh, the mortifying, through the Spirit, of the deeds of the body that cause the suffering – and it has its repercussions as one goes through life. Christ suffered in the flesh because man has sin in the flesh. If it was some other form of sin He would not have suffered in the flesh. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet without sin, and He condemned it in the flesh [Romans 8:3; Hebrews 4:15].

**Romans 8:5-8** "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."

Christians today recoil, not so much from worldliness and sinfulness, as from the battle, the sufferings of the flesh – the suffering involved in obeying the Word of God, in doing God's Will in this present evil world. ("He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.") Take one common matter in which we try to escape the Call of God to suffer: physical tiredness. Nowhere in the Bible does it say that a Christian shouldn't be physically tired, but it does say that we should deny our self and do what God's Word says. So the flesh does not get up in the early hours to pray, because the body is tired, and it sees no reason to pray when it is tired!

"God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." There is a tendency to shy away from this suffering in present Christian living and take the easy road offered by the flesh in all manner of ways. But the flesh is always flesh and the Spirit is always Spirit, and there is the conflict, and so there is suffering, and God and Christ and the Spirit of God know that. God's Word points that out, because the "carnal mind is enmity against God". There is the conflict – "for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." [v7] So we can appreciate the emphasis that Christ gave on what we call the new birth when He said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh [John 3:6a] – it doesn't have any intention of suffering for Christ's sake, or to do the Will of God! – and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" [v6b].

When we are born again into God's Family, we are expected by God to take on the Principles of that kind of living – to suffer for the Gospel, for the Word of God, for God, for Christ's sake

*"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again", v7. It is essential that we see it in that light. 'Don't wonder at it; it means to follow Me'. To follow God, to have any contact with God we have to live the God-given, God-inspired, God-motivated Life; the Spirit-directed Life. v8 "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." – not under the control of the fleshly lusts, but under the control of the Spirit who is not moved by all the attractions of the world, the flesh, or the Devil, but is simply set on God's child, God's Church, doing the Will of God in this present evil world.*

To do the Will of God in this world means suffering. *"Forasmuch then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind – come to that same decision – for He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."* [1 Peter 4:1]. Jesus Christ has taught us that Himself, that it is not possible to live a godly life in this world without suffering in this world, because the life in this world is ungodly. It has no sympathy with Godliness. It has nothing to offer to Godliness. You can see that described in another way, but just as powerfully :

*"For He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground" [Isaiah 53:2]. With no help, assistance, friendship or co-operation from this world, did the Son of God grow into Manhood, and on to the Cross...*

**Mark 8:31** *"And He began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."*

He was the Son of man, here to do a specific Work for God where nobody wants to do a specific Work for God, so He suffered. He had to suffer many things and be rejected. It is not that God inspired men to kill Him, but God demanded of Christ that He should come and allow Himself to be killed for the very fact that His coming to obey God would result inevitably in His being killed. That is really the view to see the position, and we will understand better the Cost of obedience to God. It must cost our flesh something, in our mind, body, life, goods, time...

This is a Christian era without sacrifice; only to suit our convenience. Even to the way we approach God's Word, meetings; everything to do with church life – there is nothing to do with the Cross in it. There is no evidence of a Crucified Life in most Christian living today. The slightest trouble or inconvenience, and away we go... But God expects the Church of Jesus Christ to suffer for that reason: that it is in a world which has no time for God's Church – and so Christ said that...

**vs31-32** *"And He began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32. And He spake that saying openly. And Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him."*

Peter had the view that many modern Christians have; that Christ couldn't help Himself; that God had ordained that Judas Iscariot should betray Him; that Pilate should give Him up to be crucified, and that certain people should crucify Him – but it was not so. God knew those things would be done if He let His Son loose in this world as a Man. So He came not to do those things, but to allow them to be done to Him. He made Himself of no reputation [Philippians 2:7], yes, but He was *"made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man"*, He did the inevitable thing that such a Person would do – *"He humbled Himself"* amidst a world of pride, *"and became obedient unto death"*, in the midst of total disobedience.

So there had to be a conflict, now between the Humble and Obedient One and the proud and arrogant one, the disobedient one. That is what suffering entails.

If you really obey God's Word, you will suffer for it. The implication is perhaps you are not... How can it be that we are not when we read, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." – death all round; that itself involves a suffering outlook. So Peter said, 'You shouldn't speak like that. Fancy talking about being beaten and mocked and rejected and killed' – because with all the Power he saw in Christ, it wasn't a reasonable thing to say because Peter was not realising that the moment you start obeying God's Word as God's Word is given in the way God wants you to in this world, you will begin to suffer and come into conflict with all kinds of people.

Above all things, you will rouse the furious wrath of those hordes of unclean demons, those legions of unclean spirits with their head, the implacable hater of Jesus Christ. So the opposition is both inside and outside the Christian; in the flesh and in the world. "Get thee behind Me, Satan", Christ told Peter, *v33*, "for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men." That is what a Cross-less Christianity is guilty of – not understanding the things that are of God. If you are not living a Cross-life, you have no understanding of the Cross. How can you? Yet we are told to give that suffering Work the highest place. "but the things that be of men." – we like to avoid suffering; it is our nature to avoid it if we can, and where we cannot, we regret it every minute and bewail it and com-plain about it and talk a lot about it!

*v34* "And when He had called the people unto Him with His disciples also, He said unto them, Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" – the Sufferer, the One obedient to God.

The one who is humble before God must suffer. "Let him deny himself – that is the first enemy, the first opposition to obedience: "himself" – and take up his cross – that is in the world – and follow Me". There is very little difference between the way many Christians and non-Christians dress or the way many Christians and the way non-Christians behave. It is very difficult to distinguish one from another – and in conversation likewise. "and take up his cross". That is, make a public exhibition of himself obeying God's Word, come what or who may. But many Christians positively refuse to make a public exhibition of their obedience to God's Word. Jesus Christ was crucified publicly. The principle is the same. It means that we publicly exhibit the Crucified Life, because crucifixion was a very public affair – the shame, the pain, the agony, and the reproach because only very bad criminals were executed that way under Roman law. **Christ was treated like that.**

So if you really obey God's Word in the world, you will not be liked at all, for **two reasons**: obeying the Word of God is not the world's way of living pleasantly, and, when they find someone obeying God's Word it convicts them of sin. It is no use them knowing what you know if they do not know that you have come out of sin. "deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

*v35* "For whosoever shall save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it."

Whoever will look after his own conveniences; indulge his own conveniences; allow its latitude in fulfilling his own desire.

"...but whosoever shall lose his life – given over the moment I start obeying God's Word. The indulgences and conveniences; the allowances we make to the flesh go immediately - for My sake – that is, to obey My Word - and the gospel's, the same shall save it."

It's saying, 'I will do what God says' always for preference, so self must be denied that way. It cannot get its voice heard or a footing where God's Word is being obeyed. As Paul said, "the world is crucified unto me" [Galatians 6:14].

**v36** "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

The world is full of disobedience to God; nothing in it, nothing of it will help. So the Church of God is expected by God to suffer in this world, because this world is a Christ rejecting world. In *Luke 9, vs23-25*, where a similar account is given, Luke adds this word "daily", because as long as a Christian is living in this world, he cannot live God's Life without living a Crucified Life. We must have our priorities right. *Matthew 16* has the same account, *vs24-26*, but that very startlingly dramatic and fierce rebuke of one of His leading disciples, Peter - "Get thee behind Me, Satan", *v23*, came just after he had a priceless revelation of who Christ really was. The revelation we get is no proof that we are living a Cross-life; we have to live the Cross-life! Revelation comes from **God**; the crucifying comes from **me**!

Perhaps that is why we feel frustrated, taking down notes on the lovely revelations of God, but leaving them as notes, in the main. Perhaps we do take the trouble to give them out to others, but surely the best result of that revelation is working it out in our lives... Peter had just had this revelation, that here before him was the Living God, the Saviour of the world, the Anointed King that God had told the Jews would come as a Man - so he could only come to that conclusion, that here was obedience *par excellence*. Here he was seeing how God's Word was being obeyed as he had lived with this Man for some while. But after all that he refused to concede that to obey God meant having a conflict with man. When Peter was converted, though, and filled with the Holy Ghost, he said, [Acts 4:19] 'Judge for yourselves, is it right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God?' He came then to that conclusion, that **God** must be obeyed, not the flesh, not the mind, not the desires, not the call or the invitation of the world, or even its commands, but **God**; the Word of God. Everything in this world is opposed to the Will of God - everything. Its whole system is anti-God.

**John 16:33** "These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

In Him they would find encouragement to go on doing what He told them. That is Peace: to know and have the satisfaction of doing what Christ says. In the world you shall have tribulation, because it is anti-God. There is no tribulation in God's Kingdom! "But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Everything in this world is opposed to the Will of God, so it has to be overcome; and we have to overcome the world. "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" [1 John 5:5] - he that is born of God.

**1 John 5:1, 4, 5** "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth Him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of Him. 4. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 5. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

What persecutions are endured, but out of them all the Lord delivers me - not from them all, but out of them all.

**2 Timothy 3: 12-15** "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." - a sacred Fact! - 13. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. 14. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; 15. 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."

**v16**            *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."*

It is profitable – it gains you something: teaching, doctrine, reproof for sin. It corrects the life and instructs in the Way of the Lord.

**v17**            *"That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." – in God's sight.*

**v12& v13** show that if we will obey God's Word, it says that the proof of your proper obedience is your suffering in this life.

**1 John 2:15-17**    *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." –*

Warning! Loving the world, the Father's love is not in you. If I really subscribe to the world's ways, that is, in my flesh, then I have no love for Christ. I will not be obeying Christ's Word at all.

**James 4:4**            *"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."*

Friendship with the world is enmity with God. A Christian life, the life of a child of God in this world can be a lonely one. We are made for companionship; for fellowship. God wanted us in a Family, but a child of God cannot be in fellowship with the world, with those who have no interest and no love for God. They won't be able to live together. So if you are living happily with the world, then something is wrong if you are calling yourself a Christian.

*"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."* Your very behaviour, your manner should reveal the restraint of the Cross, the discipline of that terrific Obedience. The Cross is a day-to-day affair. It is not a weekly or an occasional thing.

**John 18:36**            *"My kingdom is not of this world".* Pilate asked Him if He was then a king; Jesus told him that he was right in calling Him a king. But Pilate replied that he was not at all interested. It was His own people and nation who were saying He was calling Himself a king. He realised that Christ was disowning them as subjects of His true kingdom. Why did He say, *"My kingdom is not of this world"*? The behaviour in His Kingdom is different. Pilate saw that in this Man who called Himself a King; he saw His behaviour was different, and several times he told the Jews, *"I find no fault in Him"* [18:38, 19:4, 6].

*"My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews – His subjects would use this world's methods – but now is My kingdom not from hence."* There is more to that than you think! His servants included those countless billions of angels, who were poised to do anything that their King would say! This shows the massive obedience in Eternity that they did not do anything because He didn't ask anything of them. He was there to obey God's Word.

*"Then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence."* It works on a different Principle, a different basis, in entire obedience to the Word of God whatever the cost – and it will always cost the Christian something to obey God's Word!

Each time you obey God's Word it costs you something – it is a crucifying of the flesh; a continual severing of your contact with the world – such as they may be, and such as they must be... The world hates Jesus Christ.

**John 15:18-20** *“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. 20. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also” .*

Is that your condition? This is what God expects of you – the same attitude to His Word, and therefore the same experience as Christ had. He said exactly that. He obeyed God's Word and so they hated Him. So He is taking it for granted that the Word would be obeyed when He said, 'They hated Me, and they will hate you, just because they hate God's Word'. 'I have done nothing wrong', He said [John 18:23].

### **Hated Without A Cause**

*“They hated Me without a cause.”* That meant a lot to the Lord. He repeated that several times... It was prophetically stated [Psalms 35:19 & 69:4; John 15:25]. He couldn't get over that. It hurt Him a great deal, that God should be so disliked by the world, that Someone just coming and doing what God says should earn their dislike as well...

*“The reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen on Me”* [Psalm 69:9b; Romans 15:3]. 'Because I did what He said', He could have said. 'Those who hate God hate Me as well.' It just shows us what the world is like; nothing in it to help. When you are obeying God's Word, you must look to God for your help. You will never get anything from the world; it is totally opposed to God's Word.

**Psalm 69:2-4** *“I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow Me. 3. I am weary of My crying: My throat is dried: Mine eyes fail while I wait for My God. 4. They that hate Me without a cause are more than the hairs of Mine head: they that would destroy Me, being Mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.”*

John recorded that Christ explained this hatred to His disciples. 'If they hate you, you must know they hated Me before they hated you because you are doing what I say. They hated Me for what I did because it wasn't what they liked.' It came from God. There is a distinctive dislike of Jesus Christ in this world.

**vs5-9** *“O God, Thou knowest My foolishness; and My sins are not hid from Thee. 6. Let not them that wait on Thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for My sake: let not those that seek Thee be confounded for My sake, O God of Israel. 7. Because for Thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered My face. 8. I am become a stranger unto My brethren, and an alien unto My mother's children. 9. For the zeal of Thine house hath eaten Me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon Me.”*

Anyone doing exactly what God says must suffer in this world. Not what you think God says, but what God says! There must be hostility, dislike, and, the more you obey God, the fiercer the opposition, plus the consistent rebellion of the flesh.

There are **two things**: I deny myself and take up my cross daily and follow Christ. So I let myself die. I leave the world crucified, and I follow Him. But it costs something, and God knows that.

That is why He tells you plainly that He expects it to happen – not because He wants it to, but because the world is that way. He sent His Son into the world knowing that, because the world hates that which is good; that which comes from God, through Jesus Christ.

*Psalm 35:7*      *“For without cause have they hid for Me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for My soul.”*

Again these dreadful words! Not self pity; it is horror, that as He came Face to face with men He became aware of their intense personal dislike of God as they personally disliked Him. *“He that hateth Me hateth My Father also. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin”* [John 15:23, 22]. What sin? – their hatred of Christ, because He was a Man who lived by God’s Word.

*v23*            *“Stir up Thyself, and awake to My judgment, even unto My cause, My God and My Lord.”*

He was left; He was the Sacrifice. The Perfect Offering had to be without blemish. He had to accept all that God wanted of Him, so He was left to the merciless fury of the world and of Satan and all his angels, and God left Him to it. We find this constantly in the *Psalms*. The cry, it would seem, of a helpless man, but it was not so. It was the Cry of **an Obedient Man**, the Just One, the Holy One who couldn’t not obey the Word of God, even in the face of that ceaseless hostile pressure.

