

A Reflection

The Kingdom of God



Contents:

Life of the Kingdom	2
Destined to Reign	17
The Eternal and Physical Kingdom of God	24
A Call to Return to the Upper Room	30
Hard Hitting Truth of the Kingdom - The Glorification of God and not man	37
Entering the Kingdom – A price of sacrifice	41
Preaching the sound doctrine and instruction of the Kingdom	43
The Truth of the Kingdom	63
Restoring God’s Tabernacle in the Last Days	65
A Plumb Line in the Midst of God’s People	72
Break the Mould	74
Wherever the King is, may we also be	77
We build under His authority	80
What does it mean to be a Christian in the Kingdom of God?	88
Interwoven into God’s Kingdom by the Spirit	101
Prophetic thoughts on the Kingdom	108
A Kingdom not of this world	112
The Keys to the Kingdom of Heaven: A prophetic word	119

Life of the Kingdom

It we seek to find Life, we need to walk in the Kingdom of Life. Today, believers are more wrapped up in church activity, which is in essence these days a mere captivity to religion. And religion blinds us to the truth, for it cages us in tradition and worldly ways.

Throughout the life of Jesus, He only preached Kingdom. Nothing else. In the Lord's Prayer, methods, service modules and gender inequality which have absolutely nothing to do with Kingdom.

Just so, in Matthew 6, as Jesus taught about praying for the Kingdom to come, He also included in His teaching (verse 33) about seeking the Kingdom and His righteousness (implying walking in His Ways) then the rest will be added (life, hope, joy, and strength and spiritual prosperity). Take also into consideration John 3 where the Lord taught about the importance of being reborn again in Spirit, and unless you are reborn (new creation) you cannot see the Kingdom of God.

Therefore, it is clear: We need to seek the Kingdom above all else, but we can only walk in the manifested reality and glory of the Kingdom once we walk by Spirit, implying surrendering first our kingdom, laying down our crown and denying the Self. If we seek His Kingdom, then our kingdom (our ways, agendas, ideas) need to die as well. What we believe to be truth, or the right way, or the correct path, needs to be surrendered as we seek the true way of the Lord, which is the Way of the Kingdom. Jesus said He is the Way, Truth and Life, meaning He is the WAY of the Kingdom, and if we seek the Kingdom then we need to follow the Lord Jesus in Spirit and Truth.

There is no other way except the way of the Kingdom. Our problem is not always surrendering to the Kingdom of God, therefore submitting above all to the Spirit of the Lord. It says in John 3:30 that we must decrease so that the Lord may increase. It is that simple. We need to die unto the Self and take up the cross if we seek to follow the Kingdom. We can only be a new creation once we have died unto the Self and have allowed God's Kingdom to completely and utterly take hold of us.

Kingdom is not religion. We need to understand religion is a foolish set of beliefs born out of the imagination of man. It is carnal in nature, for it is devoid of the Spirit of Truth. It is born out of the fleshly perception, out of tradition, past experiences, cultural brain washing and incorrect indoctrination. It says in 2 Timothy 2:23: But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife.

There is great division among "churches", but not the Kingdom, because churches are run as religious institutions and by those with a religious mindset. Because of religion, churches are divided because foolish and ignorant disputes. Religion and carnality produces strife and division.

I have heard how it is said the cornerstone of people's faith is the church or that if we do not belong to a certain denomination you cannot be ministered to. Or how about somebody cannot marry or bury someone from a different denomination. This is pure religion and this

is evil by design. It separates people from a true relationship from God, as they forget our true foundation and hope is not the institution of church but rather the living Lord Himself! It says in 1 Corinthians 3:3: For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?

Churches are marked by strife and divisions, for we seek the carnality of religion and thus behave indeed like men instead of sons and daughters of the Kingdom. For this reason we sit with thousands of Protestant denominations, all vying to hold onto their “own” truth and “traditions” and customs. And then we have the Catholic and Anglican and Greek Orthodox churches holding onto their “own” truths, traditions and customs, yet we are supposed to be serving the same Lord and the same Kingdom. What separates us is religion, and it will continue to produce strife unless we address it by returning to Kingdom values, customs and truths.

We are also reminded of Romans 13: 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

Indeed, we are called to walk properly, which means walking in the ways of the Kingdom, and not in religion which breeds the works of flesh and thus fulfills the lusts of the flesh. For this reason, churches are marked by immoral behaviour, greed, lust and envy because of the carnality within its midst. This is because of a people that no longer seeking the true value of the Kingdom, but like the Pharisees and Sadducees, seeks the ways of religion. And such ways also breed tradition and legalism, which in the end leads people further away from the divine truth of the Kingdom. After all, the Pharisees and Sadducees could not even see the truth, even when the Truth Himself stood before them! And just so the churches of today have become spiritually blind because of religion and traditions.

People these days are taught church and not Kingdom, meaning the doctrines and traditions and ways of a denomination, instead of the singular truth and way of the eternal Kingdom of God. And we have to remember all denominations or even individual singular churches were started by one person or a group of people, thus the denomination or church group is built upon the “truth” of such a person or group of people. Last time I checked Jesus was still the head of the Ecclesia (wrongly translated as church in the English language) meaning He still calls all the shots, not man!

The Kingdom is only built upon the truth of One – Jesus. In the Kingdom there is one vision, one truth, one Spirit and one mission. Jesus remains the Lord and King, and never man. It says in 1 Corinthians 14:20 that the “kingdom of God is not in word, but in power”. It also says in Romans 14:17: For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

The Kingdom of God is one of Power. It is not religion, because religion deals with the will of man which digresses to trivialities such as meat, drink, dress code, the ambience, style of

music and so on. The Kingdom of God is about holiness, purity, and in the power of the Holy Spirit one finds life, hope, light and love. The first disciples walked in power as recorded in the Book of Acts. They walked in the might of the Lord for they preached the Kingdom (there was no formal church as what we know it today).

Remember, they were told to wait in Jerusalem for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, for the Holy Spirit would enable them to receive power from on high. Jesus alluded to the importance of being born again by the Holy Spirit in John 3. The disciples were empowered to walk in the power of the Kingdom because they moved in the power of the Holy Spirit who led and guided them in all Kingdom Truth! We cannot walk in the power of the Kingdom if we fail to submit and move completely in the power of the Holy Spirit, for the Spirit is the one that grants us the wisdom, might, power, knowledge and counsel to preach Kingdom and not fall in the pitfalls of religion!

Glory to God! For it is written in 2 Corinthians 3:6 (KJV): 6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. Indeed, for the Kingdom of God brings life, but religion destroys. We are urged to preach the Kingdom, for the Kingdom is the Spirit that brings life, while religion comprising of our traditions and customs eventually kills. For those who stand with the Kingdom are not divided but they are united by one truth for there is no division of doctrine or truth in the eternal Kingdom.

There is thus a radical difference when we pray with this mind-set as the Kingdom is vastly different from the modern day church as we know it. When John the Baptist began his ministry in earnest, he cried to the people to repent for the Kingdom was at hand. He was referring to the King coming to re-establish His dominion on earth – Jesus.

The shocking truth is Jesus hardly taught on grace, wealth, deliverance or healing. He taught Kingdom principles. Why? Because they who follow the King and the ways of His Kingdom walk in the authority of the King (Jesus) and in such authority rests the power of healing, deliverance and grace.

For them Mark 16 is a natural occurrence for it is the way of the Kingdom: 15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. 19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. 20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

Jesus just spoke about the Kingdom. He was so filled with the Kingdom that even when teaching according to parables it was all about the Kingdom. It says:

Matthew 13:24 (KJV): Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field...

Matthew 13:31 ((KJV): Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field...

Matthew 13:44 ((KJV): Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

It is indeed all about the Kingdom! It is about the King in Heaven and in the Kingdom there is only one truth. On earth, thousands of church denominations are constantly preaching and teachings "truths" that are contrary to the truth and the way of the Kingdom. There is one King over the Kingdom which is Jesus, and not man. We are called to be servants and ministers of the Kingdom, and not merely of a church denomination or organisation.

Surely we may say the Church is the representation of the Kingdom on earth. This is, however, not the case if you look at how we have institutionalised this organisation, adorned with religious decorations and man-made rituals and customs, some of them even pagan. We are after all as the believer the church. And we have not been called to build a church or attend a church but to BE the church. The church is the royal priesthood of believers – a building of flesh and blood, reborn by the divine Spirit.

Understanding the Concept of Church

Before we even look at the differences between our modern day understanding of church compared to Kingdom, or what it means to live for the Kingdom, consider first that the concept of church as we know it.

The correct Greek word for Church in the New Testament is Ecclesia which appears approximately 115 times in NT. That's just in this one grammatical form. It appears also in other forms. And in every instance, except three, it is wrongly translated as "church" in the King James Version. Those three exceptions are found in Acts 19:32, 39, 41. In these instances the translators rendered it "assembly" instead of "church." But, the Greek word is exactly the same as the other multiple entries where it was changed to "church" wrongly.

We get the word Church from the Old English and German word pronounced "kirche." In Scotland, it was "kirk." In the earlier Greek It was pronounced "ku-ri-a-kos" or "ku-ri-a-kon." The meaning of "Ku-ri-a-kos" is understood by its root: "Ku-ri-os," which means "lord." Thus, "kuriakos" means "pertaining to the lord." It refers to something that pertains to, or belongs to, a lord. This had nothing to with the idea of ecclesia.

The Greek word "ecclesia" is according to the Encyclopedia Britannica defined as: In the New Testament, "ecclesia" (signifying convocation) is the only single word used for church. It (ecclesia) was the name given to the governmental assembly of the city of Athens, duly convoked (called out) by proper officers and possessing all political power including even juridical functions.

In Greece therefore an ecclesia had no resemblance to our modern understanding of church. An ecclesia was a civil assembly in Athens even before the writing of the New Testament.

Therefore, an "ecclesia" was originally a select civil body, summoned or convoked for a particular purpose. What, then, did the writers of the New Testament mean when they used the word "ecclesia" to describe a Christian body of people? We can assume that they intended to convey the original Greek meaning of the word: a body of Christians called out of the Roman and Judean system to come together into a separate civil community. It meant a politically autonomous body of Christians under no king but Jesus; under no other jurisdiction but that of Jesus. No man ruled them! Only Christ and not one person or a body of people. And that was the reason these same Christians ran into trouble with kings and rulers; were arrested, crucified and martyred. They dropped Caesar as their King and took up Christ! They wanted no other ruler except Jesus!

The early disciples preached Kingdom meaning they were announcing ANOTHER KING! Not Caesar! This was a king who was bigger than Caesar. They were at war! The disciples were kingdom builders. They were dethroning rulers in the minds of the people and alienating them from the mental hold Caesar had upon them through heathenistic (central) government. They were teaching the principles of the eternal government. They were putting forth the call of God to whomever would hear and obey, and those whose hearts responded to the call became citizens of Christ's kingdom and joined themselves to the ecclesia, or community of believers.

Why is of all this important, considering Jesus just preached Kingdom and nothing else? Because we are here to establish His Kingdom here on earth, not the politics or agenda or the way or the methods of an institution called a church. We are here to glorify ONE KING, and not power hungry men or women who act like demi-gods. And such politics or agenda of a denomination or an independent church started with one or several people. Thus basically means a congregation follows the law and word of a man, even when such a person's teaching or "church laws" are contrary to the truth of God.

While the first disciples sought no other king or leader or ruler, churches these days are filled with leaders, rulers and pastors who act like kings over congregations. There must be a cry in our hearts again that we will serve no other except Jesus and that we will follow no other truth except the Truth Himself – Jesus! We are all called to serve and to lead where necessary, but never to rule. There is only one ruler and His Name is Jesus!

Thus, in our modern day churches, we have replaced too often Jesus as our true King with a pastor or a bishop who has become the king over the congregation. His word is final, and so often such a senior pastor is not allowed to be criticised or corrected. Within bigger denominations, a president/overseer stands at the head, assisted by other board members, who then tell the entire membership of this denomination what to believe in. This is not Kingdom but religion controlling the masses.

Kingdom is about glorifying one King and obeying one King and submitting to one King. Jesus said He is the Way, Truth and Life. There is no other way, and no other king. God's idea has always been for the ecclesia – group of believers who function as a royal priesthood – to go into the world and to take dominion! It has always been God's intention for those who follow Him – ambassadors of the eternal kingdom – to establish God's customs, culture and ways in the world. Is this not the Great Commission?

Yes, the Lord has appointed apostles and preachers and teachers, and yes Paul talks about bishops and deacons, but this is in order to serve and to help all to follow the ways, customs and culture of the Kingdom. We are all merely servants of the King and even though some have been appointed shepherds, this does not imply rulers but merely men and women who under the guidance of the Holy Spirit will ensure the Kingdom of God remains true in essence in the hearts of men. In the days of Paul there was no organised structure to their gathering as we know it today. In fact, they met daily and broke bread daily. There were no Sunday services and no cell groups in the week.

They gathered in cities and congregations were labeled according to locality and not according to denomination. In the days of Paul there was thus only one Kingdom, which was represented by the Ecclesia (the group of believers). The Lord after all never told anyone to build a Church in the New Testament. The disciples gathered as the "ecclesia" as a royal priesthood for they had no other ruler instead the Lord. Their kingdom was not of this world but of heaven. They never became members of a church because their membership into the Kingdom was sealed by the Blood of Jesus.

Yet today people become members of a church above being members of the Kingdom, and thus submit to that organisation's constitution and submit to the leader's final word even though the Lord says otherwise.

It says in 1 Corinthians 6:11: But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. And also read Ephesians 1: 13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Our membership is sealed by the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus. His Blood has ensured as a place in the Kingdom and thus we are citizens of His everlasting Kingdom (Ephesians 2:19). Yet, religion calls for membership unto a religious body and so today churches as religious institutions have initiated the practice of membership. This is, however, also a form of making a covenant with a person or a group of people (congregation), violating thus one's covenant with God, His Kingdom and the true Ecclesia.

At the end of the day, God's Kingdom was in existence long before religion was invented by man. Abraham was not the father of any religion (even though this is claimed to be so by Judaism, Christianity and Islam), neither did Jesus come to introduce a religion. He came to show us the true ways of the Kingdom. And in such submission remain life, liberty, love and

liberty. Yes Jesus came to preach Kingdom for He WAS the Kingdom. Yet today we as the church have somehow managed to compartmentalise certain “ministries”, such as healing, grace, prosperity, evangelism and deliverance.

Yet all of this flows naturally from the disciple who is focussed upon the Kingdom and not on religion. We compartmentalise the gifts of the Spirit instead of preaching and teaching Kingdom, which is a life in Spirit and out of such a life flows the completeness of the power of God.

Yes, Paul did teach about the calling of certain people in certain offices, but again we have compartmentalised it according to our tradition and religion (remember the position of a pastor is an invention following the Reformation) to a point where we are suffocating because of our religious doctrines and traditions. For those who truly follow the Kingdom and preach Kingdom, they walk where the Spirit leads and operates as the Spirit desires. As a disciple we simply do as the Spirit leads, which could mean operating in all the spiritual gifts and in various functions of ministry.

Look at “Matthew 4:23: And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.” It also says in “Matthew 9:35: And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.” Jesus did not offer teachings on healing, deliverance, grace or even a life in the Spirit. He simply DID for He walked in the power of the Kingdom. If we walk in the power of the church we walk in religion which is void of power and life.

It says in “Matthew 24:14: And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” Has the end come? Of course not, because there has been a lot of preaching and teaching in the world today, but very little has been the gospel of the kingdom as compared to church doctrine and dogma).

How much of our preaching and teaching have been mere religious indoctrination and how much have just been churchianity? The church for a long time has been trying to indoctrinate people according to their own doctrines and traditions, instead of preaching the Kingdom of God. Are we then surprised why there are so few miracles these days or such a blatant lack of power in churches?

Take note. The first disciples walked not in the gospel of a denomination or of a certain church leader. No, they preached the gospel of the Kingdom. Thus they preached Jesus! For there is only one Truth and it is the Truth of the Kingdom. And the Truth is Jesus. It is by such Truth and no other truth (John 8) that we are set free and liberated.

Jesus said to His disciples the following in “Matthew 10:7: And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Praise the Lord! The KINGDOM is at hand, not religion. If we want to see people set free and delivered and healed, we need to walk and worship in Spirit and Truth, which is Kingdom.

You see, somewhere along the line we have shifted focus away from the Kingdom to the earthy religious structures and agendas of church. We are more interested in being popular within the church than in the Kingdom. We are more concerned with our reputation within church circles than in the eternal Kingdom. We are more concerned with what we can achieve and do within the structures of the church than the divine realm of the Kingdom. Again, there is a vast difference between the Kingdom and the church on earth as we know it today.

For this reason we get preachers, teachers and prophets of churches and not of the Kingdom. Again, there is a vast difference – one is eternal and beyond the confinements and dictates of man, the other is temporary and confined by the religious dictates of mankind. Truly, the conflict between the two could be seen in the days of Jesus, when he confronted the Pharisees and Sadducees. Jesus came preaching the Kingdom, but the Pharisees and Sadducees held on to their religion [church]. They could not “see” the Truth that stood before them. For this reason Jesus spoke the woes of Matthew 23 over them.

He also said the following in Matthew 23:13: But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

Religion and the customs and traditions of man actually SHUTS UP the Kingdom of Heaven instead of opening it! And this has been happening sadly for a long time on earth where religious institutions that function as a “church” because of man-made customs, culture and traditions, along with erroneous doctrines tend to shut the gate to the Kingdom instead of opening it!

Peter warned in 2 Peter 2: But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. 3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

And also remember 2 Timothy 4: 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

2 Peter 2 and 2 Timothy 4 have become a reality because of religious spirit that has created the institution of the church, manifested in the advent of the Catholic Church and gaining momentum following the Reformation. Deception, falseness, division and strife are all the product of religion, for religion feeds of carnality. Church leaders today are often puffed up with pride, seeking money, fame and status above the noble purposes of the Kingdom. Indeed, there are many false teachers today because we have held onto religion instead of seeking the Kingdom.

It is written in “Philippians 4: 8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.” Paul writes here about the virtues of the Kingdom and the virtues of the Spirit as also listed in Galatians 5. Such virtue we need to seek as we pursue the Kingdom. The work of the flesh which brings about manipulation, pride, envy, lust and deception is a result of us not seeking the Spirit and the Kingdom above all else.

We have to understand we are called to make disciples not of an organisation, of a church denomination or of a religion, but disciples of the eternal Kingdom. We are not here to turn someone into a clone of the Protestant or Catholic Church, but to disciple believers to become sons and daughters of the Kingdom! Such a Kingdom exists beyond the structures, traditions, ideas, agendas or programmes of man.

We are to lead people to submit to only one King – our Lord Jesus. It is because of our traditions, legalisms and customs defined by religion that we struggle to walk in the power and glory of God for we have not been ambassadors of His Kingdoms but have tried to be ambassadors of churches. Authority rests with the true King, and not in churches. It rests in the Name of Jesus, and those who truly follow Him walk in His authority. All other authority is false and counterfeit.

Consider for example how a church organisation operates compared to the Kingdom. The church speaks of discipleship in terms of formal training, of attending programmes and ordination. The Kingdom speaks nothing of such rigid training. Jesus showed true discipleship – one on one mentoring under the power of the Holy Spirit.

The call from the Kingdom is for ALL to go out and to teach and to preach the word according to the Great Commission. There is no real ordination (as we understand and apply it) and no titles in the Kingdom. It is about disciples of Jesus. When Paul mentioned of apostles and teachers it was not referring to titles but simply a calling, but then again we have made this into an exclusive club.

We must also remember the Kingdom of God is one of spirit, and not of the material. It is one of the spiritual works as defined by Galatians 5, while the works of the flesh is the work of the devil who tries to establish his own kingdom here on earth and in the hearts of mankind. Therefore, the Kingdom is not about money, status or reputation. Over and over Jesus preached AGAINST the dangers of wealth and the love of money and riches. Yet the church had decided it is more important to preach wealth, material gain, fame and fortune rather than Kingdom.

We shall not even go into depth how the Kingdom of God has and never will be defined by a building or how the Lord never told people to religiously meet on a Saturday/Sunday for service. A lot of these traditions follow the reign of Constantine who sought to merge Paganism into the age of the Church. The Kingdom is beyond walls, boundaries and bricks. It is eternal and lives in the heart of every believer.

The church of today is also one that seeks to liberate itself from any kind of law and thus treads dangerously on a path of rebellion against God.

Yes, we are not under the Laws of Moses, but we have to realise according to Matthew 5 that Jesus never came to abolish the Law but to fulfill it. This is something that is hardly being preached in churches anymore. To fulfill means to follow Jesus means following the Law. Jesus is now the Law.

And is Jesus without Law? Is the Kingdom without any laws? If this is so then the Kingdom is a lawless Kingdom. Hear what Jesus said in "Matthew 5:19: Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Note He is not talking here about being important or less important in the church. He is talking about being important or less important in the Kingdom. Big difference. One carries the approval of man and the other the approval of God. Jesus Himself said if we love Him we shall obey Him. This therefore means obeying Him as the Law. He is after all the Way, Truth and Life. In Him is the way, truth and life of the Law.

Again, we are not talking here about the religious and ceremonial laws of Moses, but the Law of the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the commandments that govern our actions, our thoughts, our spiritual life and how we walk with God. It is a life governed by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8, Galatians 5) and a life governed by His Truth. The two greatest commandments are to love the Lord and to love your neighbour as you love yourself. Those are laws! And those who obey a God of Law will be the greatest in the Kingdom!

It is quite ironic that while churches preach against the Law (referring to the 613 laws of Moses), churches in itself is full of religious and traditionalistic laws that govern the life of such an organisation. If the church decides it will hold services on a Sunday, then that is a law. If only the pastor may preach, then that is law. So while the laws of Kingdom is misunderstood and rebelled against, churches are more than keen to enslave believers with their own rules and regulations.

Matthew 7:21 which reads :not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" is all about obedience! It is about our relationship with the Lord and not with a church or a pastor. It is about seeking the will of God who is the King of Heaven. It is His will and ways that we should seek and not the mere way or will or a denomination.

We have for too long sought to obey the will and way of churches, but such churches aren't even preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom! We are then in rebellion. Again, in the Lord's Prayer, we are urged to pray that His Kingdom come and His will be done. It speaks of the way and the will of the King, not the will or way of man that seeks to govern over a religious institute called church.

This is after all the message also of Matthew 6:33 which says “but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you”.

Are we grasping this? We tend to these days first seek obedience and allegiance to a church group instead of our sole allegiance to the King of Heaven. Again, we love to preach and mention Matthew 6:33, but how can we first seek the Kingdom if we do not even know what the Kingdom is! Yes, first seek the Kingdom Jesus said, not the ways of religious institutions that masquerade as churches.

If we disobey and rebel against God our rebellion is against the Kingdom. It is that simple. We have been taught according to tradition if you rebel against the church you then automatically rebel against the Kingdom. We teach about being expelled and being excommunicated from a church if you break a church law or tradition. This is nonsense. You can only be expelled from the Kingdom of God if you turn your back on the Lord and serve the devil. Excommunication from the church is because of rebellion against the constitution of that church, thus the pastor or the church board. It has got nothing to do with the Lord!

After all, much of the rebellion that happens within the church is against religious practices, man-made traditions and legalisms which have nothing to do with the Kingdom.

It says in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 (KJV): Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. We are not here to inherit a church or be exalted by a church, but we are here to be everlasting citizens of our true home.

The need for loyalty unto the true King is underlined in “1 Thessalonians 2:12: That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.” We have not been called in a church structure to obey man and his doctrines, but into an eternal Kingdom. This is also the message of Hebrews 12: Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God....