*Psalm 119:161*    *“Princes have persecuted Me without a cause: but My heart standeth in awe of Thy word.”* The “princes” were the powers and agencies running this world; they pressed Him sore. Yes, they tested the Sacrifice for God, examining it very closely with their merciless and ruthless brutality.

*John 17:9*        *“I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine.”*

You may be quite clear that when God [by Christ] judges you it will be on a right basis, that He is well aware that if you are escaping the Cross-life, you are escaping obedience to His Word. It is very important that we pray for each other in this world, that we will accept correction, the true sign of obedience to the Word of God as it is written. *“The Son of man goeth as it is written of Him”* – and that means suffering [Matthew 26:24].

*v14*            *“I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”*

That Word came down from Heaven in the Person of the Son; that is not what the world likes. When we preach Christ people must get a clear picture that they are full of sin. In the natural, just as they are, they have no liking for Christ, His Word, or for God. They never have, however religious or irreligious they may be. *“... they are not of the world, even as I am not world.”*

*v15*            *“I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.”*

God expects the Church to suffer in this world. He is waiting for His appointed Day, the Resurrection, but if you are alive until Jesus comes, as a child of God, you must expect to suffer. *“If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him”* [2 Timothy 2:12]. This is the mark of obedience. This is the characteristic of the child of God, simply because the Life you have come into is quite different from the life of this world.

This is the Principle that emerges when you speak of suffering. The sufferings of Christ were not something God enjoyed seeing and deliberately provoked and brought to pass, but the sufferings were necessarily a part of having this Perfect Sacrifice, as the suffering went in proportion to the obedience. He obeyed every Word of God, and He suffered all the time from some means or another. Opposition to God's Word is rampant – it rages in this world.

*vs16-17* “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17. Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth.” –

“God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” [Galatians 6:14] – the Church of God delights to suffer for God, for Christ's sake. “I am crucified with Christ... [2:20] – Paul didn't say ‘I was’; he was talking of his life; a Crucified Life, and saying in one way what Luke's record is saying in another way: taking up one's cross daily [Luke 9:23] ... *nevertheless I live*” [2:20] – I am alive. A Crucified Life is a suffering Life. It cannot be anything else, for crucifixion is the symbol of suffering. God took it out of His Son on that basis. He sent Him down in that period of time and Christ had to reveal His obedience by just doing what God says in that time and place. God and Christ knew what the results of that obedience would be – Suffering; Suffering.

“Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow” [Lamentations 1:12b] – all the sorrows came upon Him. He had to obey every moment of His Life – and so have you and I! He had to do it for you and me. You and I have to do it for Him. He did it without anyone's help. Even God took Himself off, so that the Sacrifice could be perfectly acceptable; so that we could be sure that He put all our sins away.

### **Delighting To Suffer For Christ**

We benefit from that Obedience in that we have God's good Will and support in following Christ. We have the Spirit to guide us through the world. We have Christ's personal intercession on our behalf at God's Right Hand. So the Church of God delights to suffer for Christ's sake. “...yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself – and obeyed God on my behalf – for me” [returning to Galatians 2:20]

“...all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” [2 Timothy 3:12]. If we would live godly in this present evil world, we must suffer.

“Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord” [2 Corinthians 5:6]. It is only this obedience producing constant suffering which is a reminder that He and I are not together. It reminds us that there is a Meeting coming! But if we are not living the Crucified Life, the Meeting with Christ does not hold out so much excitement. It is only as one lives that Crucified Life that one can thrill at the thought that one Day the crucifying of the flesh will be over! The ‘flesh’ will not be there to be crucified – you will be in a new body and will be happy. But until that time, you do not try to escape by committing suicide, because you are doing what God says, and so you are happy. A member of the Church delights to be crucified!

“(For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord” – to finish the conflict, the Crucified Life and the suffering, and to enter into the Glory – Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him” [2 Corinthians 5:7-9]. So the obedience goes on, whether in this body in the suffering or in the new body where there is no suffering necessary. On and on we go... Once you are committed it is no good putting your hand on the plough and looking back [Luke 9:62]. You will not make the Meeting when Christ comes for His Church.

**Titus 2:11-15**     *“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; 13. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14. Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. 15. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.”*

This is a picture of the child of God suffering willingly, gladly. You don't suffer under compulsion. You deny yourself. **You** must take up the Cross. It is a delightful Life to the Christian!

**v11**             *“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men”* – not the Wrath of God. Not the dictates of God; not the compulsion of God, but the GRACE of God has appeared to all men!!

**v12**             *“Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.”*

Christ taught His disciples that He must go; that He must suffer, He must die [Matthew 26:2]. And here He is teaching us that we must go and suffer and die to ourselves and to the world.

To live “soberly”, or **watchfully**, in this world means suffering inconvenience, taking time out of your day. It means a certain amount of loneliness, away from people. It means crucifying the flesh. It means not giving so much time and attention to our daily chores. What does it matter? Mary chose the “good part”, and the Lord Jesus said it “shall not be taken away from her” [Luke 10:42].

*“Righteously”* – **obediently**. *“Godly”* – **victoriously**.

To live victoriously you **have** to be crucified. It is the Crucified Life that was Victorious! Remember, He rose from the dead after He had been crucified! He didn't come down from the Cross and break up the experience and deny it. He denied **Himself**, and stayed on the Cross until He couldn't stay alive any more and died as a Man.

**v13**             *“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”*

While we are looking for that, we live this Crucified Life in this present world. We are looking for Him to come, the One who did that before you. The flesh must suffer. It is not easy to go into the company of worldly people, and not feel that you would like to be friendly on their basis, according to their views and their ways – but you cannot. The world hates Jesus Christ and all the friendly advances you make just make a mock of Him in their eyes because they hate Him. He is their enemy.

**Galatians 5:16-24** – The Church of God delights to suffer for Christ's sake. You cannot live a Crucified Life without the exuberance, that Joy, of the Spirit; with preoccupation and grimness. *“If a man love Me, he will keep My words”* [John 14:23]. A joyous life crucifies itself – obviously! Those happy to be rid of the flesh will do that, realising the flesh is impotent to keep them happy with God! It is always lusting and hankering after something, nosing its way into all kinds of stuff, and wanting, never happy. It cannot make a crucified person happy – ever, so it has to die. It is the only thing to do with it. That is the conclusion God came to, and Christ proved it in His own Life and Death...

**Galatians 5: 16-17**     *“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” – so you will be crucifying the flesh!*

You cannot leave it to hang around waiting for an opening. You have to crucify the flesh if you are walking in the Spirit, for that very reason: the flesh and the Spirit are contrary one to the other. So if both the flesh and the Spirit are given place in your life you become paralysed and prevented from doing the things you would want to do. If you are not paralysed, you are either giving way to one influence or the other. They will never agree! They are contrary the one to the other. The Spirit’s exuberance in the Christian is always crucifying the flesh!

**vs18-21**     *“But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. 19. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20. Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21. Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

This list of the works of the flesh, obviously, are void of anything of God. We are shown the terrible obscenity of the flesh in a man. Thankfully, however –

**vs22-24**     *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23. Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 24. And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”*

Love for Christ, the joy, the great exuberance to do what God says. *“Against such there is no law”* – no limit to all that in the Christian life; only the flesh has to be contained and crucified!

### **Counting All Things Loss To Win Christ**

**Philippians 3: 7-10**     *“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9. And be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10. That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death.”*

**That** is the Crucified Life. There are many things in our lives that are gain to us. Don’t limit your thinking to only money. Many things are gain to people which have nothing to do with money.

*“Those I counted loss.”* Paul totted it all up and said, ‘No good. If to have that and not have Christ, it has to go. I must have Christ’ – not the support of Christ, He supports us all; it is to have Christ.

**v8**     *“Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ”.*

Paul considered it carefully as a member of the Church, and he decided what had to be done. He couldn’t bear the thought of these things which were so profitable to him, even those things, coming in his way of having Christ; they had to go.

"the excellency" – that word is used, for the thought of knowing Christ far exceeded in pleasure and enjoyment all those things which were gain to him. The good things that mattered could have been Christian things. Christ didn't have anything bad in His life. He could have made this world a very nice place, got a large following, increased His numbers, kept them happy, fed them if they were persecuted, whisking them away if people wanted them killed.

If men had forgotten that He resembled God very closely and talked to Him as a man, they would have found Him very pleasant company – He knew so much! He would tell them about the very essence of Creation which they never knew – and still don't! He would have told them where light came from. He would break it up for them, explaining the mathematics of the thing! He could have built Universities, entrancing them for years with His knowledge. They would have enjoyed it. He would have shown them how to till the land properly; how to grow crops successfully and how to built better houses, even producing a building to show them what should be done – He is God after all! Remember that! But He did what His servants here now know had to be done...

All that was gain to Him, Jesus Christ, **He** counted loss. So He said to Satan "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" [Matthew 4:10] – 'Away with you. I will not gain the love of people by attracting them with the things I know and the things I do'. There is only one Way for Love to really function in a permanent way and that is by Obedience to God's Word. That is the way to worship God and to say to Satan 'Away you go'. That is the Way it has to be done – and that is how He did it!

v8            *"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."*

Paul got to such a pitch that that was what he said – 'I count it all dung'. You know what dung is?! That is the value Paul attached to the things that were **gain** to him; not the things that were without profit.

v9            *"And be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:."*

v10          *"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death."*

This is his great passion, the reason why he is getting rid of all these gainful, profitable things, these good things. Paul could have used his new spiritual knowledge to produce some lovely thoughts for the Jews of his day. He could have filled in all the gaps, just as he had heard Stephen by the Spirit. Stephen was no Biblical scholar, but he gave a masterly exposition of the whole activity of God's people right up to his present day, and the reason for it all from God's point of view. Paul perhaps could have done that now very well, but it was all dung to him, "*that I may win Christ*". That is what he suffered for – who **He** is. That is very important. I must know Him; who is This Person who knows everything and then only came and died. All He concentrated on was putting my sins away.

'I cannot live without Him. I must know Him and the Power of His Resurrection; where He is.' Paul had to know that experience; that heart, of a Man walking into the Presence of God. That Man had done it, and Paul, now knew other men would do it with this Man's help. He wanted to know that Power and experience it in his life by doing it also – walking in guiltless, pure, clean, into God's Presence. Paul knew that this Man would take him in, so he wanted to know that Power. So to know that Power, he had to get other knowledge and other things out of his way, and that he did!

*"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."* Paul wanted to know the Fellowship of His sufferings. He wanted to see what He looks like and to enjoy that. That was the real holy, joyous pleasure awaiting him. It is worth suffering for. That is what the Church thinks! It is worth suffering for, for as Christ says [*Psalm 16:11*] at God's Right Hand in Him there are pleasures for evermore. So it is worth suffering for. The pleasures in this world are parting. Once they go, they are gone for ever, and they will be destroyed – every remembrance of these sin-infected pleasures will go, but **the Pleasures in Christ will go on and on endlessly...**

Men will enjoy those Pleasures – Oh, what does He look like?... The Fellowship of His Sufferings! Paul couldn't suffer like Christ had; neither could you or I – but we, with Paul, will see Him as He is... *"Blessed are they"*, He said to Thomas, *"that have not seen, and yet have believed."* [*John 20:29*] 'You believe because you have seen Me and put your hand into the print of the nails.'

*v10*            *"being made conformable unto His death."*

Paul, as it were, returned to this earth. Living here that same type of life that he wanted to see There – that same Crucified Life. He now took up his case against the good things in his life which he counted as dung for the Real Things.

*v11*            *"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."*

Stated by Paul, God's chosen vessel, specially empowered for the special task of being the human architect of the Eternal, Divine, God-impregnated Church. *"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

**1 Peter 2:9-24**    *"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light: 10. Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul..."*

God has called His Church to suffer in this world. He doesn't only expect them to but assures them that He is aware it is necessary, so they may not feel bewildered by the ferocity of the opposition or the suffering in the flesh. Christ has called us to suffer in this world.

*vs19-20*        *"For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience sake toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 20. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God."*

If when we are serving God, obeying His Word, we suffer for it and take it patiently, that is acceptable to God. He expects it, but appreciates it – He notices it. He is not a ruthless dictator; He knows exactly what each one of His children goes through. *"God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able"* [to bear] – He will not allow that to happen [*1 Corinthians 10:13*].

*v21*            *"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps."*

We are called to this Crucified Life. God calls us to it. He calls every member of the Church to be crucified.

The Spirit will do the crucifying in convincing us what we should do regarding His Word. It works that way. *"I am crucified"* [Galatians 2:20] – 'I am always under the control of the Spirit'. Another way of saying he is full of the Holy Ghost is, he is crucified. Only by the Spirit did Christ offer Himself without spot to God [Hebrews 9:14]. Only by the Spirit can we crucify the flesh and put aside the things that would say, 'No! No! No!' to our immediate joyful obedience to God's Word, whatever the cost. Christ did what God said. One can be very occupied in not doing wrong things, but really, we are called to do the right things – there is no point in not doing the wrong things!

### The Positive Crucified Life

v22           *"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth."*

He *"did no sin"* means that He did what He was told. It is **positive**. We have to do something – we can't just not do anything. It doesn't mean He kept away from wrong things, but in the midst of wrong things He did what God told Him to do right there. So He didn't hide His face when they spat on it, and He did refrain from reviling them, and when a demand was made upon Him He healed the man whose ear had been chopped off [Luke 22:50-51].

That shows the poise of a Crucified Life. It is not negative; it is very powerfully positive. In that shambles on the Cross, hanging there in all that agony (only because He obeyed the Word of God), when a man appealed to Him, He said readily, 'Today I'll take you in' [Luke 23:42-43].