Indeed, it says for example in the Beatitudes in “Matthew 5:3: Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” When Jesus spoke about the beatitudes, He spoke of the reward of the disciples. And such a reward was one of the Kingdom! It is all about the Kingdom and nothing else.

The culture of the Kingdom

Let us understand firstly the concept of Kingdom so we can understand what it means to walk in the power and authority of the Kingdom. Kingdom is formed by two words – king and dominion. It is thus the rule of a king over a land. Heaven is God’s Kingdom which will forever stand and it will forever remain. He is the King that will forever sit upon His Throne.

The devil tried to stage a coup d'état by he failed. We talk about the royal families on earth, but there is no royal family like the one in heaven!

What was God's intention? It was simple. He made earth and then He made man. He told Adam – a man made in the image of God – to go forth and take dominion on earth. Thus, establish and extent God's rule (Kingdom) on earth. Yes, God has always functioned like a colonial master, but His intention is never to enslave but to liberate. We enslave ourselves by listening to the devil and rebelling against the one true King in Heaven.

How does a colonial power work when taking over a territory? Representatives are sent to the territory to teach the people the customs, traditions, ways and culture of the colonial power. It is that simple. It is true the colonial powers on earth have done much harm by exploiting people, but we are dealing with God and not man.

So Adam was first born to set up the Lord's Kingdom on earth by dominating it by functioning in the customs, culture and ways of the King in heaven. But of course the devil was alert to this plan. So he seduced Adam and Adam disobeyed His King. Because of his disobedience he caused mankind to fall under the curse of sin.

God's intention, however, was still to set up His royal kingdom on earth. Remember, the devil had his own ideas and wants man to adopt his culture and customs. So the Lord decided to elect one nation – the Israelites – through which to introduce Himself after the great flood. And so Israel for a while walked in the ways and customs of the Lord by obeying the 613 Laws of Moses. But God had an even greater plan to reconcile all people unto Him. In order for God to re-establish connection with the whole of mankind and see His Kingdom flood the earth, not just Israel, the King Himself came down for 33 years to show the way, truth and culture of His eternal heaven. And so He chose 12 disciples with whom He walked almost four years to teach them the ways of the Kingdom (not church).

Also remember, that the colonial power will always leave a governor in a territory to make sure that the people 'become' and 'act' and 'behave' like the colonial power. This means to teach people how to talk, walk and function as the colonial power. Jesus was not the governor, He was the King Himself who paid a visit and to die so that all mankind through faith may be reconnected to the eternal heaven. The governor is the Holy Spirit (John 16) who still today leads us in all Truth, and who teaches us the ways, customs and culture of the eternal Kingdom (not church).

Yes, the Holy Spirit came to empower us, to impart wisdom, to teach and to enable us to walk, talk and function like it is in heaven – the eternal Kingdom! When the British for example as the colonial power annexed territory, they immediately taught people English. They taught people the ways, customs and culture of England. What does the Holy Spirit do? Exactly the same! He is here to teach us to walk in the ways, the truths and the culture of the Kingdom, and to even speak the heavenly language of the Kingdom (this is why speaking in tongues is so important because it speaks about remaining loyal and faithful to our colonial master – the true King in heaven!)

What then is wrong with the concept of our modern day understanding of church? Is it not that we come under the headship of one man or a group of men? Is it not that we adopt the ways, customs and culture of that church/denomination and not the customs, culture and way of the Kingdom? Keep in mind many churches these days foster a different truth or culture or custom to the ways of the eternal Kingdom. Therefore, congregants these days are taught how to speak “church”, how to function within the culture of that church group and to adopt the ways of that church group, not Kingdom. Therefore, we betray the true Kingdom and our true King.

You see, when Jesus said He is the Way, Truth and Life, it means as the King He has come to show us the Way of the Kingdom, the Truth of the Kingdom and the Life of the Kingdom. And we can only walk in the customs and the truths of the Kingdom when we follow the true King by listening, submitting and following the guidance and influence of the Holy Spirit. Thus, we sit today with millions of believers who follow the traditions and the ways and truths of a church group, as a result of the pastoral influence, and not Kingdom as a result of the Holy Spirit guidance.

And it is true, the Ecclesia on earth is supposed to walk in the ways of the King, but because we have institutionalised church into a structure of religious rules and man-made traditions we have lost touch with the eternal Kingdom. This is also why people are following in the demonic ways of some churches that adopt homosexuality or the ideas of abortion. This is why people are getting hopelessly confused and caught up by erroneous doctrines such as prosperity teachings and chasing after material wealth. It is because they are not staying loyal to the true King but have been deceived by a false culture and authority.

There are many church teachings that are not Kingdom customs and culture (the Oneness of Jesus, cessation doctrine of the Holy Spirit, prosperity, hyper grace to name a few), but the customs and culture of a church determined by one man or a group of men. Understand, there is only one true King and He shall not be dethroned. Because there is one King, there is thus one truth.

Many in churches today want to act like they are king of their church, establishing different truth and ways. This is then rebellion against the true colonial master and this is mutiny. Did Jesus not say He is the Way, Truth and Life? He is the King! Follow Me He cried to His disciples, for then they shall establish His Kingdom on earth. He never commanded them to start churches as we know it with all kinds of clever programmes and agendas where pastors rule the roost. He called for disciples who will go into the world and to establish the true Kingdom in the hearts and minds of all mankind!

It is because we preach church and allow church to influence us that we have walked in deception, with our minds on the material and the temporary instead of the eternal. It is because we have taken our eyes away from the True King and His Kingdom that we have focused on the Self, on our own glory (own nature) and so have substituted submission to our true King to submission to a false ruler. You see, if we thus look at the proper word for glory, it becomes clear that have often exchanged God’s glory for another glory, meaning

we exchanged His nature which comes through His Way and Culture for a different nature of the institutionalised church.

It must also be noted just as the Lord seeks to establish His glory in the hearts of all mankind, just so the devil seeks to establish his own temporary dark rule in the hearts of man. While God intends to raise up sons and daughters one earth and for them to walk in His glory, meaning walking in the ways of the Kingdom, the devil seeks to raise up his own brand of sons and daughters who follow a different and false culture.

So again, let us understand it is all about the Kingdom of God. We are called to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom and not the doctrine of some or other church. The disciples sought the Kingdom and sought to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom in the Book of Acts. This is why they were so successful! They declared Jesus is the true King and stood against religion.

They moved in the power of the Kingdom and for this reason Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 4:20: For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. The writer of Hebrews declared the follows in Hebrews 12:28: Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

Indeed, it is all about the Kingdom and nothing else! It says in "Matthew 13:11: He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Read also Matthew 16:19: And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

The Lord wants us to walk in the authority, knowledge, wisdom and counsel of the Kingdom, not institutionalised religion! Let us remember "Colossians 1:13: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Yes, we have been delivered from our sins by the Blood of Jesus which have made us sons and daughters of the Kingdom. It is again to rediscover our place in His Kingdom.

Remember also the powerful words of Ephesians 2 (KJV): 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

In the end, we must remember the destiny of all kingdoms – be it that of satan or man – as stated in Revelation 11:15: And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

No other kingdom – not the one of man or of the devil – will remain standing. All kingdoms will crumble. This includes our own kingdoms that we build. We must therefore remain standing on the Rock of Jesus for He is the King of the unshakable Kingdom that will never be destroyed, shaken or defeated!

Destined to Reign

In Revelations 3 we read of the lukewarm church, and how the church must seek God above all to be spiritually rich, and not just wealthy in the natural (for only in God is true spiritual wisdom, wealth and treasures). They are admonished to be zealous and repent of being neither hot nor cold, therefore indifferent to the Kingdom of God. Then it says: “20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. 21 TO HIM WHO OVERCOMES I WILL GRANT TO SIT WITH ME ON MY THRONE, AS I ALSO OVERCAME AND SAT DOWN WITH MY FATHER ON HIS THRONE.”

Now, compare what God says in Revelations 3 to what happened in Mark 10: 35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, “Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask.” 36 And He said to them, “What do you want Me to do for you?” 37 They said to Him, “Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory.” 38 But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” 39 They said to Him, “We are able.” So Jesus said to them, “You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; 40 but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared.” 41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. 42 But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. 44 And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Take note, what James and John desires, thus to sit with Jesus on His throne, will only be given to those for whom it is PREPARED. Jesus at this stage had not yet died on the cross to prepare a way for those who believe to be with Him eternally with God. The shed Blood would prepare the way. And this preparation is the redemption and the salvation by the Blood of the Lamb. Preparation followed the crucifixion, which caused the veil to be torn followed by Jesus ascension. In Revelation 3, Jesus said as “I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.” So He had by then paid the price for those who repented and sought him, including the thief who died on the cross next to Jesus. Those who overcome can now enjoy their inheritance as the sons and daughters of the living God.

What is therefore interesting is that in Revelations 3 we are told those who overcome shall indeed be granted the request made by James and John. For Jesus has already prepared the way. But the key is “those who overcome”. And who are those who overcome? In Mark 10 Jesus spoke about humility. In Revelations 3 it speaks of being zealous for God and repenting of being lukewarm. The letters to the seven churches in context calls for a people that are seeking God as their first love, who will not bow to the idols, who will not follow lies or deception, and who seeks God above all else. Jesus also told James and John that

“you will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized.” As disciples of God we must be willing to deny the Self, carry the cross, endure hardship for the Kingdom and face persecutions to the Glory of God. Thus to overcome is a zealous endeavour to endure, to keep fighting and to keep holding on to what is good and proper.

We read of those who overcome that they will be granted to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God (Revelation 2:7), will not be hurt by the second death (Revelations 2:11), will be given hidden manna and a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it (Revelation 2:17), will be granted power over the nations (Revelation 2:26), to be clothed in white garments (Revelations 3:5), will have a new name (Revelation 3:12) and will be granted to sit with God on His throne (Revelations 3:21). Yes, great is the reward to OVERCOME, but this calls for great perseverance, diligence, and faithfulness to God’s Kingdom, and of resisting the world, the devil and everything which is carnal, false and an abomination.

In Revelations 19 we read: “6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunders, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! 7 Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.” Yes, those who overcome shall enjoy the eternal betrothal to God, dining at the wedding table, yet then we must be found without spot or wrinkle (Ephesians 5:27).

In Matthew 22 we read: Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: 2 “The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. 3 He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. 4 “Then he sent some more servants and said, ‘Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.’ 5 “But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. 6 The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. 7 The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. 8 “Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. 9 So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’ 10 So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. 11 “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. 12 He asked, ‘How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?’ The man was speechless. 13 “Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ 14 “For many are invited, but few are chosen”.

The story is about a king preparing a celebration-wedding feast for his son and for those who will hear the invitation to come. This feast, banquet or supper symbolizes what is ahead for those who have received the work of Christ on the cross in payment for the debt

of their sins. Those invited are given clothing to wear, clothing that is described as righteous acts. We should not think for a minute that we should work hard to be invited. No, our place at that table is totally free and a gift given by God. However, once we receive God's grace and believe the gospel of God, we are changed and transformed to be like Jesus by the work of the indwelling Spirit. We are secure in our love relationship with Christ to serve Him and do good works to glorify Him: "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10).

When we think of the preparation work that is occurring for this feast, we often think of the table being prepared and the food that is on it. God's preparation work is in the lives of the people who are invited and chosen to be there. Jesus said, "Come follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). When we come to Him and follow Him, He will make us into what He has called us to be and do. In the disciple's case, it was to make them into fishers of men. God is at work in you, if you belong to Him, to transform you into His image (Galatians 4:19). Although there is a real feast at the end of the age, the picture of a feast is a description of a close intimate relationship. To enjoy such a relationship, we don't have to wait until the end of the age.

"I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me" (Revelation 3:20 Emphasis mine)." Jesus is saying that, for all those who hear the call and open their hearts, He will come and enjoy a close intimate relationship with them, typified by sitting around a table and eating with Him.

At the time of Christ in the Middle East, people of means would send out a general call or invitation for all to attend the wedding feast that they were preparing. The day would be set but not the time. Verse three of our passage above says that the servants were sent to all those who had been invited. Verse three tells us that the response is not of being unable to come, but being unwilling to come. When the first servants received refusals from guests who would not come, the king sent out His servants a second time, 4"Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet' (Matthew 22:4).

Think of the expense the king of the universe has taken to prepare for men to be reunited with Himself—even to the death of His own Son on the cross to pay for people's sins. Don't you think that He would feel insulted at the rejection of His servants' invitation? Yes daily, God is calling people home and to the feast, and still today so many are ignoring the Lord. Often today, the claims and call of the gospel are pushed away because of many different excuses.

In verse 11 we read of the man who was not wearing wedding clothes. Jesus tells us of the king's coming into the midst of the wedding celebration and seeing a man wearing no wedding clothes. God supplies all of His wedding guests with a robe of righteousness. There will be none at the wedding feast better dressed than others—we will all be one in Christ Jesus and clothed in God's righteousness. It says in "Isaiah 61:10: I delight greatly in the

LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels." This man's lack of proper garments, however, shows that he has purposely rejected the king's provision for him, a greater insult than those who refused to come to the wedding. This man decided to insult the king in the presence of all His guests. He is a picture of those who refuse to wear God's provision of the garment of righteousness that God has given (Isaiah 61:10). Thus a refusal to really seek the Kingdom and God's righteousness above all else. This part of the parable alludes to the Jews who were standing around Christ as He spoke, acting as believers but trying to trap Him in His words (Matthew 22:15). This is also a picture of those who think they are believers; however, they have never indeed submitted their lives to the Son and been born again of the Spirit (John 3:3). Sadly, they will find out too late that their hope was built on moving sands rather than upon the Rock of Christ (Matthew 7:24-27).

Many are invited in the "general call" that goes out to all who will hear it. The call is a summons to repentance and faith in Christ. Many will hear, but few will respond. Jesus said, 13"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. 14"For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matthew 17). All those who will respond to the call are those whom God has foreseen their repentance. These are the chosen of God before the foundation of the world. "Ephesians 1: 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself."

Yes, this is all part of the inheritance of the saints who are destined to reign with God in all His Glory. We are invited to a glorious wedding to be robed in righteousness. Revelations 19, regarding the wedding feast, connects directly with Revelations 3:5 of being clothed in white garments. It is about truly about dwelling with God, just as Adam and Eve tabernacle with God in the Paradise. And since we are to be eternally betrothed unto God, we shall eternally reign with God. It is therefore our destiny to reign. Are we thus sure we are indeed wearing the robe of righteousness? Are we certain we have answered the call to the wedding? Are we ready to be eternally with God?

Regarding preparation, we read in "Matthew 25: 34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'" Yes, there is a glorious inheritance that has been prepared by Jesus, and such an inheritance has been set aside for those who overcome and endure the deceptions and apostasy and all things unholy in the last days.

In Acts 26, Paul summarises his mandate and he says part of it is (verse 18) “to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.” Glory to God, there is an inheritance for the Jew and the Gentile who seek God, who follow God and who allow themselves to be sanctified by the Truth of God. It also says in “1 Corinthians 6:9: Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites.”

Paul continued to write about inheritance as follows: Ephesians 1:11: In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will; Ephesians 1:14: who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory; Ephesians 1:18: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.

Yet, again, Paul writes in “Ephesians 5:5: For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.” This of course connects with what the Lord said in “Revelations 22: 14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. 15 But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.”

So yes, there is a glorious inheritance for those who serve and obey God. Indeed, if we overcome, thus endure to the end, we shall be in the glorious and wonderful position of actually sitting with Christ on His throne. And for what purpose? “Revelations 2: 26 And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations— 27 ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’—as I also have received from My Father; 28 and I will give him the morning star.” So what is this about power of the nations? It says in “Revelation 20: 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.” Yes, physical destined to reign!

Indeed, the inheritance of the saints is the glorious and restored Paradise at the time where earth and heaven are renewed, and the coming of the New Jerusalem. For this reason we will be allowed to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God (Revelation 2:7). It also says in Revelations 22: 1 And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. 4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.

5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.”

Glory of God, the New Jerusalem is a final restoration of complete sustenance, hope and provision in God. A time of no pain more pain, tears, heartache or suffering. A time of bliss, but also a time where the serpent will no more show up to deceive and corrupt. Yes, with God and forever more we shall enjoy a restored identity in Christ, thus the new name. We shall belong, and there shall be more rejection or pain.

As disciples of God, for those who endure and overcome, they are destined to rule and reign on earth for a 1000 years! Yes, not merely for all eternity in God’s presence. This is before the advent of the New Jerusalem and the final demise of the serpent that will be thrown into the lake of fire. Talk about destined to reign! So yes, according to Revelations, we will eat from the tree of life. Adam and Eve lost their place in the Garden, thus intimate fellowship with God, but we shall return to the Paradise and to eat from the tree again. We shall again be in God’s fellowship and enjoying His presence, like the disciples walked with Jesus. And yes, those who overcome shall be given power over the nations. This is part of the 1000 years of reign of peace. For in this world we shall know suffering, but in God’s physical established Kingdom His children shall indeed rule and reign!

It says in “1 Corinthians 6: 1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? 2 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? 3 Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?” Yes, we should learn right now how to walk in wisdom, in discernment and in love because one day we shall authority over nations! But not to rule in tyranny, but in God’s love, mercy and peace.

We are thus urged to pray that the Lord’s will be done on earth as it is heaven. Why? Because what is heaven will be our natural habitat. Many see the streets of gold and the Paradise and the New Jerusalem of Revelations as something which is merely symbolic or figurative. The reality is that even while it is no symbolic in the sense that it does exist, it can also be seen symbolic for such should be the state of our being RIGHT NOW as we abide in Christ. Yes, we should be enjoying right now Paradise within by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, thus a state of rest, peace, bliss and blessings. It is merely a question of how much are we submitted and yielded to God. Yes for now while on earth, heaven is inside of us, thus Paradise. Yes, God wants us to stay in paradise for all time, and God will create such a physical and restored paradise, yet something which is even more glorious than the Garden of Eden. This new dominion will be as it is in heaven – beautiful, clean and restored by God’s Glory. And so we are taught to pray in Matthew 6 for things to be on earth as it is in heaven, for our eternal home will be as it already is in heaven!

It says in “Ephesians 2: 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the

heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” Right now we are walking in God’s authority, for we are operating in the kingdom authority for we are “seated” spiritually with Christ on high. We are infilled by the glorious power of the Holy Spirit. But the time will come when the Lord comes for His Bride that those who overcome will actually be seated with Christ in power, ruling and reigning!

For of Christ it says: “Ephesians 1: 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His 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 age but also in that which is to come. 22 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.” You see, Jesus overcame and was granted all dominion and power. All things are already under His feet, and this will be clearly demonstrated during the end of the age, which includes the thousand years of reign and the New Jerusalem. We are destined to reign, and not to flee or cower! God remains eternally in control.

Indeed, ‘all things’ are under the feet of our Lord, for all things ultimately and always have belongs to our God. It says in “Zechariah 14: 3 Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. 4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east.” Jesus standing on the Mount of Olives is truly a profound and powerful picture that God is firm in His resolve, never moving, never backing down, for He is the Rock and all dominion belongs unto Him. For this reason we are called to build our lives (our house) upon the Rock of Jesus, for Jesus will never be moved, or be defeated, Indeed, he who overcomes and endures in Christ will enjoy the hidden manna, and will be dressed in white and his name will never be blotted out from the Book of Life. Glory to God.

In Hebrews 11 we read: “8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.” In our times of perilous times and dangers, we need to respond to faith in God and His calling and greatness to embrace our inheritance just as Abraham had to embrace his inheritance. As Abraham “went out”, we need to get out of the worldly systems and out of Babylon (all things fallen even in a religious sense). We need to get out and get into God’s Kingdom. We need to walk by faith and not by sight, and we need to be brave and courageous like Joshua. We need to truly have a heart for God and His Kingdom, like David, and we need to remain standing as Paul urged. Yes, there is a glorious inheritance of ruling and reigning, of dwelling and walking forever with God in a place of no more pain or tears, but then we need to endure, overcome and persist in the truth.

The Eternal and Physical Kingdom of God

In Luke 17:20–21, Jesus says, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you” (NKJV). The context of Jesus’ statement is a question put to Him by His Pharisee detractors who had asked when the kingdom of God would come (verse 20).

Jesus’ answer was that the kingdom of God was not coming in the manner the Pharisees were expecting. The kingdom would not be inaugurated with spectacle or splendour. In fact, Jesus says, the kingdom had already begun, but it was now settled in the hearts of man. They were of course concerned more about the tangible than the spiritual.

Various translations render the Greek of Luke 17:21 various ways. The phrase translated “within you” in the KJV and NKJV is translated as “in your midst” in the NIV, NASB, and NET; “among you” in the NLT and HCSB; and “in the midst of you” in the ESV. Earlier versions of the NIV had “within you” with a marginal note suggesting “among you.” In essence, Jesus was telling the Pharisees that He brought the Kingdom of God to earth, and while the Kingdom in the form of Jesus was now in their presence, soon through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit the Kingdom will reside in the heart of every believer. This happened on the day of Pentecost. So while the Kingdom was certainly among the people in the form of Jesus, it would soon be within those who seek and yearn to follow the true Way. This was of course fulfilled.

Jesus said in “Mark 1:15: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” When Christ appeared on earth as a human, it was clear that this Kingdom did not yet rule over the earth, and the early Christians eagerly awaited its arrival. This teaching regarding the Kingdom of God being a kingdom that would come to earth and replace all civil governments disappeared from mainstream Christianity over the centuries following Christ’s death. But this is an error in teaching.

In the second year of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, the monarch had a dream predicting three major gentile empires that would follow his Babylonian Empire (Daniel 2:1-43). Historically, these successive empires turned out to be the Medo-Persian, Greek and Roman empires. God, through Daniel, gave the interpretation of the king’s dream (verse 19). The last part of the dream and its explanation was: “And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever” (verse 44). From this passage we can see that the Kingdom of God will rule over all people and nations. God reiterated this point through the prophet Zechariah, who in describing the second coming of Christ to earth said, “And the Lord shall be King over all the earth” (Zechariah 14:9). This point is restated in several New Testament passages (1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 11:15; 17:14; 19:16).

As for the “what” and “where” of the Kingdom, the Old Testament revealed that it would be a future kingdom to be established on earth, which was emphasised by “Revelations 20: 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw

the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” This follows the fall of Babylon and the defeat of the Beast and his armies (Revelations 19). This is thus all in perfect support of Daniel 2.

Jesus’ teaching that “the kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:15) was also simply a statement that He was available to teach people about this Kingdom. And this Kingdom will indeed be for a time being reside in the heart of man through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. But a time will come when the Kingdom of God will be established on earth. Yes, believers are not headed for ‘heaven’ as we know it, but for Paradise which will settled on the new earth and the new heavens. This Paradise is expressed in the coming of the New Jerusalem.

In the time of Daniel, God had revealed through the prophet that “the saints [those studying, learning and living in accordance with God’s truth] of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever” (Daniel 7:18). This prophecy indicated that the saints and this kingdom would be eternal. In Matthew 5 it says: 3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven ... 5 Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” So who will reign with God in His eternal and physical Kingdom? Yes, those who are humble, pure of heart and who seek the way of God above all else.