*"neither was guile found in His mouth."* It costs something to speak always just what is so. The world takes it for granted that what a man says is not true in its essence. God takes nothing for granted; He asks us, and calls us into that suffering life. You will not suffer in Eternity when you speak without guile! – there is no guile there; no need for it there, everything is known; God is known, you are known, Christ is known, but here everything is equal, so the secrets of men's hearts are revealed in the final account. However, here there must be no guile found in the mouth of the child of God!

v23           *"Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously."*

It does not necessarily mean outwardly, openly, expressing resentment, but **inside** having no resentment. Jesus Christ hid not His face from shame and spitting [Isaiah 50:6b] – but actually, He had no resentment, though He knew He could have avoided it. It is quite different from a man giving himself up and then being submitted to torture over which he has no control. But Christ could have helped it, and there was no resentment in having to give His face to the spitters and His cheeks to those who tore out His beard – no revilings inside Him. *"when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously."* It cost Him to obey God's Word.

v24           *"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."*

He accepted the shame. He accepted the reproach of that Sacrifice. We also must bear His reproach...

(end of morning session)

(afternoon session)

**1 Peter 2:19-20** *“... if a man for conscience sake toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 20. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it – when you are serving God, you suffer for it – ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.”*

**vs21-24** *“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: 22. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: 23. Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously: 24. Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”*

He accepted the shame and reproach of that Sacrifice.

We must also bear His reproach. People who do not like Christ should not find you nice to know. They should find you exactly as distasteful as Christ is to them. The people who didn't like God didn't like Christ. He said so, because it is the Word of God that so embarrasses the God-less. It discomforts them. It enrages them, and so they say, [as they said before Pilate,] *“Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him”* [John 19:15].

### **The Crucified Way To Perfection**

**1 Peter 5:6-7** *“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: 7. Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you.”*

Christians find themselves unable to do this as this is what crucifying the flesh means. If you are to cast all your cares upon Christ, then you are not full of the cares and troubles of this life; you are not busy doing what you want!

**vs8-10** *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9. Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. 10. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”*

It is only after you have lived the Cross-life that God can make you perfect. It was the same thing for Christ:

**Hebrews 5:8-9** *“Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; 9. And being made perfect – only after He learned obedience and suffered – He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him”.*

So the God of all Grace has called us into His eternal Glory by Christ Jesus. *“...after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”*

*“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* ‘God please prevent me from showing pleasure, giving attention, being glad, happy, delighted, excited, about anything save and except that Obedience which took Christ to Calvary.’ I can have pleasure in nothing else, but unless I am operating that obedience, I won't have the pleasure that the Church of God would have! Disobedience spoils all pleasure, however good or spiritual that pleasure might be. That is why it is put like that. God has called His Church to suffer in this world. In other words, to appropriate that Obedience that took a Person like Christ to Calvary, so it had to be that Obedience which was to get Him there.

It resulted in Christ hanging on the Cross – so there is Power in that Obedience! All life will be harmonious, without tensions, and it will be filled with a capacity to enjoy Salvation only when it issues from that kind of obedient Life.

**Philippians 1:18-20** *“What then? Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. 19. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20. According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.”*

Everything was all right as long as that obedience was functioning in Paul!

**vs21-24** *“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. 23. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: 24. Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.”*

The same attitude: that that obedience should take first place in his life. So if God wanted him to go he would be glad to go. If God wanted him to stay as He appeared to do, he was glad to stay in this world, as long as it was obedience to God’s Word that was required of him – that Cross-obedience; that Crucified Life.

**vs25-26** *“And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith; 26. That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.”*

Always the life of a Christian is balanced; without tension, without any lack, or longings unsatisfied – those Christians who are answering God’s Call to His Church and who are loving that Obedient Life which led only to the Cross for Him. That is the Life! Whatever else He did to please God – that which He did to obey God, and which took Him to Calvary – that is the most perfect satisfying Life for a Christian to live. That Obedience will give you all that you need, which is JESUS!

**vs27-29** *“Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; 28. And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. 29. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.”*

Christ has provided the only type of Life that will suit any man, not just satisfy God. It wouldn’t satisfy God unless it suited you, so when God calls you to that obedience, He is calling you to a Life that will suit you best. The Church of God is a perfect witness, a proof, conclusive evidence that That Life of obedience can be lived under the same conditions, with the same help from God: His holy written Word and His Holy Spirit.

**Colossians 2:1-11.** The conflict is not an uncertainty or indecision in Paul, but it is merely this battle – the ceaseless war between the flesh and the Spirit; the Spirit insisting on God’s Pattern laid down: the Cross, That Life, that Crucified Life, the best Life available and suitable to anyone and everyone including Paul and the people at Colossē. So Paul, in order to be able to show to them what they had to do, emphasised the battle between the flesh and the Spirit...

v5           *“For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.”*

“Beholding **your order**” – it is the most orderly, the most proper, practical Life, the Life lived as the Cross. It really is the most reliable Life, the most peaceable Life. It is unshakeable in its success over all the power of the enemy – undaunted, unaffected, unmoved in its course. Creation moves in the ordered course along which it has been set by Christ, by His Word, and it is kept there; it goes according to His Word. And because we love Him, we have chosen to follow this ordered Way, the narrow way. The gate is “*strait*” [confined]. The road of the Cross-obedience leads directly to that gate, and we can only go into Eternal Life that Way. It is not going to be enlarged to allow for other forms of living, other ways of obeying. This Way is the right way.

vs6-8       *“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: 7. Rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. 8. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”*

This Cross-life is heavily attacked by the religious world, by nominal and backsliding Christians, for the reason that it is entirely independent of the senses. It does not appeal to the senses; the reason, the logic of man, his desires, lusts, pleasures, covetousness or pride – only to God!

That is why the Church of God is called to live This Life, because this is the Life that appeals to God. He finds it wonderful! Why! look at what results it has produced – a whole Family which God can take pleasure in. So if you as member of the Church of God are saying you belong to Christ and you do not find your life a fruitful one, a satisfied one or a contented one, today is the day to take on This Life and leave your own discontented, dissatisfied, disobedient life! *“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

vs8-9       *“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. 9. For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”*

You will not find any other type of life suited to God’s Home, to God’s personality or to Christ. **This Life** only fits in with the Habits and the Programme of Heaven. No other life can fit in There – it is too orderly and disciplined, too free from self and selfishness. This Life is full of Love, full of Joy and full of Peace! It does not allow for the promotion of despair, depressions or self-interests. It has no room for that, so obviously it is the only Life suited to Eternity, the only Life that will last in Eternity!

v10         *“And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power.”*

Over again we get the same emphasis: This Life is sufficient, and everything starts there. That is why we started this meditation with that: *“God forbid that I should glory”* in any other type of life than This, or in any other experience than This Life. After I have taken hold of This Life, and embarked upon it, the Cross, the Christ-Crucified Life, then other things will fall into place.

Another way of putting it was in the previous Age: *“Delight thyself also in the LORD; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart”* [Psalm 37:4]. It is the same thing, only we are speaking with the know-ledge of the Church, so we have the greater revelation. But if you say, *“God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ”*, you are obviously delighting yourself in Him.

*vs11-12* "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: 12. Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead."

The Church has the type of mind to accept suffering in this world for Christ's sake as right and proper. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" [Philippians 2:5] – the same type of Mind, in fact, the same way of thinking that accepts it is right and proper for anyone in God's Family to suffer in this world.

### **Wholly Given To God**

*Philippians 2:5* "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."  
What was that type of Mind?..

*v6* "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God" –

He decided He would give Himself wholly to God. This arose out of the question of what should be done to save Man from his sins; he couldn't, so God was to save him from his sin, and in the planning and the arranging of the details, this Fact stuck out:

**What is the sin of Mankind? What is the cause of all his distress?**

The Answer is: Disregard of, disobedience to, and doubts concerning, My Word. That's what God would say and Christ agreed. The proof of Christ's agreement with God's view is that Christ Himself suffered, first from seeing all that and from being among it, and subsequently having to endure it here. The Holy Spirit presents us with the thinking out of the Plan by This Man. So **what** did He do? He decided He would give Himself **wholly** to God. Of what avail would it be to say, 'All right, I will do this when You ask Me'? – No!

The whole man needed to be cleansed, with all sin put away. The whole man was saturated with it, so Christ gave Himself wholly to God as a Man, so that it could be a real, efficient proper Salvation. He didn't say, 'I will come down at sometime and I will come back again'. He gave Himself to God. **That** is obedience; that is the Cross-obedience. It starts right there, and what does it do **then**? – just what it is meant to do by God. It puts God's Word into the First Place in the life, making **the Word** the most prominent part of the life. So that whenever anyone saw That Life giving itself wholly over to God, they were quite sure they knew why and could see it was always available to God's Word.

God's Way **is** the best Way, and surely this is why we have seen throughout this meditation on 'Suffering For Christ' that God expects us to live the Best Way. He doesn't want us to live a poorer way – He is our Father; we belong to **His** Family. Only the best kind of behaviour, conduct, and the best kind of conversation will suit that kind of Royal Family. It needs to be the best, doesn't it, if it is Royal? It is Royal, and it has to rule over the Universe. Everybody and everything has to be subject to that Family. They ought to be the best behaved in the whole Universe. They ought to be setting the example with the best type of manners and conduct and thinking and speaking.

*Psalms 138:1-2* "I will praise Thee with My whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto Thee. 2. I will worship toward Thy holy temple, and praise Thy name for Thy lovingkindness and for Thy truth: for Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name."

All this praise comes out of seeing God and what God has done, and the Cause of that Vision – the Cause enabling the Speaker to see this:

"For Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name".

The Speaker is Christ, but He Himself is seeing the matchless Glory of this Salvation that God has wrought through Him – Christ’s own initial obedience, thereby producing a Race of men, a Family for God; the Church of God, who are equally wholehearted in their obedience. Of course, the Word will be magnified above all His Name! If you give yourself entirely to God, men will only see God in your life. If they don’t want God they won’t come near you. “*He that hateth Me hateth My Father also*” [John 15:23]. It goes for you as well as for Christ. He then determined **how** He would do it, with God’s approval, of course. And **what** did He do?

**Philippians 2:**     *“But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and 7-8                    was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”*

He stripped His Person of all His Glory, all that which gave to His Person its dignity, the honour which brought upon Him the praise and honour of countless bill-ions of angels. All Heaven saw Him when He went by! Some say this statement that He “*made Himself of no reputation*” means that He emptied Himself, but He did not for He was still the same Person. He had the same Power, but He exercised it under different conditions. He was still the same Holy Person; still in charge of Eternity – only He said, ‘I could receive more than ten legions of angels, but I am more concerned with doing what God says in His Written Word’ [Matthew 26:53].

This is that matchless Cross-obedience which the Church of God is expected by God to follow. It means what it is meant to: He stripped Himself of that which gave Him this reputation. Read of Him as He appeared in Vision to *Ezekiel* [1:26-28] and *Daniel* [10:5-6] and others. You see the awesome sight He was! When these prophets saw Him, down they went on their faces.

One said his comeliness had turned into corruption as if he was full of rotting diseases at the sight of that glorious Holiness – but Christ stripped Himself of all that; He left it behind. How, we will not know until we see Him! Then we will know, but He did say, as recorded by John, “*O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was*” [John 17:5] !

That Glory would have made obedience difficult! And that is why Paul said, ‘All these things must go. I count all things dung that I might win Christ’. We cannot live the Cross-life with many other pursuits and demands taking up all your time. The Crucified Life must have First Call on our attention. So He stripped Himself of His Glory; He had to do it; God couldn’t do it. That is obedience. There is no compulsion whatsoever when we obey God, because God is LOVE – and “*we love Him because He first loved us*”! [1 John 4:8, 16 & 19].

v7                    *“But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.”*

He accepted for Himself the character and conduct of a servant. So He trained Himself in those years before He came to be the Servant; to accept that Position. He accepted the Position before He ever came here, leaving His Glory behind. “*By His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many*”, says God through *Isaiah 53:11*. What knowledge? The knowledge that the only way of **obedience**, the servant-way, could procure for Him the Salvation He wanted for Mankind. It is described also in *Hebrews 5:8*, “*yet learned He obedience*”. To be a good Servant, He must obey. That is what a servant is for. Obedience is the servant’s vocation! What else would a servant do for a job?! So the Christ of God conditioned His Life to that before He ever took on the reality. Indeed, He is reported as saying, “*I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me*” [John 6:38]. That is very much a servant-attitude! – conscious of being in service to Someone.

This is what impressed the centurion who wanted his own servant healed – this Cross-life: this faultless, unwavering, minute, precise, unbroken appeal to God’s Word as it is written. He saw this Man was under Authority and saw the discipline of this Life under Authority. To be disciplined is to put oneself under that Authority, then the life will be disciplined by that Authority. Any other authority might make allowances for the flesh – “*But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!*” [1 Corinthians 15:57]

No allowance is made for the flesh. It is treated as a dead thing, and you have the victory through the Blood, through the Word, and by the Spirit... So the centurion said, ‘You don’t have to come all that way. No, not a Man like You. You know exactly what You are doing, Whom You are serving, and, what is more, You have exactly the knowledge that what You say shall be done because You know You have His entire confidence – so just say the word, and that feverish sickness must go!’ And so it did!

v7            *“and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.”*

The logical completion of His method of carrying out this Call to obey, this Love-Call: ‘Will You do it?’ It is so wonderful to read that Statement: “*I have laid help upon one that is mighty*” [Psalm 89:19]. There is no force or compulsion, but He put all the weight of the sin of the world on to Him, saying, ‘Only You can do it; only You will do it. I know You will, because I know You’. So He went out to do it that Way. There is **no other way** than That Way. “*God forbid*” that there is any other way ... delight in any other way ... appreciate any other way ... look at any other way ... consider any other way. “*God forbid ... save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

**John 8:23-30**        *“And He said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.”* – the pathway that the members of the Church of God follow when they are obeying like this and living this Cross-life.

It brought Him from one World to another, from Eternity into Time. How exciting! There is nothing as exciting in your Christian life as the Cross-life leading you along paths and ways you haven’t gone hitherto, which you didn’t know about; meeting all kinds of demands you never knew of, and never thought of to meet, enduring all kinds of afflictions you hadn’t cared to think about!! And you see all kinds of wonderful things happening to men and women by the mighty Grace of that Obedient One, such as you would never have known if you hadn’t walked that Way too!

v24            *“I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins.”*

‘If you are not going to accept me as the Life you must lead, you must die in your sins.’ That is one way which the Obedient Life does not lead – to the eternal Lake of Fire.

**vs25-26**        *“Then said they unto Him, Who art Thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning. 26. I have many things to say and to judge of you: but He that sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him.”*

One of the characteristics of the suffering of the Cross is the inability that such a Life has for indulging in much advice and offering many solutions and coming to many conclusions about people’s lives. The inability is derived from this concentration on doing what God says. If the Church of God is doing what God says then the things it wants altered and doesn’t see altered, will be altered. When Christians tell men how to do things their way, it doesn’t happen their way!