Indeed, the inheritance of the saints is the glorious and restored Paradise at the time where earth and heaven are renewed, and the coming of the New Jerusalem. For this reason we will be allowed to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God (Revelation 2:7). It also says in “Revelations 22: 1 And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. 4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. 5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.” Glory of God, the New Jerusalem is a final restoration of complete sustenance, hope and provision in God. It bring to completion the circle from the Garden of Eden to the New Jerusalem, where God again walks with man. A time of no pain, tears, heartache or suffering. A time of bliss, but also a time where the serpent will no more show up to deceive and corrupt (for he has now been finally thrown into the lake of fire). Yes, with God and forever more we shall enjoy a restored identity in Christ, thus the new name. We shall belong, and there shall be more rejection or pain.

As disciples of God, for those who endure and overcome, they are destined to rule and reign on earth for a 1000 years! Yes, not merely for all eternity in God's presence. This is before the advent of the New Jerusalem and the final demise of the serpent that will be thrown into the lake of fire. Talk about destined to reign! So according to Revelations, we will eat from the tree of life. Adam and Eve lost their place in the Garden, thus intimate fellowship with God, but we shall return to the Paradise and to eat from the tree again. We shall again be in God's fellowship and enjoying His presence, like the disciples walked with Jesus. And yes, those who overcome shall be given power over the nations. This is part of the 1000 years of reign of peace. For in this world we shall know suffering, but in God's physical established Kingdom His children shall indeed rule and reign!

The reality is that those who faithfully respond to Jesus' Gospel are destined to rule with Him as kings and priests over the physical nations and peoples who will exist when He returns (Revelation 1:6; 5:10). But an important concept to note is that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 15:50). In order to become a member of this Kingdom, one's human body must be changed to a "spiritual body" (verse 44). As Paul put it, "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (verse 53). The Kingdom of God will be faithful followers of Christ who have been changed into a spiritual being (what this will look like we do not know). It is also important to note that in order for a human being to reign currently on earth, he needs a body. Thus even in the time of the 1000 years reign, we are going to need a body to function on earth, but it will be renewed, restored and spiritual in nature. This will transpire for both living and those resurrected. Thus those who were once mortal will assist Christ in ruling over the mortal humans who remain alive on earth after all the devastation that will occur prior to His return. Thus, an eternal kingdom composed of and administered by spirit beings (yet in a body) who will rule over mortal humans during the 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth.

Jesus was asked the following question: Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her? (Matthew 22:28). Jesus said their problem was a lack of understanding of two basic things - the Scriptures, and the power of God. "Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven (Matthew 22:29, 30). It is also written in "Luke 20:35-36: But those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; for neither can they die anymore, for they are like angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection."

So we can see relationships will take on a new meaning. The Kingdom of God will usher in a different set of relationships than here upon the earth. We are all adopted sons and daughters in God's family. Paul wrote. "He destined us for adoption as His children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will (Ephesians 1:5)." Therefore, we have new family relationships. Ultimately, we will be married to Christ. We read in "Revelation 19:7-9: Let us rejoice and exult and give Him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready; to her it has been granted to be clothed with

fine linen, bright and pure" - for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are true words of God."

Since heaven will be a deathless state, there is no need for relations. There is no need for perpetuation of humanity since there will be no adding or subtracting to the number in heaven. Whatever God has planned for believers will be something far better than we can imagine. The Bible says the following: "However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him" (1 Corinthians 2:9)." The resurrected state will be God-centered, not human-centered. The emphasis will be upon God, not humanity.

And since this is an eternal kingdom, it will continue forever even after the millennial reign of Christ comes to an end. Even though God's Kingdom will not be established on earth until Jesus returns, He expects His followers to be seeking His Kingdom now. As Jesus taught in His Sermon on the Mount, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33, King James Version). Seeking God's Kingdom "first" means giving it the highest priority in our lives. Illustrating this point, Jesus likened this Kingdom to a "pearl of great price" (Matthew 13:45-46). We seek the Kingdom by living according to the truths and values of the Kingdom, for one day we shall live according to such values.

We are after all admonished to pray as follows: "In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come." (Matthew 6:9-10). This is not just about living in His Kingdom now by the Spirit of God, but also a yearning for the physical Kingdom to be established. Indeed, we also seek God's Kingdom when we seek God's righteousness, in the sense that we're preparing to be rulers with Christ in it. Jesus will rule in righteousness, and His Kingdom will bring justice and equity to all. When we live now by God's laws, we internalize God's values and prepare for our future roles assisting Jesus in His role as "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Revelation 19:16).

Indeed, right now Christians in this life are growing in understanding of God and His righteous character. The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sins and, upon our repentance and baptism, encourages us and empowers us to live God's way of life. But our spiritual birth and entrance into God's Kingdom will come when Jesus returns and our bodies are changed into spirit. As Paul noted: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. "For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:50-53).

It says in "Romans 14:11: It is written: "'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will acknowledge God.'" This will happen both during the 1000 years of reign and even after the final demise of the devil. It says in "Zechariah 14:16

Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles." Jesus' return is sparked by this attack, during a time that He comes to save the city and to gather the followers from the earth – both the living and the dead. And yes, they shall then rule with Him and over those who go to Jerusalem to worship God.

It says in Revelations 21: 6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. 7 He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son." Glory to God. We are called to inherit the eternal Kingdom forever established! It also says in the same chapter "8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." It also says in "Revelations 22: 14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. 15 But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie." The truth is those who did not worship God will never be part of God's Kingdom, and they will not dwell in His Presence or light. For them (following the final resurrection of the dead and the White Throne of Judgement – Revelations 20) there will only be separation from life, and from God's love. Again it says in "Revelations 20: 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." Some do see this lake of fire as being symbolic or a figurative form of speech, but why are we trying to deny the inevitable? Without God there is indeed no life, no hope and no love. God's Kingdom is after all about righteousness and peace and joy and love.

While God's Kingdom is to be in our hearts and minds, the Kingdom of God is far more than a philosophic mind-set. In Philippians 3:20, Paul said that "our citizenship is in heaven." Based on this passage, some have mistakenly assumed that this means Christians will go to heaven in order to become part of God's Kingdom. As we have already seen, Jesus Christ will return to earth and establish the Kingdom of God here on earth. Yes, our citizenship has indeed been reserved, but in the new Paradise we shall live and reign. We are not going anywhere, we are staying right here and enjoying the time when all things are made new.

While the Kingdom of God currently exists in heaven, it is destined to also encompass all peoples and nations here on earth. For those who have inherited the Kingdom, they will indeed dwell in the New Jerusalem. As John saw in vision: "Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!'" (Revelation 11:15). Christ will bring the "times of restoration of all things" to the earth (Acts 3:21).

Elsewhere, Jesus mentions His miracles as definitive proof of the kingdom: "If I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Luke 11:20). While we are living on this earth, we enjoy Kingdom life, Kingdom power, Kingdom blessings and favour because God inhabits the spirit and soul of those who seek and submit unto Him. Thus, we can say the kingdom of God is essentially inward, within man's heart, and

therefore the kingdom is within your reach if you make the right choices and the kingdom of God is still in midst because of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Jesus at His coming was inaugurating the kingdom as He changed the hearts of men, one at a time, and this has continued after Pentecost.

What is important is that the Kingdom is not one of stone and brick. It is never the building, or the place. The believers are the vessels, or the arks, in which God dwells. It says in Acts 7:48: "However, the Most High does not live in houses made by human hands." Jesus wanted us to understand that while there is a very real Kingdom of Heaven, for now we live in such a reality and majesty and splendour of the Kingdom while we are still on earth. Truly, John the Baptist announced the Kingdom of God was at hand, and today it remains at hand and readily available and accessible to all who seek the Lord. And by the Holy Spirit the Kingdom becomes a reality in the hearts of believers. And such reality we will see manifest one day in the New Jerusalem following new heavens and the new earth.

Yes, for the time being, Christ's kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36). One day, however, the kingdom of God will be manifest on the earth (Isaiah 35:1), and Jesus Christ will rule a physical kingdom from David's throne (Isaiah 9:7) with Jerusalem as His capital (Zechariah 8:3). This is the reality, but we are already being prepared for the New Jerusalem and of such a physical kingdom, for the Kingdom is already inside of us. One day, however, we will again walk with God as Adam and Eve did.

In John 3 we read that those who are born of the Spirit enter the Kingdom of God and will see the Kingdom. Through the baptism of the Spirit, children of the King enter into the dominance of the Lord and therefore operate and function according to its rightful authority. And by such authority we are called NOW to be good stewards on earth, shining His light, leading people back to God and driving back the darkness that corrupts and destroys. But one day we shall rule and reign, and we "see" the manifestation of the true and eternal and physical Kingdom of God.

A Call to Return to the Upper Room

More than ever there is a need for the church to return to the Upper Room. The Lord has laid it strongly on my heart is time for the Church to rediscover the importance of the Upper Room in our spiritual walk. But then we need to understand what the Upper Room is, and what it truly means. For it was more than the place where the Holy Spirit was poured out. Yes, so much more.

We all know what happened in the Upper Room. We all know the story of Acts 2: 1 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Another translation is as follows: Complete Jewish Bible (CJB): 1 The festival of Shavu'ot arrived, and the believers all gathered together in one place. 2 Suddenly there came a sound from the sky like the roar of a violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire, which separated and came to rest on each one of them. 4 They were all filled with the Ruach HaKodesh and began to talk in different languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

Oh yes, there in the room, after waiting as instructed by Jesus for the power from on high, 10 days taking into consideration the 40 days before Ascension after the resurrection, the disciples were equipped and empowered by the very presence of God, filling them and enabling them to be witnesses unto the ends of the earth! Glory to God. Yes, there was a wind, for the Spirit is the Rauch Elohim – the very breath of God. Of those born in the Holy Spirit it says “John 3:8: The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

Indeed, of the breath of God we read in Ezekiel 37 in regards to the prophecy with the dead bones. For the life-giving Spirit of the Living God descended upon the disciples, fulfilling the promise of John 16 verse 7: But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the [a]Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengthener, Standby) will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him (the Holy Spirit) to you [to be in close fellowship with you].

Glory to God! And we know what happened beyond the Upper Room. We know of the first sermon that touched the lives of 3000. We know that in Acts 4 verse 3 it says “and with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus”. In Acts 5 we read: “12 And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon’s Porch. 13 Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. 14 And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, 15 so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. 16 Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding

cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed”.

Yes, great was the impact of the believers. Great was the witnessing of the Lord and so the harvest grew. Why? Because of the Upper Room. Yes, because of the Holy Spirit! They were touched by God, for God is the all-consuming fire. The Upper Room, also known as the Cenacle, is located in the southern part of the Old City of Jerusalem on Mount Zion, and is perhaps best known as the traditional site of the Last Supper since the fourth century AD. It was not just the place where the disciples were filled by the Holy Spirit, but it was the place of intimate fellowship with God Himself!

We read in Luke 22: 7 Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed. 8 And He sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat.” 9 So they said to Him, “Where do You want us to prepare?” 10 And He said to them, “Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters. 11 Then you shall say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, “Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?’” ’ 12 Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready.” 13 So they went and found it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover.

Jesus thus set the scene, not man, for it was not going to be any room, but a room chosen by God. He chose Peter and John, loved disciples, for a very important assignment. The Lord had set apart a place not only for the Last Supper, but also for the Pentecost. A place for fellowship, just as God has set Moses aside on Mount Sinai for 40 days. According to tradition, this room would become the place where the apostles stayed when they were in Jerusalem. The Cenacle is also where Jesus washed his disciples’ feet (John 13:1–20), which symbolizes the ministry of loving service. It is where the concept of a loving friendship with Jesus was introduced, as set forth in John’s Last Supper discourses (John 14–16), and gave the apostles a glimpse into the beautiful prayer life of Jesus, sometimes known as the “high priestly prayer,” recorded in John 17.

It is the place where the disciples gathered in fear after the death of Jesus. We read in John 20: New King James Version (NKJV): 19 Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, “Peace be with you.” 20 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. 21 So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” 22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

Just as the Spirit descended upon Jesus at the baptism and rested upon Him in Power for the work of His earthly ministry, so also the disciples were regenerated and indwelt by the Spirit of the resurrected Christ prior to Pentecost. But at Pentecost the Spirit was poured

out upon them in power, because Christ had ascended to the throne of God and received all authority and power. Yes, in the Upper Room what Jesus started by breathing upon them the Spirit comes into completion with the outpouring of the Ruach Elohim! So we therefore find the Risen Lord breathing on them the Holy Spirit “on the evening of that first day of the week” (John 20:19). It is from there that the apostles went forth with boldness sharing the Good News. All in the power of God, and to the glory of God!

And so by tradition, this is the same room where Jesus appeared, both before and after the resurrection. It was here that the Risen One made visible His wounds to see and touch, and the room where the faith of Thomas emerged. We read of this in John 20: 24 Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 The other disciples therefore said to him, “We have seen the Lord.” So he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.” 26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, “Peace to you!” 27 Then He said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.”

It was therefore not just the room where the Spirit was breathed upon them, but also the room from which, filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, the apostles would ultimately leave to change the world—your world and mine. It is a room where all doubt vanished and the disciples were bolstered in their hope and faith to change the world! This was not a room of fear, but of conviction in the greatness of God.

We read in Psalm 104:30: “Send forth your spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.” The fruits of Jesus’s life and ministry, as witnessed in the precious moments in the Upper Room documented in Scripture, continue in and through the Church up to today. In this humble space, the most important room in all of Christendom, Jesus set a remarkable precedent of faith and service, and so we are given a new understanding of God’s love and the revolutionary power of the Holy Spirit was unleashed.

Indeed, it is the Upper Room where the disciples were truly moulded to be followers of Jesus. They had learned from the Master. They had spent time with God, with each other, and so they learned of fellowship, of unity, of truth, of humanity, of love, of hope and redemption. Yes, so much happened in the Upper Room for it was here that Jesus also told of Judas’s betrayal and Peter’s denial (John 13:21–30, 36–38). The humanity of each apostle is vibrantly portrayed in the Upper Room, giving us a glimpse into our own hearts and nature, as well as into the unrelenting love of Jesus Christ for his followers.

We also read in Acts 1, before the ascension of Jesus thus during the 40 days after His resurrection: Acts 1: 1 The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2 until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, 3 to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. 4 And being

assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” 6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7 And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. 8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Take note of the following “speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God”. So by all accounts, the Lord spoke to them about the Kingdom, probably many things not recorded before ascending to the Father. We can only imagine the teaching they received, and how their faith was bolstered! For them Matthew 6 would have really become a reality where Jesus taught to first seek His Kingdom and righteousness. And yes, Moses was on that mountain for 40 days, learning and knowing God, and so it is not by accident that the Lord has also set apart 40 special days after His resurrection to equip His followers for their great work that waited for them. And much of that fellowship would have taken place in the Upper Room! And then, there in the Upper Room, the Holy Spirit came in glory to take over the work of the Son.

Yes, in the Upper Room the disciples had to make room for God in His Totality as the Trinity! They had to make room for His divinity, presence, and glory, and so they learned, grew spiritually and in knowledge of His fullness. Yes, in the Upper Room the disciples understood once and for all Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life. They had fellowship with the Risen Lord – the Alpha and the Omega, not just at the Last Supper but even beyond the cross and the tomb. For them, they would have understood more clearly the significance of the Last Supper, where they learned about the cup and the bread. They would have understood the power of the Blood, and that Jesus is the hope of glory!

And yes, by all accounts, the disciples simply replicated what they had experienced in the Upper Room once they were led out in the world under the power of the Holy Spirit. We read of this in Acts 2: 43 A sense of awe was felt by everyone, and many wonders and signs (attesting miracles) were taking place through the apostles. 44 And all those who had believed [in Jesus as Savior] [k]were together and had all things in common [considering their possessions to belong to the group as a whole]. 45 And they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing the proceeds with all [the other believers], as anyone had need. 46 Day after day they met in the temple [area] continuing with one mind, and breaking bread in various private homes. They were eating their meals together with joy and generous hearts, 47 praising God continually, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord kept adding to their number daily those who were being saved.

And also Acts 4: 32 Now the company of believers was of one heart and soul, and not one [of them] claimed that anything belonging to him was [exclusively] his own, but everything was common property and for the use of all. 33 And with great ability and power the apostles were continuously testifying to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace

[God's remarkable lovingkindness and favor and goodwill] rested richly upon them all. 34 There was not a needy person among them, because those who were owners of land or houses were selling them, and bringing the proceeds of the sales 35 and placing the money down at the apostles' feet. Then it was distributed to each as anyone had need.

The disciples simply replicated and put into motion what they had learned in the Upper Room! And what had they learned! Yes, what it means to be the true church (ecclesia) and they learned of the Kingdom, and of being a servant.

The Upper Room was also a place of prayer. It says in Acts 1 (following the Ascension): 12 Then the disciples returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet (Olive Grove), which is near Jerusalem, [only] a Sabbath day's journey (less than one mile) away. 13 When they had entered the city, they went upstairs to the upper room where they were staying [indefinitely]; that is, Peter, and John and [his brother] James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew (Nathanael) and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas (Thaddaeus) the son of James. 14 All these with one mind and one purpose were continually devoting themselves to prayer, [waiting together] along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

Take note, it says the disciples devoted themselves to prayer. It was therefore a place of unified prayer, and of supplication and seeking God's will. Paul would echo the importance of prayer in Ephesians 6: 18 With all prayer and petition pray [with specific requests] at all times [on every occasion and in every season] in the Spirit, and with this in view, stay alert with all perseverance and petition [interceding in prayer] for all God's people.

To return to the Upper Room is for the Church to therefore return to deep prayer life, but also a united prayer life with other disciples. A life of seeking God, seeking His will, and praying as the Spirit leads. Unity is after all so important for the Church, for in the Upper Room the disciples learned of fellowship, of unity, of sharing, of caring, and the power of God's love. In the Upper Room they spoke for the first time in other languages, and they knew beyond a doubt that God will be with them as witnesses unto the ends of the earth. No wonder Jesus had to set aside a special place, because He needed to prepare those who were set aside for the Kingdom!

So why is the Upper Room so important? Simple. In the upper room, the church – consisting of Spirit filled disciples - was ACTIVATED in Power and then MOBILISED to be witnesses unto the ends of the world, thus to fulfil the Great Commission. Yes, the Church was mobilized, for the Church was the disciples, and the Church today is still the living and breathing disciples! The Upper Room as the building and the room was not the Church, but only served as the Ark that housed for a season and a time the disciples who were about to be ignited with fire by the Ruach Elohim! The true Church left the building to be the Church, for they were activated and empowered to be mobilized. And this is a process of moving, being active and serving the Kingdom.

Yes, they left the Upper Room! They did not call people to join them in the building, but the Church went into the crowd to bring Jesus to a world dying and in need of a true Saviour! And so the first sermon touched the lives of 3000 people, simply because the disciples were now moving in Kingdom power, and they were focused only upon Jesus and His Kingdom and the lost who needed the King of kings! The disciples were equipped and trained one last time, then activated and then they went. Thus they FOLLOWED first and then out of the door of the Upper Room into the world (literally among the crowd) to preach and teach.

The Church went from that Upper Room – yes they left what was comfortably and safe – and they embraced a hostile world with the Good News of hope and glory! It says in Mark 16: 15 And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

Glory to God! The disciples as the Church was now activated and mobilized, and yes, signs and wonders of God’s power followed them! These disciples were not running after the signs and wonders, but they walked in the Truth of God, filled by the Spirit, and so as they went, mobilized, the Kingdom of God manifested among the world. The disciples were on fire for the Lord, for they understood they were called to be the Church and they were called to be the fulfilment of Mark 16 and Matthew 28. In Acts 3 for example we read how a lame man was healed, and in Acts 2 we read in verse 43 how “many wonders and signs were done through the apostles” and how the “Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

Was God’s intention to fill a building when it says adding to the church? No, he was adding followers to the disciples who were willing to preach and teach the Kingdom, thus those who were willing to be also empowered and mobilized! Suddenly the living Church was growing for God is a God of Life, and suddenly the Church was truly alive with hope, expectation, and with purpose and intent! The disciples were following the blueprint of Jesus of making disciples, and so the Church – activated and mobilized, was now making a huge impact in the world. Why? Not because of clever sermons, or interesting services or because of the coffee and cake, no, because they were following Jesus in the Spirit of the Living God and they were not willing to back down, to be slowed down or to compromise. The active Church was empowered to be a powerful testimony of God's grace and mercy!

So when the Lord speaks of returning to the Upper Room, this is therefore a time for the Church to again be ACTIVATED (a return to the Spirit, to the Kingdom, to the Truth) in order for the Church to be mobilized to fulfill the Great Commission! Now is the time to move, to follow God’s blueprint of discipleship, and to be again filled with Kingdom purpose and

intent! Now is the time to be the true active Church, empowered in the fullness of the knowledge of Jesus!

For it is time to again follow and go as commanded by the Lord! Yes, in the Upper Room was the activation and the mobilization by the Spirit, just as Jesus was activated by the Spirit and then mobilized for three plus years in His ministry on earth! How we need as the Church of Spirit-filled disciples to be reactivated in order to go into this world preaching and teaching only the Truth of God and nothing else, for only the Truth of God sets man free in the liberty of the grace of a living God.

But first we need to return to the Upper Room, for we have lost our way. A return to be reactivated and mobilized. But this time, may the Church never look back, but keep going into the world spiritually dying and hunger. May the Church keep moving, keep going in the power of God, so that the world may see the manifestation of His Kingdom, of His Love and the reality of His Glory. Amen.

So for us to return to the Upper Room is really to return as disciples to God and His Kingdom, to reconnect, and to learn again about fellowship. It is for us to learn again about unity as children of God, of caring, and sharing. It is about worshiping and fellowshiping with the Risen Lord. In the Upper Room of our spiritual experience we need to return to the true path of God and once again submit and yield to His presence. How we need to make room again for God, and so dwell and abide in Him. It is a call to return to love, to hope, to the power from on high, and to be a vessel on fire for God. It is a return to the Covenant, to the power of the Blood, a return to our humanity as children of God, and a return to faith beyond doubt and a return to walking in His Glory when beyond the doors the world is dying spiritually.

May we indeed return to the Upper Room of our faith, our relationship and our walk with Jesus – the Lamb who was slain yet returns as the victorious King! May we indeed walk in the indwelling power of the Spirit to walk in the Lord's will, to be sanctified and to know the Truth of the Kingdom. Yes, it is time to return to where the Church truly began, for as the Church we have lost our way for beyond the Upper Room we have strayed from the course and from the Master. May we return with weeping and joy.

Hard Hitting Truth of the Kingdom - The Glorification of God and not man

Matthew 6: 19 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

Matthew 6: 8 “Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. 9 In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. 13 And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

When Jesus stood on the mount as recorded in Matthew 5, the crowd that gathered were anxiously awaiting for a stirring speech about political liberation, about human emancipation and self-motivation. They were expecting Him to rally the troops and stir their faith to take up arms and to rise above their challenges. Instead, Jesus preached what the people hardly wanted to hear – He talked about the hard hitting facts of the Kingdom, such as being meek and mild, poor in spirit, peaceful, pure at heart, loving righteousness and alas, to endure persecution.

Indeed, Jesus did not stand in front of the crowd to win popularity, neither did He come to rouse the crowd into a frenzied state of self-belief and false hope, no, He brought the uncompromising and real facts of the Gospel. This may be hard to hear, but Jesus was not a self-motivation guru, yet we have turned the Gospel into a self-motivational programme. We are living in the times more than ever of 2 Timothy 4: 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. 5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Jesus did not come to teach mankind about worldly ambition, about fame or success or riches or wealth, but He came to teach and show the truth about Himself, about spiritual wealth, about the everlasting importance and life blood of the Kingdom and He came to present the hard reality of how we should live as ambassadors of the Kingdom. Jesus did not compromise with the world. Truth is truth. He spoke about the narrow road, He spoke about how hating one’s brother is just like murder, He spoke about being clean inside and He spoke about the importance of having faith in the Living God and not to have faith in man and earthly treasures.