## Wanting To Suffer For Love

*vs28-29* “Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things. 29. And He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him.”

The Church of God, being the Church of God, wants to suffer for Christ’s sake. Not only do they know they are expected to, not only are they willing to, but they also **want** to very much, because they love Him.

*Ephesians 5:1-2* “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; 2. And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.”

This is the basis of this Obedience, the Cross-life – because of **love**, and because it does it – for the Church chooses to answer God’s Call for love of Christ – this Walk does it much good!

*James 1:2-4* “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”

We need patience to live even a million years! This is the only Way to live that Cross-life which is suited to the even, measured, unchanging Way of Eternity. There is no rush and hurry There; no fret, froth and bubble, no irritation – but there is Patience and Joy!

*James 5:7-11* “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until He receive the early and latter rain. 8. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. 9. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. 10. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. 11. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

‘Continue this Cross-life, because you love Me’, Christ says. The Cross-life is quite sure that Jesus is coming, and believes, just as the farmer knows when he sees the signs, watching for it so patiently. He cannot hurry the rain, nor delay it, as He gets his land sown at the proper time, wait for it. But he sees it coming as he waits, looking out for it. I do believe, as the Church of God lives that Cross-life, it will know the moment that Christ shouts! It will know immediately, and it will go immediately!

*2 Corinthians 1:3-4* “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; 4. Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.”

In this suffering, this Cross-life, living like Christ Crucified, there is comfort. There’s no comfort in any other kind of living; there is always some discomfort somewhere, some discontent, some dissatisfaction; but not in the Cross-life!

*vs5-6* "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. 6. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation." – 'as the Obedience of Christ Crucified abounds in us.'

In proportion to your living this Cross-life – in the measure that you suffer as you do so, in that measure only can you offer comfort to others along that Road.

*vs7-8* "And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation. 8. For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life."

There is no anxiety, no concern in the heart of a pastor who finds one of his members living the Cross-life, being much afflicted, or in great distresses. There is no anxiety, no doubts about his ability to stay the course, but his concern is to encourage, for this Life will outlast anything! All other types of life will have vanished away, but this Cross-life will go on throughout Eternity!

*v8* "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life."

There is the comfort of suffering for Christ's sake, so Paul has told them that, *v7*, while he also wants them to know of their troubles which came to them in Asia [now Turkey], where they really thought they would die...

*v9* "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, – not in someone else. The sentence of death was that their hands were no longer on their own lives – that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." That is the Crucified Life, not trusting their own effort to get out of their troubles.

**Hebrews 11** is all about suffering for Christ's sake; living the Crucified Life, answering God's Call, living up to God's expectations, and to Christ's Joy and Love. It keeps your Vision of God clear. Those who suffering for Christ's sake always retain their Vision of God whatever the pressures...

*v7* "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

Surrounded by hostility and mockery, Noah did what God asked him, and became an heir of the Righteousness which is by faith. He didn't know what rain was, but looked out for the things that were to destroy the earth because God told him to protect himself from the floods by making an ark. He hadn't seen water like that before – a mist came up from the ground and watered the earth.

*v8* "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went."

Abraham too, was told to go to a place he hadn't known before. He knew he wouldn't inherit it then, but he went out, believing it was his. He obeyed God; he gave himself wholly over. In that sense, he took up his Cross and denied himself.

v9 *“By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles [tents] with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.”*

He couldn't settle down. It was not his yet, but God had told him it was his so on he went! Why?...

v10 *“For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”*  
Unimpaired vision!

v14 *“For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.”*

They declare plainly that they are living the life of the Cross. In the New Testament version, they are “looking unto Jesus”. They are following that Life, that Pattern which was found the Best for all Mankind.

vs23-27 *“By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. 24. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25. Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. 27. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible.”*

Moses' parents hid him three months. They denied themselves both of the child and of their possible liberty if they were caught. They were not afraid of the king's commandment [to have every male baby cast into the river, *Exodus 1:22*]. This is **The Life** of the Cross. We are so fortunate to have the Pattern now for it!

v26 *“Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.”*

He lived the type of life that Christ was going to live eventually which brings the reproach of the world on the person living it. Moses' Vision was bright and clear.

vs32-40 – 12:1 *“And what shall I more say for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: 33. Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34. Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. 35. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: 36. And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: 37. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; 38. (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. 39. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40. God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us...”*

They all witnessed to This Life of Obedience, of giving oneself wholly over to the Word of God as it is written as being **the Best Life**.

12:2 *“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

## DAY 10

**Daily Readings: Isaiah 55:6-9; Hebrews 1:1-4; Isaiah 53:1-6; Revelation 21:22-27**

### SCRIPTURES FOR THE DAY'S STUDY

Psalm 36:7-11

Isaiah 58:10-11

## Revelations from the Scriptures

### SATISFIED WITH GOD

**Ephesians 5:18-21** *"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; 19. Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; 20. Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; 21. Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."*

#### **A Command To The Church of God To Be Full of the Holy Spirit**

The Church of God, the Church of the Living God, is commanded by God to be filled with the Spirit of God – *"And be not drunk with wine ... but be filled with the Spirit"*. The picture of a man drunk with wine is a good way of expressing that men are under the control of so many things, and alcohol is one weapon used by Satan to get men under his control eventually.

To be filled with the Spirit of God is to know, to recognize and therefore to be **satisfied** that Christ is controlling, is directing your life personally – the lives of every member of the Church of God.

To be filled with the Spirit is not to have a ready outlet for my emotional outbursts or my feelings. It is to know and to recognize and therefore to be satisfied – the Church of Jesus Christ is satisfied with God – that Christ is controlling, Christ is directing, our lives personally; individual lives, communal lives of the Church of God personally by the Spirit.

**Luke 24:44-49** *"And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning Me. 45. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, 46. And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: 47. And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48. And ye are witnesses of these things. 49. And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."*

**The Church of God must be filled with the Spirit of God.** That is Divine logic.

**vs50-53**     *“And He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them. 51. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. 52. And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy – why? because the Promise had been advised to them; they were to receive some thing from this departed Lord, (“**be filled with the Spirit**”) – 53. And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.”*

The Church, the Church of God, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, as well as in other Scriptures, was full of the Holy Ghost. Even its Head – *“And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days He did eat nothing.”* [Luke 4:1-2] The whole passage of **Luke 4** to **v14** is worth studying ... After the devil’s confrontation with Christ, it says, *“And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee – there is no other power by which the Church of God moves. As soon as you relapse or move out of that Position of the Holy Spirit’s Power, you are immediately in the flesh, and it is more evident as you have known the moving of the Holy Spirit. The movings of the flesh are very evident in churches as distinct from the movings of the Spirit – and there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about – because He was preaching, speaking, working and acting in the Power of the Spirit.*

**Acts 6:2-3**     – the Acts of the Holy Ghost! – *“Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. 3. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business – the condition insisted by the Apostles, for what? for the handling of the distribution of their ever-increasing funds. You might say, ‘Is that all?’ Yes, but it was the Church of the Living God, and everything the Church handled was from God and to God and on God’s account. So they insisted on that condition. And the rest of the Church chose seven men accordingly.*

**v5**             *“And the saying pleased the whole multitude – they realised, themselves being full of the Holy Ghost, no doubt, that only a man full of the Holy Ghost could run any business for God. Not so today, is that thought, but God still expects us, His Church, to be full of His Spirit, no other spirit – and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch.” They were all filled. It doesn’t mention it but the Holy Spirit just recorded Stephen as one of the seven, as that was the condition insisted on for all the seven – “seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost”. The result was obvious, **v7**, *“And the word of God increased; – the Word **will** increase where the Holy Ghost is, it must. It becomes fruitful; it springs up into ever-lasting Life – and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.”**

### Stephen, A Man Full of The Holy Ghost

**v8**             *“And Stephen, full of faith and power – you have to be **full**. The teaching of ‘One Baptism, many fillings’ is blasphemous. We must be full of the Holy Ghost. How are you to know when you are not filled? – when you’re backsliding, when you’re disobeying, when you’re not seeking God, when you are not reading the Bible properly?... When is the Church not the Church? When were the seven men not filled with the Holy Ghost? Or were they only when attending to the business of distributing the money? Surely not! – *did great wonders and miracles among the people.*” – obviously! And, his preaching was with irresistible power because he was full of the Holy Ghost. They couldn’t gainsay it. They couldn’t find a way round it and through it. Even those unbelieving, Christ-rejecting men, knew they had no answer except man’s ways, which they employed to kill him eventually.*

**Acts 7:44-60** Stephen's answer to the charge of blasphemy: *"Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen. 45. Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus in to the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drave out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David; 46. Who found favour before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. 47. But Solomon built Him an house. 48. Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands - he said **dwelleth**, not 'will dwell' or 'dwelt'. The Church is dwelled in by the Holy Ghost. Every member is the temple in which the Holy Ghost dwells; not does dwell from time to time - it means "**full**". Here was a temple not *made with hands* speaking! He was very conscious of the fact. He was about to die violently, painfully, but he was sure he was full of the Holy Ghost, that the most High was not dwelling in temples made with hands...*

**v48b-52** *"as saith the prophet, 49. Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool: what house will ye build Me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of My rest? 50. Hath not My hand made all these things? 51. Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. 52. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:"*

The whole story was summed up by the Holy Ghost, by God speaking out of His temple -

**vs53-54** *"Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, - God gave them the Law peaceably, correctly and spiritually - and have not kept it. When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth."*

And so Stephen is reported as being in that same circumstance with his archenemies. The same who crucified his Lord, his God were about to kill him...

**v55** *"But he, being full of the Holy Ghost - it doesn't mean he suddenly became full, he **was** full. It started by saying that of Stephen, "a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost", [6:5] - it is put like that to show why he acted thus - *looked up stedfastly into heaven* - he didn't look at that ring of implacable, merciless faces, not because he was afraid, or he would never have said what he did! What he said was on pain of death, but God had said it, and the men who didn't repent, who stoned Stephen, must face that Judgment Seat. And Stephen? ... his body was battered and he died like that, but he knew **Him**, because he was full of the Holy Ghost and faith!*

*"... looked stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."*

The vision wasn't a constant one, but because he was constantly full of the Holy Ghost he could see these wondrous things. Heaven opened for Stephen to see *"the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."*

**vs57-58** *"Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, - they didn't see heaven opened, with the Son of man standing on the right hand of God; they were not full of the Holy Ghost - and nor will we unless we are full of the Holy Ghost - And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.*

Oh, yes, God used Stephen to convict Saul. Shortly after that this same murderous Saul heard the voice of the same Person that Stephen had seen in his death, and he was converted and convicted, and he was full of the Holy Ghost! And so on and on it went, this Church.

v59 *“And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”*  
If we can get rid of all this false teaching, which has permeated the Pentecostal community, we would not allow for any lapses or lapse.

When a man truly repents and receives Christ as his Saviour, he ought, according to God’s Word, to be filled with the Holy Ghost and stay full. Cast out all these words which only help Satan to rob us of our Power with God and our Position in Christ. Would you say Christ had many in-fillings of the Holy Spirit? You would say, ‘No’. Well, what Christ is, the Church is.

v60 *“And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge – my, he was full of the Holy Ghost – And when he had said this, he fell asleep.”*

### Barnabas, A Good Man, and Full of The Holy Ghost

**Acts 11:24** *“For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of much faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.”*

*“Full of the Holy Ghost.”* The Church of God is commanded to be full of the Holy Ghost – the Church, that part of it reported on in Holy Scripture as being full of the Spirit.

### Peter Witnesses Gentiles Being Filled With The Holy Ghost

vs15-24 This is Peter explaining to the rest of the Church why he baptised in water Gentiles. The implication being **two-fold**: If Peter baptised people in water, they must have become children of God. They must be acceptable to Christ. They must have repented as they all did before them. So they couldn’t understand how Gentiles had received the Message of Grace. The **second** part of the Message was that it was taken for granted that when a man repented, he was filled with the Holy Ghost. So Peter said,

v15 *“And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning”* – that was a very good point he made. It reminded him that they had all been filled with the Holy Ghost, and they hadn’t lost that filling – how can you...?

v16-18 *“Then remembered I the word of the Lord, [Acts 1:5] how that He said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. 17. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? 18. When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”* That is how they took it.

vs19-20 *“Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. 20. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.”* Now they had impetus and encouragement from Peter’s experience with Cornelius.

### Back To Barnabas...

vs21-24 *“And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. – of the Grecians – 22. Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. 23. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. 24. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: - that’s why they sent for Barnabas.*

He had seen the Grace of God immediately working in that community; he was sure it was stamped with the Seal of God – *and much people was added unto the Lord.*” – through Barnabas’s added ministry to that region.

Barnabas was quite a prominent member in the ministry of that early Church – “*full of the Holy Ghost and of faith*”. He was well-known for his ministry, a great deal with Paul. “*Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them*” – the Holy Ghost spoke through someone else full of the Holy Ghost [Acts 13:2]. That’s why they were so clear – ‘God was telling me this, and God was telling me that, and God told us this’, and there was never any mistake. It always turned out as God had said it would. Oh, Hallelujah!

*vs25-26* “*Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: – the work grew enormously through men full of the Holy Ghost and faith – And when he had found him, – another one full of the Holy Ghost – he brought him unto Antioch. – The fact that there were no cars and aeroplanes and such like didn’t seem to hinder their movements in the work of God – And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, – two men full of the Holy Ghost and faith, Saul and Barnabas – and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.*”

The Church of **God** is commanded, then, to be filled with the Holy Ghost. “*And be not drunk with wine – let nothing else influence to the point of controlling your life; it belongs to God.*” The Church of God is aware of that; very acutely aware – *but be filled with the Spirit.*”

### **Filled and Satisfied With God**

**To be filled with the Spirit of God, is to be satisfied with God!** You can’t be satisfied with God unless the Spirit is moving positively in your life; in your heart, in your mind, in your whole being. How can you? It is only by the Spirit you see Jesus. It is only by the Spirit you hear God’s Voice. **We must be filled with the Holy Ghost. We must be full of satisfaction with God!**

### **John The Baptist, Filled With The Holy Ghost**

**Luke 1:15** This is Gabriel, the angel sent from God, explaining the role of John the Baptist in God’s Plan for His Church, ultimately, to Zacharias, “*For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink – that’s a very good connection... Now you see why Paul said, “be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit” – all men filled with the Spirit have the same link, be it John the Baptist in that day and Paul in his day, but the Spirit is the same, blessed be God! – and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother’s womb.*” And you will have to admit that John the Baptist was not greater than any member of the Church [Matthew 11:11]. Having a particular form of Ministry or work, a task for God, he was “*filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother’s womb*”, but he was **filled**. “*Full of the Holy Ghost*” [the seven deacons, Barnabas] – let that be a true statement for every one of us, as we go on living as members of the Church of the Living God, of the Body of Christ!