Jesus’ teaching was hard hitting, but the truth is not always easy to digest, but we need to digest His truth for it is our life and strength. We might wish to ignore the fact that these days the Gospel according to Jesus is being compromised, as we tend to preach a gospel according to Paul or Peter. This gospel will be sprinkled with the teachings of the Son of God

but in the end the truth becomes emerged into a different reality to produce of a gospel of self-motivation and self-glorification. Such a road of self-glorification that takes precedence above the glorification of God borders on humanism and secular enlightenment.

If one reads the Gospel according to Jesus, He hardly spoke about self-motivation, about self-enrichment, about self-appraisal or self-exaltation, but He spoke rather about the Kingdom of heaven, about the heart of the Father, about love, about faith, about hope, about a righteous life and a pure life. Jesus made one thing very clear – it is all about the glorification of the Lord, about His Kingdom and striving towards what is pure and right and true and just.

The hard hitting facts of the Kingdom speaks about forgiveness, about loving one's enemies, about being morally and spiritually clean and pure, about caring, about being a notable representative on earth, about placing your hope and faith in the Lord.

Jesus came to speak about the need to be born again in the Spirit, He came to speak about being a light for the world, He came to speak about serving beyond compromise the one true God, and came to show the way to a blessed life.

At times, we forget He is the Way, Truth and Life. We sometimes seek many ways and truth to get the Kingdom or to find our blessings or to be enriched, but Jesus reminded us that if we truly seek the Kingdom of God we need to abide in Him then He will abide in us (John 15).

That is the hard hitting reality of the Gospel of the Kingdom according to Jesus. He is the foundation of our Salvation and Redemption, nothing else. With Jesus, there is no other way, there is no compromise, and there are no shadow areas of operations.

In the eyes of Jesus, love cannot be compromised.

In the eyes of Jesus, forgiveness is not a choice or an option, but a vital part of how we live.

In the eyes of Jesus, righteousness, faith, truth, hope and being a light is not a path that we should hope to attain but a path we should be walking.

We would love to take the Gospel according to Jesus and add all kinds of flavours and shades to it, but the reality is for Jesus it was all about the spiritual, about the Kingdom, about the lost and about those who do not know love. He spoke about the parable of the sower, but with the intent of speaking about our spiritual state of receiving the Word of God, and since He is the Word that became flesh so He reminded us how the world and the devil wishes to steal our attention.

He spoke against the Pharisees and Sadducees for enslaving the people because of wrong doctrine and because they wanted all the glory. And just so today we need to be so aware that many in the faith still minister with wrong motivations and intentions. He spoke judgment against those who do not adhere to the call of the Lord to seek Him as the one and only Good Shepherd. He spoke about the separation of the wheat and the weed, about the separation of the sheep and the goats and about turbulent end days.

Indeed, the Lord did not spare any punches for He did not come to be popular but to save, and the only way to save someone from the world or from a life of the flesh or from the bondages of hell is to speak the truth. The truth sets you free, and since He is the Truth, He spoke about the Truth that is inside of Him. He is after all the Law fulfilled, and only when we follow Him and His Truth shall we be free. There is no compromise.

Jesus drew criticism for He overthrew the tables in the temple, He came to raise the dead and He came to heal the sick, because the Gospel according to the Son of God is about holiness, purity and life. Jesus is the Saviour of the World, who cures the spiritually and emotionally and physically sick. He is the one and only eternal and only hope of glory in the Living God.

Indeed, Jesus cursed the fig tree, for He made a point that we need to bear fruit because if we bear not fruit then we are leading a hypocritical life of religiosity which is dead according to the letter of the law. Bearing fruit is not an option, neither is loving God with all your heart and neither is loving your fellow man. Bearing fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5) and loving unconditionally is the way of Jesus, and it is the only way. Yet, we live in a world of hate and bitterness and unforgiveness. And such fruits are being carried by Christians and heathens. Surely this cannot be if we truly follow Jesus and nothing else.

Was Jesus a self-motivational guru? Hardly. He did not exalt people, instead He called upon those who followed Him to be humble, to carry their own cross, to deny themselves, to turn their backs on the love of riches, to leave their families for the sake of the Truth, to seek only after the Kingdom of God, to serve no other master, no love the poor and the needy and He came to show us how to love the sinner and our enemy. He called upon us to rather seek the treasures of heaven, to first seek the Kingdom above all else and to reach out a helping hand as Good Samaritans.

Jesus was not a self-motivator, He is God and with Him there is only one Truth and such a Truth is a hard hitting truth that speaks of our moral disposition and our spiritual fortitude. His Truth addresses our stubbornness, our rebellion, our idolatry and our lack of faith. These are hard hitting truths, but Jesus came to save us with the Truth but we need to first embrace the Truth of our ways, even today more than ever. Baptism of water and Spirit was not an option with Jesus. It is vital for we cannot continue to live an old life while we seek after Him. Why then argue with the Lord? He showed the Way, and in that way we need to walk.

When did it become all about us and not about God? When did it become our needs and wants and desires? When did it become about self-motivation and self-exaltation when Jesus calls for laying down our will and doing the will of the Father?

In Mark 4, regarding the parable of the Sower, the Lord reminded the disciples that the true mysteries of heaven can only be known for those who truly walk with God, for He says to those who are 'outside' the truth: ' Seeing they may see and not perceive, And hearing they may hear and not understand; Lest they should turn, And their sins be forgiven them.'" The

reality is sin is sin, hate is hate and the world and the devil seeks for us to move away from the truths and mysteries of God.

Only in Him is Life and Light – there is no other source. We are not the source of light or life if we abide not in Him. When did it become about our truth and way when Jesus is the Truth and Way? When did it become about our perceptions of sin and justice and righteousness and pure living when it is all about God's stand upon these issues? Indeed, Jesus came to give the hard hitting facts of the Gospel, and not about self-empowerment. Truly, we are only empowered in Christ and never in ourselves, and we are only enriched in the Spirit and not in ourselves, and we are only wise in the wisdom of the Father.

How we need to return to the teachings and commandments of Jesus, for the Kingdom of God is about serving, about becoming less so that God becomes more and it is about those who still do not know that eternity is not a myth but a reality.

Truth is that the Cross is a reality, His Resurrection is a reality, the Holy Spirit is a reality, but just so seeking after the world and other gods leads us further away from the Presence of the Lord.

The reality is that once we do abide in the sanctification and holiness of God, then indeed we are blessed by all spiritual blessings and we will indeed walk as children of God protected and provided by His hand to His will and glory. When we pray, let us pray that His will be done for it is not about our will but about His Kingdom and His Glory.

Entering the Kingdom – A price of sacrifice

Mark 10: 24The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! 25It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." 26The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?" 27Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God." 28Peter said to him, "We have left everything to follow you!" 29"I tell you the truth," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel 30will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life. 31But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

Let us pause and contemplate how Jesus placed emphasis on how difficult it really is to enter the Kingdom of God – for this is not a trivial matter but one that pertains to our eternal life. Indeed, it is by faith that we are saved and not by good deeds. And for those who profess to have faith are those who should also regard God as their greatest treasure in life.

We also know that the greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart, strength and with our mind. Nothing else therefore should take God's place in our life. Jesus illustrated the absolute importance of pursuing and following God in such a matter, therefore staying true to the greatest commandment, by touching on the sensitive issue regarding earthly pursuit of wants and needs. Jesus highlighted how easily the treasures of this world and our pursuit of the temporary can entangle us so that in the end we lose sight of God and He becomes devalued in our life.

And this is a serious, even a grievous, spiritual error. In Mark 10, Jesus addressed the issue of being saved by strangely enough placing emphasis on following the Ten Commandments. Jesus first and foremost reminds us that if we truly value God and we truly value Him above else, then we will follow Him and do as He has commanded. And we cannot do this out of our strength, but only in the grace and mercy of the Spirit by which all things are possible.

Jesus therefore issued a first challenge to the disciples that if they truly love Him then they will live according to His teaching. The disciples reluctantly agreed but then Jesus issued a second challenge by showing them that they should harbour no love for anything in this world that is greater than their love for God. And by such teachings Jesus shook the value system of the disciples when He pointed out that it will be hard for them to enter the Kingdom of God if they held onto such a love for earthly treasures. Was Jesus condemning wealth? No. Jesus, being the Living Lord, made a point 2000 years, with a foresight into our days, how our love for such treasures can entangle us so that our highest priority becomes not the pursuit of a spiritual relationship with God but a physical gratification born out of the world.

We may insist that such a search for earthly treasure does not entangle our priorities. Job, who had great wealth, was challenged on his love for the Lord when all he had taken was

shaken to the core. What will happen if the Lord removes all our treasures? Will we stand with God or will we cry aloud that we are doomed?

Jesus issued a third challenge to His disciples by making the point clear that entering the Kingdom is not so simple for believing entails a committed heart of loving and serving. He therefore stressed His point that to enter the Kingdom requires obedience, faithfulness and purity.

The third challenge is wrapped up in these words: "I tell you the truth," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life.

The disciples could stomach the thought of following the commandments. They were however less enthusiastic about seeking the treasures of God above the treasures of life. But now, Jesus strikes at the very essence of it all – for if they truly love Him then nothing but nothing, not even family or loved ones should steal their love for the Living Lord.

We today also tend to think it is easy to enter the Kingdom of God. Jesus highlighted the fact this is not so – yes, we have to believe, but to believe is to sacrifice and to become less so that God becomes more. No easy task but a rewarding one – for now and in heaven.

Our relationship with the Lord requires an unwavering determination to seek Him above all else. It requires obedience, sacrifice and a faithfulness that is not luke-warm but ablaze all day and all week. It requires living to please Him above all and to seek Him above all and to love Him above all. It requires our deeds and actions to speak aloud of His glory.

We may speculate how we will react if we were in Job's sandals, but we can't really. But God was making a point – if we have nothing, not even our health, is God still our greatest treasure and love? Jesus made the point that when everything goes wrong and the world hates us, will we still stand with God or we surrender?

Indeed, to enter the Kingdom is not easy. The faithful enter, but the faithful stays true to the ancient ways of the Living Lord. And indeed God challenges us daily and right now. How much do we love Him? Do we love Him above all else?

For those who follow Him will be rewarded by gaining the treasures of heaven – treasures that cannot wither and fade away.

And what greater reward remains than to know God and for He to know us?

1 Timothy 6:18-20: 18Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

Preaching the sound doctrine and instruction of the Kingdom

More than ever, we need to stand for sound doctrine, and contend for the faith and contend for the Truth, for apostasy and heresy is rife in the churches.

It says in Galatians 1: 6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

Take note of how Paul writes that even if an angel speaks a different Gospel you need to be aware. This reminds of 1 Timothy 4: Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons ... You see, Paul warned many will be deceived by spiritual entities, especially those of demonic nature who can even appear to be an angel.

The reality is that we live in a time where the very truth of the Lord has been totally obscured, and where the gospel of the Lord has been twisted, distorted and manipulated for self-gain. Yet in his epistle Paul warns that anyone who preaches a different gospel will be “accursed”. After all, all that we do is either about life or death. By preaching the Gospel of Jesus, we speak life. By speaking any other Gospel, we speak death. It is that simple. It is not merely about false doctrines and false teachers, but it all boils down to life and death. Do we speak life or do we speak death? Do we speak Kingdom or the things of the world? And so many we advocate the Word of Faith Movement speak not the Gospel of the Lord, and therefore speak death, and we must be reminded that Paul says they shall then be accursed.

It is written in 2 John 1: 7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. 8 Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full reward. 9 Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; 11 for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.