**Luke 1:40-41** “*And [Mary] entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. 41. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe [John] leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.*” Gabriel had told Mary in Nazareth in Galilee where she was, and so it says...

**v39** “*And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; – she travelled quite a distance, and with a lack of quick transport. Elisabeth didn’t know what Gabriel had said to Mary, but she was filled with the Holy Ghost!*”

*vs42-45* “Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb – Mary had just been told that she would have a Child by the Holy Ghost – 43. *And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord – she’s speaking of Jesus Christ before He had been born! – should come to me?* 44. *For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy – what a wonderful story, of the foretaste of the Church that was to be begun by that Holy Thing that would come out of Mary – 45. And blessed is she that believed – she’s saying everything that happened to Mary when Gabriel made his tremendous announcement! – for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.”*

So she prophesied to confirm to Mary’s heart that all was well. Mary was excited; she believed, but she could have been a little fearful, not in unbelief, but she was a young person and was told all these things, so an older woman having a baby miraculously from the same God was used by the Lord to comfort this child – she was probably much younger – and to strengthen her faith and to establish in her the great sense of being the human mother of the Lord. So Mary immediately said...

*vs46-47* “My soul doth magnify the Lord, 47. *And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour – Mary was not full of the Holy Ghost, but she’d been told this by Gabriel and now it was confirmed, undoubtedly by God through Elisabeth, and so Mary gave forth her feelings in praise of God.*

*Luke 1:59-67* “*And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. 60. And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John. 61. And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.”*

God is not bound by traditions and customs; He is carrying out His Purposes which are extremely wise, but good.

### The Works of God

*vs62-68* “*And they signs to his father, how he would have him called. 63. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. 64. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God. 65. And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea. 66. And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him. 67. And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, 68. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people,...*”

By the Holy Ghost he spoke of the Finished Work. His remarkable spiritual son hadn’t yet started his remarkable Spirit-filled ministry as a prelude to the Man who was following on his heels, even Jesus Christ, and yet God gave the finished matter. “for He hath visited and redeemed His people, – Zacharias was speaking of the Lord God of Israel, not of his son John who was going to introduce the Lord God of Israel to His own people in the flesh ...

*vs69-70* “*And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David; 70. As He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began”*

What a difference to the doubting man who questioned Gabriel’s authority; which was why he was struck dumb.

### They Were All Filled With The Holy Ghost

**Acts 2:1-4a** The beginnings of the Church; approximately hundred and twenty in the upper room... *“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them – in turn, I should think – And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost – that’s what the Baptism [of the Spirit] is!*

And Peter said, *“as on us at the beginning”* [Acts 11:15], and so they took that Message right through. Paul recognised it, Philip recognised it, Peter recognised it, John recognised it, as the tide of blessing, of revelation and of recognition that **Christ was working in His Church**, rolled on and on ... this is how they went. *“Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?”* [Acts 19:2]

**v4** *“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”* And what they spoke – as they were all speaking together in different languages which the different nationalities there could pick out, it being perfectly in their own tongue, where they were born, their own native tongue – they heard perfectly, not with a Galilean accent or with Galilean grammar! But they said,

**v7b** *“Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?”*

They were not very well-educated men, but speaking faultless Greek, or Parthian or Persian [**vs8-11**]. What were they speaking? – *“the wonderful works of God”, v11*. And that does not refer to Creation. Remember *Psalm 107*? *v2 “Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy; v4 They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way – this is when they didn’t act redeemed – “v6 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses. v7 And He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.”* This *Psalm* is full of God’s Redemption, His **Redeeming Power**, His ceaseless, continuous Grace, and so in between while, by the Spirit, of course, the prophet says this, *v8, “Oh that men would praise the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men”.*

Those are His works: the Redemption, the Redeeming Power of God towards the children of men, who don’t deserve it, who don’t act redeemed, who do their best, apparently, to get out of the position of staying redeemed, and yet, again and again, *v11, “Because they rebelled against the word of God and contemned the counsel of the most High:” v12 “Therefore He brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help.” v13 “Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, – as we always do – and He saved them out of their distresses.” v14 “He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder” – **these** are the wonderful works of God those people could hear – *v15 “Oh that men would praise the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!”* It goes on, *v19 – “Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and He saveth them out of their distresses. v20 He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions. v21 Oh that men would praise the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!”* These verses concern the prophet’s cry, the Holy Ghost’s cry, that men would praise God for His redeeming Grace...*

So these men, by the Holy Ghost, spoke of the Grace of God in Christ Jesus. And Barnabas, full of the Holy Ghost, saw the Grace of God evidenced in all that was being done there. He was impressed with the Grace of God which had brought Salvation – not with the miracles – the same Salvation that welled up in his heart by the Holy Spirit; the same Grace now seated on the Right Hand of His Father! *“...full of the Holy Ghost...” “...be filled with the Spirit”* – the Command of God to His Church. Other churches are other churches, but to the Church of God this Command comes – *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; – where there is lack of control, or control by wrong forces – “but **be** filled with the Spirit.”*

## Peter, Filled With The Holy Ghost

**Acts 4:8** This is the account of Peter when questioned by the council on his adventure, when through their laying on of hands from Peter, the lame man was healed completely...

**vs5** *“And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, 6. And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, – they were all there, all the opponents of Christ – and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. 7. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name – they asked the right question – have ye done this? 8. Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost...”*

Again, it doesn't mean that suddenly he was filled with the Holy Ghost to answer that question, but because he was filled with the Holy Ghost, he gave the answer that God would give under those circumstances. How can you have God now and not have Him then? What do you do in the meantime? Where do you go? Christians today are being robbed by false teaching of **the Power** and of **the Position** that is theirs; of the Holy Spirit which is given freely, of the Power of the Blood to assure them that all God has for them is theirs.

The Church of God is God's Church. You are not your own [1 Corinthians 6:19]. You don't belong to yourself. You have no right to treat the Church of God as any old thing. You are a member of the Church of the Living God. And if we believed that, oh, how different would be our country today...

**vs8-10** *“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost – his Position – said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, 9. If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; 10. Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole.”*

**vs11-12** *“This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. 12. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”*

The rivers flowed out; the right words were used. He told them who raised this man, and he told them that was exactly the Person they had left out of their Church; out of their Jewish religion, out of the structure of their faith, of their people's life itself, and he added for good measure, 'What's more, there is no other Name under Heaven, given by God, whereby you must be saved'.

Paul did say, 'What you say, what the Church says, should be like a bugle sounding a clear note, so that those hearing can tell whether it is warning or instruction, or calling, or demanding something, or rebuking [1 Corinthians 14:8]. The Church of God is the Church of God, and the Spirit of God is the Spirit of God in the Church! Remember that!

**Acts 4:31** This is the condition of the disciples after hearing from Peter and John of the council's threats, *“And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.”*

It is not that suddenly the Holy Spirit filled them; that they were not filled before; *“they were all filled with the Holy Ghost”* They were all responding to what was theirs, and so – *they spake the word of God with boldness.* – as they always did! But they had asked God for this, so they didn't wait to go out and give the Message. They only spoke to each other, but they heard each other, speaking clearly – it doesn't say what...

God gave this manifestation just to assure them that it was still the same. They had been threatened; their leaders had been threatened, but God was in control. And they used that very word, by the Spirit,

v29 *“behold their threatenings”* – and by the Spirit they asked for that one thing that was needful – *and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak Thy word.”*

### Ananias Meets Saul

*Acts 9:17* Now this is the conversion of Saul, called Paul later on, and one of the Church members named Ananias, whom Christ used – He uses every member of His Body in the Church! Everybody has some contact with Christ to do something for Christ! The trouble today, with all this teaching that you may be Baptised [in the Holy Ghost] or you may not – you’ll be a good Christian anyway; you may be filled or you may not be; you may have power or you may not have power – in all this, obviously, the deadly logic of such false teaching brings us to believe that we may be of service to God or we may not. So you get a lot of human church members, filling up the seats, coming and going, even in Pentecostal churches, content with a message in tongues in the church, forgetting the interpretation and going back to their lunches, their teas, their dinners ... and the week’s work begins, and back they come next Sunday. Then when meetings are specially organised, they all flock to the meetings and say, ‘What a wonderful man we heard! Oh, he prayed for the sick’ and they go back to the church and back to their work. All those lives under false teaching...

Not so This Church. Not so the Christ. He has no false church. He has no powerless church. What we must see by the Spirit is that the Church we’re talking about, the Church we must be in, is That Church that will be raptured – that’s the Church of God, the Church of the Living God, the Church that responds to God’s Spirit in God’s Word and through God’s Word. That is the Church that finally will stand before the God of all the Ages – *“the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”*, [Ephesians 1:3] who will say, ‘Welcome Home, with My Son’.

And so Ananias was a very earnest soul, probably a quiet man, he didn’t seem to have a ministry that was recorded in great detail, dramatically, but he did do this: He went to one of the Church’s fiercest and most terrible antagonist, Saul of Tarsus, who was a man to be reckoned with; very intelligent, full of the Old Testament Scriptures, and very full of fire and determination. A man of skill, and of great discernment of human beings, and so, undoubtedly, with much power in his hands – for good or for evil – and he hated the thought that the Person he had read of and knew and believed to be his Messiah should be preached as someone who could possibly be crucified by some lot of common people, even including priests and so on, by ordinary men; hung on a cross and then after all that, be found to be walking about in that same Body. He couldn’t stand that seemingly blasphemous thought, and Christ spoke to this same man, Saul! The men with him were not of the Church – they readily carried out his merciless orders – and they fell to the earth. They didn’t hear what Saul heard, and they didn’t see anything except a great light and they were afraid, paralysed with fear.

So there was no Christian evidence; nothing to show the Church that Saul of Tarsus was anything but a Godless murderer – amazing to see that the man who murdered many in the Church is God’s chief architect in building that Church! What a wonderful Person Jesus Christ must be!...

So, poor Ananias was told to go! No one else had seen this Saul before – he went into Damascus, where he was said to be praying. Who was he praying to?! He must have prayed a lot to his God; he wasn’t unaccustomed to praying.

Paul had said, 'I am a Pharisee of the Pharisees' [Acts 23:6]. The Pharisees prayed much, going about the streets praying, at the best corners [Matthew 6:5, eg]. Saul was a good prayer! So that was no evidence to Ananias. The only evidence he had was that Christ spoke to him. How could he have taken all that if he wasn't full of the Holy Ghost?...

**vs10-12**      *"There was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. 11. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, - Christ spoke from Heaven, at God's Right Hand; God does hear all that is going on! and He was approving of all that Christ was saying by His side - and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: - isn't it amazing, men came to hide from God [Genesis 3:8], but here is Christ speaking from Heaven giving Saul's address! We don't know everybody's address, but Christ does! He knows exactly which house you live in. How can we not believe we are of The Church of God? It's God speaking to His Church. So He must have said those things in order to give some proof to Ananias, for he was getting terrified as soon as he heard that name Saul, of Tarsus. So Christ was making it homely, and proper. If He knew where Saul was, then perhaps Ananias would be encouraged to know too. - for, behold, he prayeth, And hath seen in a vision - He was telling Ananias what He, by the Spirit, was giving Saul -*  
*12. a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight."* He had told Saul, but Ananias was only now being told by the Holy Ghost!

**v13**            *"Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to Thy saints at Jerusalem: - we are in the flesh, and so Ananias was permitted to let off steam in giving his opinion of Saul. It didn't matter, but he was allowed to do that...*

**v14**            *"And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy name - and the Lord let him say that, for it was true, but the greater truth was now grafted into Ananias's believing heart...*

**vs15-16**      *"But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16. For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake" - that was enough for Ananias.*

**v17**            *"And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him... - he did exactly what Christ said, what Saul had seen him do! Isn't the Lord wonderful!! How could he speak like that if he didn't know that His own Church wasn't full of the Holy Ghost? He was speaking Divine language, with Divine information; too amazing to argue about. Ananias had a Goal, and he accepted all that Christ had said. "... and putting his hands on him, said, - he went straight to Saul, to his address, and asked to see Saul of Tarsus, and in speaking with such assurance, was taken straight in - and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost - and of course that happened...*

**v18**            *"And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." 20. "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God."*

It's taken for granted that we believe that he also spoke with other tongues, because Ananias did as he was told, and so Saul was now filled with the Holy Ghost who was now driving him to preach Christ - "straightway" ... straightaway.

*vs21-22* "But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priest? 22. But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this – this who? **This Crucified Man** – *is very Christ*".

Yes, all that which was in the Old Testament was now flooding this man's heart. He had been caught by **Love** on that road; he was now filled with Love in the Person of the Holy Ghost, shedding abroad in his heart love for Christ [Romans 5:5]. And he was completely captivated, and he **never** looked back, or did anything else. We read that he counted all things but dung! that he might win Christ, not having his own righteousness, oh, no, but the Righteousness which is of God is his [Philippians 3:8-9]. He was filled with the Holy Ghost.

### Elymas

*Acts 13:9* This is Paul dealing with a man called Elymas, the sorcerer, expert in witchcraft and was interfering with Saul's success with Sergius Paulus, a prudent man, *v7*, that is, he was very cautious, "...who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God". He didn't think he could be excited into believing all that these very fiery, filled-with-the-Spirit men had come to say. Of course he didn't realise that he'd sent for just the two men that would convict the people they spoke to, that Christ was alive and real! So, Elymas withstood them, "*seeking to turn the deputy from the faith.*"

*vs9-12* "Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, 10. And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? – it is right that a man should be converted. It is right that any man should be converted. It is the right through the shed Blood of Jesus Christ; Paul knew that –  
11. And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. 12. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord."

If you believed these things, you would always be ready and doing these things. There must have been many occasions when many of us have faced almost similar conditions, and afterwards we thought it all out. Our second thoughts were good, what we should have done. But if we believed that we **were full of the Holy Ghost**, out of us would flow the right words that would have done the right thing. Demons would be cast out at the right time; men would be delivered of sin at the time we faced the sin, as God had brought us face to face to heal them.

We would speak the right word, and act in the right way, always – the Holy Ghost is not at a loss; so why are we at a loss...? It's this cursed teaching which tells us that we can be first filled with God and then not filled with God. Then when are you the Church of God? When are you the Temple? – the temple that God approves of is filled with God, not with anything else. All the filth is cleared out of it – that's how these men lived. They believed that they were cleaned out when they received Peter's word, Philip's word, anybody's word...!

Paul received Ananias's word confirming what he'd heard from Heaven. "*Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit*" – it is a **Command** of God; it is not a suggestion. It is not a condition of life, at certain times, nor is it just a privilege that you may receive, nor is it some experience which you may enjoy if you so desire. It is none of those things. It is your Life as a member of the Church of God – "*be filled with the Spirit*". Christ was full of the Holy Ghost. Paul was full of the Holy Spirit; Peter was full of the Holy Spirit.

## The Results of Being Filled With The Holy Ghost

To be filled with the Holy Ghost, then, is to be **fully aware of**, to **know assuredly**, to be **absolutely confident** and therefore **satisfied** – that is the word to take away – **satisfied** that you are fulfilling a task, fulfilling a work, or fulfilling a whole life's ministry for **God only**.

**That** is what it means to be full of the Holy Ghost. You are **satisfied**. No one else need be – you are satisfied, that you are fulfilling a task, a work or a whole life's ministry for **God only** – no one else – in the way **God** requires it to be fulfilled and producing the results **desired** and **looked for** by **God alone**. **That** is being filled with the Spirit. It is important to repeat that, for us to be **clear** of the clutter of all these positions *“Oh that men would praise the LORD for His goodness, and His wonderful works to the children of men”*

**To be filled with the Holy Ghost**, then, is to be **fully aware of**, to **know assuredly**, to be **completely confident**, and therefore **satisfied** that the one filled with the Spirit is fulfilling a task, a work or a whole life's ministry **for God only**, God alone, in the way **God** requires it to be done and producing the results desired and looked for by **God alone**.

### Zechariah's Amazing Vision

In the ministry of **the prophet Zechariah**, the angel that talked with him said, 4:2-6, 'What do you see?' And he saw the golden candlestick, the bowl, the lamps, the olive trees, the oil flowing in – and this was the Word, that came to him, *“Knowest thou not what these things be? And I said, No, my lord. Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.”*

This is what we are saying, speaking of **the Church**. The candlestick **does** refer to the Church. In the last Book the Son of man stood in the middle of the seven candlesticks, and He said the candlesticks are the seven churches [Revelation 1:12-13, 20]. The candlestick, the light and the oil are **all** to do with the Church and the Word of God poured into it by the Holy Ghost – poured into it, poured... The Apostles **poured** the Word of God into people. You read that: *“The word of God multiplied”* and *“the word of God increased”* [Acts 12:24, Acts 6:7] and *“the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.”* [Acts 13:52]. – *“Not by might, Zechariah, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.”* [Zechariah 4:6]

It is not for nothing that this is the Vision concerning those **two extraordinary men** that we read of in Revelation as *“My two Witnesses”* [11:3]. In the days of **that** Temple, built, I would say, in the [early] days and reign of the Antichrist, *“the beast”* [13:1-3], in those days of the Reign of Terror, from both Heaven and *“the beast”*, **these two men** revealed to Zechariah in this form, will come down from Heaven **full** of God's Word and empowered by the Spirit of Life, as He is called, **to preach to a world which was rejecting Jesus Christ** that it **is** *“not by might nor by power”* – that might be their Message – no, **but by My Spirit I'm going to do these things**.

Men will think **even more so then** that they could make and unmake situations; that what *“the beast”* was doing was the end of it all. If **he** killed, they were killed; if he **didn't** kill, they were not killed. But **God** will show them by **His Judgments** that it is **not** so – *“not might, nor by power, but by My Spirit”*.

Those two men will **prove** that, and not only by their lives, as they will be immune to all attempts to kill them; guns, bullets, knives, poison, whatever is used against them will fail. In fact, those attempted murderers, it seems to suggest, will die in their attempts – miraculously. *“Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit”!* Then, when **God has finished with their testimony** – not when **they** have finished; they will be going great guns.

They could think, 'This is wonderful, we can never be killed; "beast" or no "beast", we're immune from the secret police; from all his fantastic weapons' (which must be in use then) but it's not by might, nor by power, "but by My Spirit"; God will finish their Ministry - when God has finished their Ministry, they will be slain. They will be open to "the beast's" first onslaught as soon as he gets hold of them, and their Ministry will be over.

They will be killed, but not till then. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit." And then they will be raised up by the Spirit of Life. In the midst of all that was going on, a great Voice says [11:12] "Come up hither", and the Spirit of Life puts them together and takes them up! Isn't that marvellous?!

"Be filled with the Spirit" - be filled - Oh, be filled! Put aside all that you've been taught and think about. The very air around us is heavy with false teaching; one feels the opposition: 'Oh, there is time, there is time' - there's no time! Now is the time to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Who said we need to wait? Who said we need to spend hours praying to be filled with the Spirit? They were just asked, 'Do you know the Holy Ghost?' 'No', they said, 'we haven't even heard of Him.' 'Come here', they said, 'This is what Christ has done for you', and they believed and were filled [Acts 19:2-7].

Why should it not be so? Why should there be those among us who earnestly believe the same things as we believe and they are not filled - because of this filthy teaching. It is vile, because it stops men from receiving all that God has for them.

So for you who have not spoken with other tongues, you just put all traditional thinking aside. It's in the churches very much, so much so that those who are Baptised feel a sort of sympathy for those who are not, instead of saying, 'Have you received? Come, and receive'. But we have seen the build-up of this kind of difference. Paul's teaching does terrible things when it is believed, of course, and Christ's condemnation to those churches, [in Revelation 2 & 3] to several of them was the charge of allowing the Apostles teaching to remain [idle], let alone practice it. So it is not proper teaching to not know that you should be full of the Holy Ghost, that you should be **filled with the Spirit!!**

So Zechariah was told that then. The Vision he was given was of the time when the Holy Spirit would use men mightily; a time of much action by God. All those years of "the beast's" reign, as we read in Revelation was all marked out for its remarkable action, only because the Action was from God. That's why it is important. So we see that in the midst of the vilest sin, God is still going to work. He will have His Witnesses; He will have the Reality of His Son revealed at all times. And so they saw it, even in these two men, who Zechariah was shown. We don't know why Zechariah got that Vision, but he did, and it is all to do with the last time.

**Zechariah 4:6** "This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel". He was Governor of Judah, the son of Shealtiel, [Ezra 3:2] and he finished the foundation of the Temple - you read that in Ezra and Nehemiah's records. It says that in v9, "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands also shall finish it; - he never did, but Christ is speaking prophetically - and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you." So Zechariah too was getting a pre-vision of the Future.

### **God Will Achieve His Purpose and Plan Only By His Spirit In The Church**

By His Spirit, only, through men, will God achieve His Purpose - not by any other means. Do not say, 'I am to wait to be Baptised', or say, 'I am filled today, and [perhaps] I shall be filled tomorrow'. Don't say those blasphemous things, for they are blasphemous, because it pollutes what God has said.

It really could be said to be making light of the Blood of the Cross, because if you claim to be clean by the Blood which was poured out on Calvary, you ought to be filled with the Holy Ghost – and God would witness to that. It’s by the proportion of the extent we believe in the cleansing of that Sacrifice in our life. Only by His Spirit working through men will God effect, make to pass, His Plan. Only by His Spirit working through men will God produce His Results – in you and through you; not only through you but in you.

**Luke 1:34-35**      *“Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?”*

There are many “How”s in the Bible; and the only answer is, “by My Spirit” – “**not** by might, **nor** by power...” – and that’s just what Gabriel said –

35. *And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: – how else would it be done – therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”*

**vs36-37**      *“And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible”* – this is the same language of the Church; not the language of people today.

The Church of God says, “*With God nothing shall be impossible*”. It is aware of it in the lives and hearts of individual members of this Body called the Church of the Living God. It is an **awareness**, a complete **knowledge** that nothing is impossible with God, because they **are** the Church of God. **Only by the Spirit working in and through men will God achieve His Purposes, effect His Plans, and produce His Results...**

**Hebrews 9: 13-14**      *“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh – it is by the Spirit of God that a man is writing – 14. How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, – how much more through this Work, engineered and prospered and brought to pass by the Holy Ghost – *purge your conscience* – it can’t do less – *from dead works to serve the living God?*” – by the Spirit of God... “*Be filled with the Spirit*”. “*Be filled*” – this is the Message to both of us; those who were Baptised, and those who want to be – “*Be filled with the Spirit*”.*

*“How much more* – by the fact that the killing of a lamb was done by a man, and a man who was a priest offered the blood, and a man who was a priest pronounced God’s blessing, obviously with God’s approval, but it could **not** take away sins. How do you know that? because the Spirit of God witnesses to you that one day **a Man came and poured all His Blood out**. You’ve never seen the Man, you’ve not seen His Blood, you’ve not heard Him speak, except by the Holy Ghost – isn’t that so? So today we can say that to each other, “*How much more?*”... If religion could do that for those Jews, **how much more** could Life not do it for you, with the Holy Ghost working in you?...

*“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself – poured out His Blood – without spot to God, *purge your conscience from dead works* – remove all obligations to serve the traditions of men, the religions of this world, and the churches, not the Church of God, but churches, constructed by men and organised and brought into being; those are the dead works – *purge your conscience* – remove all false sense of obligations to these things.*

Your only obligation when you are filled with the Spirit is to **God**. Where you are working, where you’re living, where you eat and drink, where you sleep, where you move, your obligation is to the Living God, because you’re alive in Christ, at His Right Hand.

That is the Authority that we can speak with, or have, or believe in – only by the Holy Ghost. So when are we to speak, and when are we not to? So it's ridiculous to think that we shouldn't speak it at all times. "Be filled with the Spirit."

In connection with **Hebrews 9:14**, **Romans 8:1-2** gives a similar position. "*How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit poured it out, on the Cross, we could say, purge your conscience – remove all false sense of duty and obligations; the things that are not God's concern any more – from dead works to serve the living God?*" And here it is...

**Romans 8:1-2**     *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, – all obligations to serve other things are removed; it is to Christ Jesus – who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. – how can you walk after the Spirit without being filled with the Spirit? Paul says, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" [Galatians 5:25].*

2. *"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."*

How can we know that without the Spirit in us? It is one thing to assent to it, as many thousands of well-meaning people do, but it is another thing to live it out, to really know that by experience: '**I am free!**' Free to do what? – what God says in my day-to-day life, so that nothing causes me to stumble or think out long decisions or weighty matters of what to do and what not to do. The person filled with the Holy Ghost knows what to do with his life; God is telling him right there, as he is thinking what to do. But it is only other things that make us weigh up this and weigh up that, and spend hours working out what you're going to do. What are you to do, but proclaim **Christ Crucified**!?

But, 'Shall I be in this job? Shall I be in that work? Shall I do this with my money? Shall I do that with my house' – that's not of the Church of God! We are filled with the Spirit. Look at the tremendously important actions men took – an erstwhile murderer is anointed by a really wonderful Christian man, just like that! How did he believe that except the Spirit of God filled him? We have to get used to the language of God; be used to the Spirit of God talking to us, so that we won't argue and discuss for hours and hours with each other what to do and what not to do. You will do it rather than discuss it while men are dying in their sins.

People are waiting for us to come and say to them, 'Thus, brother...', and to your amazement he says, 'That is of God, I'll go and do it now'. That's what God is waiting for, that voice of Authority, not arrogance, but the Voice of God. The Authority of God is good; it puts a boost into us; gives us a sense of purpose, and we are ready to do it, because we know that is God speaking to us by His Spirit. Whoever the channel is, is quite irrelevant. When God has something to tell me, I answer, 'Here I am, Lord, ready to do it'.

**Acts 1:6-8**     *"When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" – a perfectly correct remark, revealing perfectly correct thinking for those **not** filled with the Holy Ghost! They were concerned about everything except what Christ is in the life; what great movements Christ was setting in motion in the world. And so they came with all this traditional thinking – all right and proper, but not from the Holy Spirit.*

v7     *"And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, – men filled with the Holy Ghost don't go out wanting to know other things. They haven't got the inclination, not because they are lazy or they haven't got the mind. Paul had a brilliant mind, as we say, but he said, 'I count that all dung that I may win Christ', so his whole life was centred on Christ. That's why he had such an all-pervasive ministry. It went on and on, never knowing defeat, stopping at times, but on it went, for the Spirit went on – which the Father hath put in His own power." Now this is the important thing:*

v8           *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me – what a simple statement! but what an enormous vocation!*

What an all-embracing, far-reaching, world-influencing work – *"ye shall be witnesses unto Me"*. It's only by the Spirit that you can read into it everything that the Church of God has got, it will take to do that! – *both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria – on it goes – and unto the uttermost part of the earth."* And all that is got out of this are these two things: 'I must speak with tongues, and then I must go from my home town to some other place' ...

But it doesn't mean all that. It means, you will be **f i l l e d** with the Holy Ghost! and you will **stay** full of the Holy Ghost. Then you can step out of your door, an ordinary person, full of God and speak to men and women as you go along your way, to your work, and to your duty, and people shall be born-again, of that Spirit and of that Word.

v9           *"And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight."* And so Jesus left them with that Word and He went away, and then He sent His Holy Spirit. **Only by His Spirit** will God do what He wants to do – produce the Results.

### **The Work of The Holy Spirit In The Church**

**John 16:7-11** This gives you the Work of the Holy Spirit. Again, what a far-reaching Work! How much is involved in those few simple statements.

*"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. s. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, – not the Church, but He will.*

Then must I not be always full of the Holy Ghost? I should always be ready to be used by the Holy Ghost, to reprove the world of the sin of not believing in the Risen Crucified Christ in His marred Body.

v9           *"Of sin – the Church of God is used by the Spirit of God as the Church of God comprises men and women who speak the languages of other men and women, telling those other men and women, 'You are sinning; you need to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; you must repent; you must' – that's God speaking. You don't even need to say so; the Spirit will witness to the man, and God is telling him that – *"Of sin, because they believe not on Me."* – today is his Day of Salvation...*

v10           *"Of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more;" – What we can call 'Christian communities' have such a respect for persons. This v10 is just what the Spirit of God has come to say – the Church of God, by the Spirit of God in a man, is subject to **Christ** and so there is no life here that pleases God. You've got to fetch that Life down by the Spirit and put it into your own life – if I might use those simple words! Convict the world, – *"reprove the world of sin"* – and yet Christians, because they do not believe that they can be and must be and should be filled with the Holy Ghost, are respecters of persons. But there is only One Righteousness; there is only One Sweetness – this word which is used by Christians: 'a sweet man' ... We must be full of the Holy Spirit and use the Words of God in the right place! There is only One Fragrance – *"Thy name is as an ointment poured forth"* [Song of Songs 1:3] – nobody else's name, surely...*

*"Of righteousness, – the Holy Ghost is doing the Work, in the Church and through the Church – because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more;" – the Holy Ghost has to help us and show us. He's called alongside us; He's the Comforter. He comforts us with the Reality of Jesus, and then He sends us out comforting people, to say, 'Look, I'm bringing you a Message of Comfort.*

Repent of all your own wanderings around, and come out of all your strivings, and be at Rest. Walk with Jesus Christ in your life'. That's all it means. I'm putting it in my own words...

And convincing, reproofing, rebuking "*the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:*" – what judgment? of all the judgments they have come to: that there is time to work hard, and get lots of money; that there is time to save up, to buy a good house, and fit it well, and do this and that; educ-ate oneself, and give the children a good career in this world, saying, 'I have time for all this; I have time. We haven't got time. The prince of this world has already been judged...

v11            "*Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.*" That is what the world is being reproofed of ... and Christians reproofing others are themselves ignoring the reproof! Jesus said, "*the prince of this world is judged*". If the head of an organisation is written off you won't bother what the organisation does. You would say to yourself, 'It's already finished; those are only the dying kicks – which is true. The world is kicking in its death throes. The prince, the god, the life of this world is already out. There's another Life coming!! There's another Judgment coming! There's another Point of View! And the Church of God is here to tell men that, in God's Way, by God's Spirit, in God's Time, which is always NOW!

(end of morning session)

(afternoon session)

## **The Spirit of Life Dwells Within The Church**

**Romans 8:10-12** "*And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. 12. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.*"

*"the Spirit is life because of righteousness."*

We are under no obligation except to Christ. If you have done what Christ said, you will be the most useful person in this world today! That is what the Church is! Don't say, 'I have other obligations', of course you have! but the obligation to Christ must come **first** (and come only by the Holy Ghost) and those other obligations you will meet better than with all your planning and programming. You will meet every need you feel responsible for; every demand made upon you. You will meet every cry, even that coming to your own heart – 'Go and meet that person's need'. You will meet it all; you will not say, 'How can I do so many things?' The Spirit filling you will get everything done for you! Your heart will know you are comforted and blessed, resting with no striving, no straining...

**Romans 8:22-23** "*For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. 23. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*"

We groan within ourselves because of that inkling, that foretaste, by the Spirit in us of that Future world. Heaven becomes real only to those filled with the Holy Ghost. The Place where God is is **real**; and by His side is a real Man, sitting right now – and you know it, and it cannot escape your spiritual consciousness.

v24            "*For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"*

By the Holy Ghost, Heaven, God and Christ are **so real** that you can almost see them. Paul said, *"We walk by faith, not by sight"* [2 Corinthians 5:7], meaning, the Holy Ghost's vision is your vision, spiritually, until physically you feast your eyes on Christ. Until then, you want to be with Him because He is real. You know where to locate Him, just as Christ knows where to locate you today!

v25 *"But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."*

The Holy Ghost doesn't just excite you and then drop you flat. You are filled with the Spirit and you know you are going on from Glory to Glory and you know you haven't been raptured because you are not! You know you haven't seen Christ because you haven't seen Him! and you will know you have gone when you will have gone! There is nothing simpler than that! It is as straightforward as that!

v26 *"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."*

The infirmities of our own body, the weariness, the tiredness of the mind, must come even to a Spirit-filled person, but *"the Spirit helpeth"*. He does things for you – which is where you come in – you are not left to be used by the Spirit as just a vessel and a vehicle and a convenience. No! You are getting **the benefit** of that Filling. You come to the end of it all *"but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered"*. He is exhaustless; He never slumbers nor sleeps. He is the Person you are filled with – the Holy Spirit; the Spirit of God. *"Be filled with the Spirit"* is a Command.

*"...with groanings which cannot be uttered."* You do not know, but He is making the groanings – groanings, because it touches on the deep things of your life; the things which perhaps you are not conscious of. Your yearnings to see Christ can be so deep that you may not be aware of it, and if you are going to give way to the flesh, you might think it is yearnings for someone or something else. But it may be just God calling you to go on loving His Son until you see Him face to Face!

v27 *"And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."* – and we know that *"all things work together for good to them that love God"* [v28] by the same Spirit *"that dwelleth in you"* – not by hearsay; not repeated as a Scriptural quotation; not because you accept it as sensible for God to say these extra-ordinary hard things to you, but because the Spirit of God in you witnesses that everything that happens works.

v28 *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."*

The Spirit of God makes it work! The *"things"* are the servants for good to them that love God which He will bring to pass by the same Spirit that dwells in you. – *"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit."* – the Spirit of God, of course.

### Continuing To Be Filled With The Same Spirit

To be filled with the Spirit means you must have been Baptised by Christ by the same Holy Spirit, speaking with other tongues, as it was with them at the beginning, as recorded in Acts 2, and in other Chapters as well. This Baptism, this Filling, must have been preceded first by repentance towards God – not towards anyone or anything else, but repentance towards GOD, dropping the whole life, good and bad in it, and having Christ Crucified as your New Life.

The Baptism, this Filling, must be preceded by this definite positive experience in your life. Repentance towards God; then baptism in water by total immersion, testifying to the Life of Christ Crucified now appropriated by you, henceforth and for ever, and then, “*ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*” [Acts 2:38] – this Baptism, this Filling, of which we are speaking today.

“*And be filled with the Spirit.*” The Church of God is commanded to remain filled. “*Be filled*” with God’s Spirit. How else will they remain satisfied with God? How else will the Church of God stay satisfied, stay convinced that they are still His Church, and that He is still controlling and guiding their lives and work for Him, except they remain filled with the Holy Spirit? Having your name on a local church register and attending that same church physically every Sunday or every meeting does not convince a man that he still belongs to God. We pretend it does, but in reality it doesn’t for we do the things that are not of God. But when you are filled with the Holy Ghost; when you have been Baptised, speaking with other tongues – filled with the Spirit, once for all – then you are aware that you are coming There, because the same Holy Spirit filling you is going to show you Christ!

You want another drink at the Fountain, another taste of the good Bread of Life, another sorting out that the Spirit wants sorting out, because you are still His Church! still under the Spirit’s control; still under His guidance in the whole life, ministry and work of the Church, when you remain filled with the Spirit. **Romans 8** shows what it is to remain filled with the Spirit – as that in **Ephesians 5** means:

**v1** “...*who walk...*” – that is, who are continuing to walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.  
**v2** “...*hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*” Paul speaks as part of the Church of God.  
**v9** “*But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.*” – “dwelling” – lives; inhabits; takes up residence, and stays in residence in you.  
**v9b** “*Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.*” That is logical. Only the Spirit of God dwelling in a man can convince him of his Power and Position in the Church of God.

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20** “*Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost* – meaning that it is a physical experience in its initial impact. You speak with other tongues; which is not the same as when you repented, but it is both from the same Source, that is, God –  
*your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God and ye are not your own.*”

This was the early Church’s common experience, and it should be the same all down the ages.  
**20.** “*For ye are bought with a price*” – to be inhabited with the Holy Ghost; to be residents of the Spirit until He takes us with Christ in the air – “...*which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*” **20.** *For ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body...*” – only by the Spirit.

It is because Pentecostal people do not believe these things, are not taught these things, and do not envisage the great Glory and Holiness of God, that those who have been Baptised in the Holy Ghost can indulge in foolish talking and jesting, worldly behaviour, and dress, manners, customs and worldly company.

**Acts 7:48** “*Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet.*”

This is part of Stephen’s answer to the charge of blasphemy. So where does He dwell? – in the Church of the Living God! “*your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost* – the Spirit of God dwells in you – *and ye are not your own.*” “*If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are*” [1 Corinthians 3:17].

**2 Timothy 1: 13-14**      *"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us."* -  
*"by the Holy Ghost"; from the Holy Ghost.*

**Romans 5:3**      *"And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience."* - not only have our sins been blotted out by the Blood of Christ; not only can we repent and be new creatures, baptised in water, but also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation works patience!

**vs4-5**      *"And patience, experience; and experience hope: 5. And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts - we must have the Love of God circulating powerfully within us - by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."* - dwelling in us.

**Romans 8:11**      *"But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."*

So you will hear that shout! It is not possible for those not indwelt by the Spirit to hear it. It is a spiritual Shout. It is conveyed by the Spirit to an ordinary man living in this world, doing his work, fulfilling his job.

[*Ephesians 5:18-19*]      *"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."*

### **In Psalm and Hymns and Spiritual Songs...**

A **Psalm** is a song expressing a man's worship, a man's praise for **God alone** - no one else. It is a Song which is a vocal celebration, celebrating in words God's Acts, God's Conduct towards the singer and towards all men; God's Character, God's Reality, and God's Person.

A Psalm expresses a man's contact with God; his knowledge of God; his appreciation and understanding of who God is, what He is like, where He is, when He is to be found there, and how we may best speak with Him. It expresses worship and praise. It brings out the Reality of God. A hymn means exactly the same thing - the expression of a man's worship - a hymn and a psalm expressing satisfaction with God.

**1 Chronicles 16:9** *"Sing unto Him, sing psalms unto Him, talk ye of all His wondrous works."*  
It is to sing unto Him. The expression is always directed to God.

**Psalm 95:2**      *"Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms."*

The joyful noise is not necessarily a song. It could be, but it is a vocal expression to God, something that no other man needs to hear specifically. But if they do hear it, if they are in the vicinity of the person expressing his worship, it is his understanding of who God is - "...unto Him".

**Psalm 105:2**      *"Sing unto Him, sing psalms unto Him: talk ye of all His wondrous works."*

The Psalm is the expression of a man's worship; a man's praise of God alone; of God's Conduct towards him; of God's Character and the Reality of the Person of God.

**Colossians 3: 15-16**     *"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." "...be ye **thankful**..." - to God.*

Christian singing today is mostly for entertainment, with the intention of attracting men to Christ. That is not the intention of the *Psalms*. They are not sung as a witness; they are sung as a movement of the Spirit of God within a man, to tell God what he thinks about Him, and what he knows about Him by his experience of the Holy Ghost.

**James 5:13**       *"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms."*

The writing of James' letter always gives the impression of a very sober man - not gloomy and dull, but a sober man given to writing quite plainly and straightforwardly, telling exactly what to do without much drama or emotion. And he writes about being merry! So he is not so prosaic after all! He too gets moved by the Holy Ghost! He too, rather than being mundane, has expressed his devotion to God, his love, his desire to only please God. He too has sung psalms to God!

**1 Corinthians 14:26**     *"How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying."*

Paul speaks here of how everyone in this church all wanted to talk at once, all having something they thought God had given them. But notice that he starts with, "...hath a psalm...", meaning, whoever did want to speak, whether they were all speaking out of turn or not, the point to make is that a psalm is an expression of praise to God, and it does not necessarily have to be sung or spoken or prayed in the presence of another single soul except God by God's Spirit.

**Matthew 26:30**     *"And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives."*

After that great Last Passover Supper and the equally great First Lord's Supper, they had sung a hymn, before going to the Mount of Olives. It wasn't just to finish a meeting, but deliberately done by Christ with His Apostles to express to God His great devotion and His great love, and to celebrate, as it were, that God was in the ascendance. God was getting all the Glory. God was working His Purposes out.

*"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;"* - everything the Church of God does is to the Lord. By the Spirit of God only can you do it. But when we seek it for effect and for men, it is nothing to do with the Holy Ghost at all. If you do what you have to do unto God, then it affects the human hearers mightily! *"...singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord"* - by the Holy Ghost. That is one of the results, the benefits to you, which shows your heart is a lovely heart to God. It is full, it bubbles by the Holy Ghost, not just with Joy, but its sheer satisfaction. It shows you are contented with God, and Christ is so lovely to you. That is the sort of situation in the heart.

These *Psalms*, melodies of worship and praise of complete satisfaction, then, are expressed to God only. The Holy Ghost will not bring them out to entertain or encourage men, or even to attract souls unto God, to point them God-wards. Oh, no! They are a very personal expression, so they have not been clearly understood as they are thought to be the expression of men's experience. **Not so!!**

When you speak by the Holy Ghost you don't express to God or to man your experiences! You express to God your devotion to Him, [through a *Psalm*, a song] and to man you must express yourself, telling of how wonderful the Saviour is; how much the person needs Christ in his life; how he must repent and be filled with the Holy Ghost, speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance...

These *Psalms* are an expression of love; a personal expression of love to God, expressing to God the deep satisfaction in the heart, whatever the circumstances, with all that God is to the person. The Church of God is a very satisfied Church. It is satisfied with God. Its members are longing souls satisfied with Jesus. It says, "*He satisfieth the longing soul*" [*Psalm 107:9*]. Is the Church of God not satisfied then? Obviously! It is a satisfied Body. "*And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs making melody in your heart to the Lord.*" This can only be done when a person is filled with the Holy Ghost.

### The Psalms Reveal Jesus Christ

The *Book of Psalms* is, in the main, as you now know, a Record of Christ!

**Luke 20:42**      "*And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand.*"

This speaks of Christ as a Man, and of Christ before He became a Man. It is a personal Record of Him. Christ confirmed that the *Psalms* express the Reality of God and of Himself; of Their Love, Their conduct and Character; who They were and what They were doing – and He [Christ] used the *Psalms* to indicate that there were Two Persons.

**Luke 24:44**      "*And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me.*"

The *Psalms* are treated always as a separate Record, though part of the whole.

The Books of the prophets have all that tremendous weight of revelation, but the *Psalms* are distinctly mentioned separately as a source of Revelation of God; an expression of who God really is, and of Christ. It is a precious Book, not more precious than the others, but precious for the vast revelation contained in it. The whole Work of God; the Character of God; the movings of God; the History of God, and of His Son, from Eternity going on into Eternity – like the Book of Revelation...!

**Acts 1:16-19** This is Peter speaking about Judas after Christ had gone, and how they would have to replace him to make up the twelve.

**v20**              "*For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take.*"

The *Psalm* is ***Psalm 109:8***. Peter picked that out only by the Holy Ghost of Judas. Where it mentions Judas, it must include Christ, because Judas, one of the twelve Apostles, is only important for his terrible act, that terrible thing he did to Christ.

**Acts 13: 33-35**      "*God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the **second** psalm, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. 34. And as concerning that He raised Him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, He said on this wise, I will give You the sure mercies of David. 35. Wherefore He saith also in **another** psalm, Thou shalt not suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption.*"

This is Paul speaking of Christ. It is only that second Psalm which gives us the proper meaning of "the only begotten Son" [John 1:14; John 3:16; 1 John 4:9; Revelation 1:5]. On the day that Christ rose from the dead, that was the day God called Him, "My Son" - "...this day have I begotten Thee", so Paul said, "That was the day when He was raised from the dead."

*vs36-37* "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: 37. But He, whom God raised again saw no corruption." - as *v35* says, "He saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption." [Psalm 16:10]

The Book of Psalms is then, in the main, a Record of Christ and of His personal expression as a Man, of His deep devotion to and love for God the Father. His devotion and love were uttered in most cases from the Cross, and the men writing these *Psalms* did so entirely under the direct control of the Spirit of God.

*2 Samuel 23:1-2* "Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, 2. The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and His word was in my tongue."

We know David could only call himself "*sweet*" because he was speaking the Words of the Spirit of God! They are the only words we hear and read.

These are some of the Psalms in which we see the Personal Passion of Jesus Christ, in His sufferings and in His woe and agony as the Sacrifice of God for the sin of the whole world: *Psalms 16, 22, 31, 34, 35, 40, 41, 67 and 109*.

Through them He expressed His devotion to God; His love for God. Men faithfully wrote these things down entirely under the direct personal control of the Spirit of God.

*Psalms* other than those about the Cross are either about Christ personally, such as *Psalms 2, 89, 110* and others, or from Christ asking for and calling for expressions of worship, of satisfaction with our God - all revealing a deep, intimate personal knowledge of and acquaintance with God. You can begin to see how the Church of God is a successful Church! First, it must be filled with the Holy Ghost, then it is able to understand God personally: have a personal experience; a contact with Him.

The Church has a personal revelation of Him; knows who Christ is, where He is, what He looks like, what He means to us, what He can do for us, what He doesn't want to do. So as the *Psalms* are that expression of a Man full of the Holy Ghost, they are revealed by Him through Spirit-filled men only.

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs making melody in your heart to the Lord." That is the first personal result of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost within members of the Church. Obey that command today, and it will begin... "*making melody in your heart*". It is not just a knowledge of music, or of having a good voice. It is a heart's knowledge of the loveliness of Christ that composes these expressions of glory and Grace, which are meant for His ears and His attention!

### The Result of Satisfaction Is Gratitude

[Ephesians 5:20] "*Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Gratitude must be the result of satisfaction in the Church of God. Gratitude is a very scarce commodity. It is not usual to find Christians always grateful, always appreciative, always giving thanks.

But this is the Seal, the mark of a Christian, of the Church of God: *"In everything give thanks"* [1 Thessalonians 5:18]. We are to know, only by the Spirit of God, that we deserve nothing, so we are grateful, because we are satisfied with God. The very thought of who He is fills you with satisfaction!! *"Giving thanks always for all things."* We are learning our true **Position** – the Position God has given us. Therefore we must go out without question and live up to it. There is gratitude to God because of satisfaction with God: *"giving thanks always for all things"*

This lack of appreciation and gratitude in the members of what may be called the Church of God by some is a proof that they are not full of the Holy Ghost. Being not satisfied with God, they take what is given them, or done for them, or what they get as just one of those things; it's taken for granted. It isn't so in members of The Church of God! who live every second of their lives in positive appreciation of God. They are satisfied people! Satisfied with God; no one else will satisfy them like Jesus Christ! We may say that, but only by the Spirit of God can you know that. Praise His lovely Name!!

*"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."* – the reason for all the Church's gratitude and satisfaction with God. Jesus Himself said, *"The thief cometh not but for to kill and to destroy, but I have come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly"* – and gratitude is a proof of that more abundant life in the Church. Ingratitude is nothing to do with God; it is not evidence that you are full of the Holy Ghost. Gratitude to God would be expressed in the Church's graciousness and good manners, and appreciation of everything. Being full of the Holy Ghost results in giving thanks always to God. Christ always gave thanks to God.

### The Giving of Thanks

**Matthew 15:36** This is Jesus asking how many loaves they had, commanding the hungry people to sit on the ground: *"And He took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude."*

He thanked God that He was there as an ordinary Man, but with the Power of the Godhead in Him to give out cooked fish and bread from two fishes and seven loaves to feed four thousand men beside women and children! He thanked God, that God would approve of Him doing that. He didn't need to thank God. He knew God approved of it, or He wouldn't have done it, but He thanked God, because God must be thanked! God had brought all this to pass.

God had sent Him down to die for all these lost souls, so – 'God is wonderful and I must thank Him for giving Me the privilege, the opportunity, to really show to these people how I love mankind'. Surely that is a good example, and we find it again in *Mark 8* and *John 6*. In those three Gospels you find either the feeding of the five thousand or the four thousand, but He gave thanks. In some records it says also that He looked up to Heaven...

**Luke 22:19** *"And He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is My body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me."*

The Holy Spirit directs us to God, and the more we look at Christ the more like Him we will become. You will be more polite, more gracious, more considerate, more gentle, more humble if you are filled with the Holy Ghost, looking unto God. This is about the last Passover; the first Lord's Supper inaugurated by the Lord Himself. Look at the gentle courtesy! the great gratitude – what for? for the very goodness of God. Just fancy! What He was saying was, 'Thank you for sending Me to die'. It amounts to that! Hallelujah!

**1 Corinthians 11:24** *"And when He had given thanks"* – by the Spirit only came genuine, heartfelt thanks.

**Acts 27:33-34** *"And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing. 34. Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you."*

See how considerate Paul was. He could get by; he was filled with the Holy Ghost! He believed these poor men without God were not going to sink. They had been toiling and rowing and Paul had compassion for them as they hadn't eaten for days. After all, they were looking after him. He was on board the ship but he didn't know what to do, as they did. They were fighting the storm, and he would be safe if they made it, so he said, 'Take food now for your health, for no harm shall come to any of you'. What compassion – like a father over his children.

**vs35-36** *"And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to god in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat. 36. Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat."*

Paul gave thanks to God before them all, and the result was that they were all of good cheer! May God grant that we be full of the Holy Ghost!

**Romans 14:6** *"He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks."*

No wonder God was provoked by those murmurers and complainers, those whisperers and backbiters, because they were not satisfied with Him. He couldn't do anything with them. They were dissatisfied with God. Who else would look after them like God? So if God did not satisfy them, who else would they find more competent, more kindly, more careful of their needs?

**Romans 16:4** *"Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles."*

He gives thanks to them, and said so – but it is still to God. Paul is full of gratitude; full of the Holy Ghost.

**1 Corinthians 15:57** *"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

**2 Corinthians 2:14** *"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place."*

**2 Corinthians 9:15** *"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."*

**Ephesians 5:4** *"Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks."*

**1 Thessalonians 1:2** *"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers."*

**Hebrews 13:15** *"By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name."* – always thanking God; appreciating God's conduct, God's behaviour, God's activities; always conscious of God's movements. That can only be done when you are filled with the Holy Ghost.

**Revelation 11: 16-17** *“And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, 17. Saying, We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned.”*

This is in response to the judgments raining down upon the earth. The elders gave God thanks for that, because God is Good! He is satisfying to look at, to know and to see in action – not someone to be tired with, or bored with, or to avoid...

### **A Command To The Church of God To Be Satisfied With God**

The Church of God, then, is commanded to be **satisfied with God**. *“Be filled with the Spirit, giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father.”* It is a **Command**. We are **commanded** to be grateful to God, to express vocally our thanks. This is different from *“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs making melody in your hearts to the Lord”* which is the **vocal expression**, when **others** hear you acknowledge God as being the Source of all Good and all you experience.

**1 Thessalonians 5:18** *“In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”*

This is the Command to the Church. In giving **Him** thanks according to His Will in Christ Jesus, therein lies **the true appreciation** of what Christ has done for us, if we give thanks to God. You may only see that by the Holy Ghost. It is the obvious outcome of being filled with the Holy Ghost, to say, ‘Thank You, Lord’, to really show one’s appreciation, zest, enthusiasm for God, just because He is **God**; just because He is there, not even if you think you have nothing to thank Him for! *“In everything give thanks”*, does not mean for everything you **get**, but to simply to give thanks to **God**. Give **Him** the glory. It would be more powerful if we got up [to pray] really knowing by the Spirit that we were thankful and grateful, saying, ‘Thank You, Lord’, than giving a long catalogue of how He did this or that for us. Is that really an expression of thanks? After all, **He** knows what He has done for us! You don’t have to tell everyone what God does; they will see it in your life. Your witness is not what God **does** for you. It is what **you are to God by the Holy Ghost**. That is how men see God...

### **Christ’s Example Through The Psalms**

So the *Psalms* would be expressions of **gratitude to God** – revealing, as they do, **Christ’s regard for God**. Here are some references:

**Psalm 18:49** *“Therefore will I give thanks unto Thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto Thy name.”*

**Psalm 30:4,12** *“Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.” v12 “To the end that My glory may sing praise unto Thee, and not be silent. O LORD My God, I will give thanks unto Thee for ever.”*

**Psalm 35:18** *“I will give Thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise Thee among much people.”*

**Psalm 92:1** *“It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O most High.”*

**Psalm 105:1** *“O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon His name: make known His deeds among the people.”*

**Psalm 106:1** *"Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever."*

**Psalm 119:62** *"At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto Thee because of Thy righteous judgments."*

**Psalm 136:1-3** *"O give thanks unto the LORD; for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever. 2. O give thanks unto the God of gods: for His mercy endureth for ever. 3. O give thanks to the LORD of lords: for His mercy endureth for ever."*

**v26** *"O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for His mercy endureth for ever."*

**Psalm 140:13** *"Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto Thy name: the upright shall dwell in Thy presence."*

It must be **satisfaction with God in everything**, because God is adequate; God is satisfying in everything – in sorrow and in joy; in pain and in peace; in failure and in success; in defeat and in victory – God is always satisfying because He is GOD. Christ can never be not satisfying! **Satisfaction with God in everything** can be felt and expressed only in you and through you by the Holy Spirit of God. –

*"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit, Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts unto the Lord, giving thanks always in all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."*

**Satisfaction with God** must produce a state of life where self is completely absent. **God** then is supreme in the thoughts and life. A person satisfied and contented with God has no 'self'. It's never seen; it is not there, because the satisfaction is on God, not on what it has, gets, needs, wants, looks for or acquires. It is on God, so it is contented, happy. There is no self there.

**Psalm 34:1-2** *"I will bless the LORD at all times: His praise shall continually be in My mouth. 2. My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad."*

Look – a Soul satisfied with God! *"I will bless the LORD"*, so the LORD is very evident in this Life, and on this Tongue. *"His praise shall continually be in My mouth"*, not 'my praise for Him', but *"His praise"* – what He really is, what He wants to be to me, what He indicates by His actions. That is the way to praise Him, not by saying, 'You have done this or that for me', but revealing what He really is. That is praise of God. The Revelation of the Wonder of who Christ really is!..

**v2** *"My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad."*

The conversation of the Church centres around God because it is well satisfied with **God**. This produces Salvation on every hand: souls born again, bodies healed, people delivered, when men see God in us, hear God in us, find God ever in residence; self completely absent; God supreme in the thoughts and life, attracting people to God that way.

**v3** *"O magnify the LORD with Me, and let us exalt His name together."*

It's not calling a meeting, but purely to invite people to enjoy with you what you are enjoying – your perfect satisfaction with God.

*Psalm 25:8-9* "Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will He teach sinners in the way. 9. The meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach His way."

This is the satisfaction – "Giving thanks to God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

**Satisfaction with God** then, must issue forth in a readiness to humble oneself and to show this humility of heart and mind. **A satisfied person is a humble person**. A person satisfied with God is quite prepared to meet every demand put upon that person by God.

*Isaiah 50:5-7* "The Lord GOD hath opened Mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. 6. I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting. 7. For the Lord GOD will help Me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed."

Christ was satisfied with God. What grief God put Him to, but in the *Psalms* you see the triumphant note of Praise, not defiance, not wishful thinking, but actually in the heat of the furnace of the torment, actual satisfaction with God. He was thankful and grateful to God; glad to have suffered for God and for you and for me... **That** is humility. That is a humbling of oneself...

#### Christ's Example In The Gospels

*Luke 9:51-56* "And it came to pass, when the time was come that He should be received up, He stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, 52. And sent messengers before His face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for Him. 53. And they did not receive Him, because His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem. 54. And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? 55. But He turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. 56. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village."

He would not stay there. He said He had no time, and they saw He was in a hurry. He had His mind elsewhere. That thankful, satisfied-with-God, humble Man took His disciples and they went on to another village...

*"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit.*

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And so we come to the end of this second week, and to the end of these studies given originally over a precious fortnight... **The Church of God In This Age – Its Power and Its Position...**

May you now set time aside to contemplate these revelations from the Scriptures, to set them firmly in your life. Many passages and references are so familiar that they often make very little impression. So power-less, unholy, compromised Christians fill the churches and make like disciples as themselves. Now that you have applied yourself to reading, meditating and absorbing these Messages from God's Holy Spirit, may your heart be filled indeed with the **Power** of your God who has washed you clean and raised you up to His **Position** of Holiness and Humility and Authority. May you be waiting, ready for His Shout from Heaven when He comes to snatch you away to Himself!

Access other Holy Spirit-inspired studies and meditations on the Lord Jesus Christ through the scriptures from the website <http://www.basar-blessings.org>