Here John makes it very clear the importance of abiding in the doctrine of Christ, therefore the Truth of the Kingdom. He even warns that those who agree with such a doctrine “shares in his evil deeds”. The Scripture is also translated as a partaker, and partaker speaks of fellowship. Therefore if we follow and embrace false doctrines we become partakers of such blasphemy and deception. Like Galatians 1, 2 John 1 sounds an urgent warning that we must be so aware to speak the Truth, therefore speak Life, lest we speak Death and become partakers of Death.

Read also what it says in Romans 16: 17 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. 18 For

those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

Here we again read about those who speak a different Gospel DO NOT serve the Lord Jesus. These are indeed very serious words, but teachers and preachers speaking false word is still being accepted within the Church and are allowed to stand on the pulpit to speak to hundreds, if not thousands or if not more. Paul warns us that those who cause divisions and offenses, which come because of a different Gospel being taught, must be AVOIDED. After all, they act to serve their own belly, meaning they are only serving an agenda of own need, want and desire.

Remember what it says in 2 John? Verse 9 Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God ...

Therefore those who pervert the Gospel of our Lord Jesus according to Paul and John do not have God, and neither are they serving the Lord. Yet, throughout the world those who preach clearly a false Gospel are being tolerated, welcomed and are allowed to become a major influence.

Erroneous misinterpretations of 'judge not' and 'touch not my anointed' have caused those who are preaching the false Gospel to be allowed on the pulpit instead of being completely avoided. We are after all called to be watchmen, testing what is being spoken against the Scriptures. Sure, we are not here to judge the person's salvation, but surely if a false doctrine is being preached then such a gospel must be exposed.

Let us read Galatians 2: 11 Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; 12 for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. 13 And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. 14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? 15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, 16 knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

Paul corrected Peter face to face! This is Peter who walked with the Lord Jesus. Yet he was in error and in danger of leading others astray. So Paul corrected him based on the danger of not walking in the truth. So much for 'judge not' and 'touch not my anointed'! In Acts 15 we also read for example how Paul and Barnabas addressed the apostles and elders over a dispute regarding physical circumcision. We need to correct where there is error, just as Jesus corrected the Pharisees and Sadducees in Mathew 23. And such correction must always be done in the Holy Spirit, therefore in wisdom and love.

In 1 Timothy 6 we read: 20 O Timothy, guard and keep the deposit entrusted [to you]! Turn away from the irreverent babble and godless chatter, with the vain and empty and worldly phrases, and the subtleties and the contradictions in what is falsely called knowledge and spiritual illumination. Here Paul again warns Timothy to turn away from the babble and godless chatter that appears to spiritual illumination and knowledge. Reality is, a lot of preaching and teachings in churches these days are not sound doctrine, but is merely babble and godless chatter that contradicts the true Gospel of our Lord Jesus.

Of course, we can also read 2 Peter 2, the Book of Jude and 2 Timothy 3 and 4 regarding the dangers of false teachers and those who preach myths and fables instead of sound doctrine.

And yet, despite all the warnings, the church these days is infested with men and women who are allowed to continue with godless chatter without rebuke or correction. In times of apostasy, it has become critical for us to tame the tongue, to speak the Truth of the Lord, to walk in such truth and to adhere to such truth.

In Malachi 2 we read of this stern warning regarding the importance of preserving God's pure knowledge and instruction on one's lips (therefore what you speak): 4 And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the Lord of hosts. 5 My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. 6 The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. 7 For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. 8 But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts.

Take note of the following verses: 6 True instruction was in his mouth and nothing false was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many from sin. 7 "For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, because he is the messenger of the LORD Almighty and people seek instruction from his mouth.

Now we may say Malachi 2 implies to the Levi's – the priesthood. But take note of 1 Peter 2: 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 ...

Under the Blood of the Lamb, we ALL who believe enter into priesthood, and we all are now priests unto the sight of the Lord. We are ALL representatives of the New Covenant, called to bring a lost and broken world back to our Lord Jesus. We can all enter into the Lord's Presence and build His Kingdom on earth. Just as the Levi's stood in Covenant with the Lord, so we stand in Covenant with the Lord as His priests, even though we are also His disciples. It doesn't matter if we are young or old, educated or not educated, women or men, we are the priesthood by the Blood of the Lamb.

It says in Revelations 1 (NIV): To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, 6 and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. The KJV says it as follows: To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, 6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Paul confirms the role of the priests – thus all disciples – in 2 Corinthians 3: 6: He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant. No matter our calling or ordination, we are all priests of the Lord, and we as the Body of the Lord are the kingdom of priests on earth called to drive back darkness.

So according to Malachi 2, the Lord expected of the priests (thus the disciples of God under the New Covenant) the following:

- 1) The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips
- 2) He walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.
- 3) For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts

The Amplified Bible version says it as follows: 6 True instruction was in Levi's mouth and injustice was not found on his lips. He walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many from wickedness. 7 For the lips of the priest should guard and preserve knowledge [of My law], and the people should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. 8 But as for you [priests], you have turned from the way and you have caused many to stumble by your instruction [in the law].

We therefore understand that it was of vital importance for the priests to preserve the knowledge of the Lord, to speak the true instruction of the Lord and to turn people away from iniquity by avoiding walking or speaking injustice. The KJV refers primarily to the Law of the Lord that was to be on the lips of the priests. Under the New Covenant, we do not adhere to the strict 613 Laws of Moses, but the Lord God is still a Lord of Law and the entire Scripture and the teachings and commandments of Jesus is the Law of the Lord. So we read in "John 1: In the beginning [before all time] was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God, and [the Word was God Himself. 2 He was [continually existing] in the beginning [co-eternally] with God." The Word of God is the Law of God, for in Jesus who is the Word is the entire Law fulfilled (Matthew 5:17).

To preserve speaks about keeping alive or in existence; or in other words, to keep safe from harm or injury, to protect or spare. So we all as believers of the Lord are called to keep alive the knowledge of the Lord, His Truth and instruction, and we must keep such truth safe from harm. And such harm comes from the mouth of the serpent, from the dark agenda of the world and from everything that is corrupt, immoral, unholy and impure.

Paul writes to Timothy in 1 Timothy 4: 16 Pay close attention to yourself [concentrate on your personal development] and to your teaching; persevere in these things [hold to them], for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you. To

persevere speaks about continuing in a course of action even in the face of difficulty or with little or no indication of success. So Paul admonished and encouraged Timothy to 1) pay close attention to himself, meaning guarding his heart and mind and also his conduct and speech 2) pay close attention to his teaching. He must persevere with such a mindset as to keep this course of action – safeguarding the truth from harm.

Paul also said to Timothy the following in 1 Timothy 4:12: Let no one look down on [you because of] your youth, but be an example and set a pattern for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in [moral] purity. Here Paul speaks about a pattern of speech, and how this should align with Timothy's conduct and even the love and faith and purity he portrays. Indeed, such a pattern of speech should be words that glorify the Lord, that are wholesome, pure and full of truth. Again, this is the call of the priest according to Malachi 2, and the call for all those who are part of the priesthood.

Take also note of the following Scripture (Amplified Version) regarding the manner of our speech, considering according to Malachi 2 the purity of knowledge and instruction must be on our lips.

Ephesians 4:29 Do not let unwholesome [foul, profane, worthless, vulgar] words ever come out of your mouth, but only such speech as is good for building up others, according to the need and the occasion, so that it will be a blessing to those who hear [you speak].

Colossians 4:6 Let your speech at all times be gracious and pleasant, seasoned with salt, so that you will know how to answer each one [who questions you].

Ephesians 4:15 But speaking the truth in love [in all things—both our speech and our lives expressing His truth], let us grow up in all things into Him [following His example] who is the Head—Christ.

Peter wrote the following in 1 Peter 2:1 [As Newborn Babies] So put aside every trace of malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander and hateful speech.

Upon the lips of the priests – thus the disciple under the New Covenant for we all represent His Kingdom on earth – there should be therefore no hateful speech or unwholesome words. We should only speak words that edify, exhort, that glorify the Lord, that is a blessing and that is truthful. Yet, as we will see, there is also the occasion that we must rebuke, correct and reproof when the knowledge and the truth of the Lord comes under harm.

So in Malachi 2 the Lord said that the priests had turned away from Him because true instruction was no longer on their lips and they had not preserved knowledge and not kept people from iniquity. The reality is that the expectation for God's priesthood has never changed. We as priests are called to also continually and habitually to preserve the purity of His Knowledge (meaning proclaiming the whole truth of His Gospel and the Scriptures), and the instruction of His Way, His Truth and His Kingdom should be found on our lips.

Contemplate Jeremiah 6 v 16: Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.

But they said, We will not walk therein. This world more than ever is at a crossroad. The one path leads deeper into apostasy and spiritual darkness and the other towards Jesus, who is the Way, Truth and Life. We as the ministers of the New Covenant are called to show people the Way, therefore instruct them in what path to follow. Sadly, so many within the fold of the church still lead people astray - thus down the wide road instead of the narrow way - for they have themselves lost the way, and they themselves have issued instructions that only exalt and benefit the self.

Indeed, as the Scriptures says the Lord's people perish because of a lack of knowledge. This is worrying, because the purity of the knowledge should be on the lips of the priests. Where have we then gone so wrong? Job 28:28 reminds us 'the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding'. Wisdom is nothing more than the application of godly instruction and knowledge. To fear the Lord is to love Him, to obey Him and to submit to Him. Then we shall walk in true knowledge to His Glory and we shall be able to instruct a broken world how to find the way to Jesus.

Listen to what Paul say in 1 Thessalonians 4: Living to Please God: 4 As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. Paul was therefore constantly instructing believers how to live, because this is the mandate and purpose of the priesthood! We are supposed to be showing how to lead a godly and pure life according to Colossians 3 and Ephesians 4 and 5.

Take note of Colossians 2: 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.

And also Ephesians 5: 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. 3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

God calls His servants to walk in purity, to speak in purity and to act in purity. We must guard against being spoiled by traditions of man, which is passed down from generation to generation through speech and conduct. To be spoiled means to become infested and infected by all things that are false and deceitful, for we are called to walk in the purity of the Lord and for such purity to be on our lips. This reminds of Galatians 5 verse 1: It was for this freedom that Christ set us free [completely liberating us]; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery [which you once removed]. Yes, we are been set free, so that us move and operate and speak in the liberty of the Sprit!

Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 14: 26 What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or

an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up. Indeed, Paul describes here the purity of knowledge and instruction that must be found on the lips of the priesthood!

If we consider Malachi 2, is this happening in our churches these days? Can we really say that the pure knowledge and instruction of God's Truth and Word is upon the priesthood of God? After all, if we look at all the false teachings that abound in the church then this is surely not the case. Are we leading people away from iniquity by what we speak or are we leading towards iniquity? And remember, iniquity implies a sin that we condone or advocate by not turning away from it or by repenting for our actions. Unrepented sin becomes iniquity.

Take note of what Peter writes in 2 Peter 2: False Teachers and Their Destruction: 2 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. 2 Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. 3 In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping. 4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them in chains of darkness to be held for judgment; 5 if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; 6 if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; 7 and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the depraved conduct of the lawless 8 (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)— 9 if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment. 10 This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the flesh and despise authority. Bold and arrogant, they are not afraid to heap abuse on celestial beings; 11 yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not heap abuse on such beings when bringing judgment on them from the Lord. 12 But these people blaspheme in matters they do not understand.

These false workers blaspheme, they introduce destructive heresies, and they bring the WAY into disrepute. Peter is warning about those working within the church system, yet it is clear by his warning that they do not abide by the instruction of Malachi 2. Where the priesthood is supposed to be turning away people from iniquity, we find that they do exactly the opposite for they lead people further down a path of deception. You find actions highlighted by Jesus in the seven woes of Matthew 23 when addressing the Sadducees and Pharisees, who were the embodiment of the religious system. And it says in verse 12: But these people blaspheme in matters they do not understand. This therefore speaks of a lack of knowledge and understanding, which places a question mark behind their relationship with the Lord.

For remember Matthew 7, those ‘disciples’ who came to the Lord to boast about the work they have done? We read in verse 23 of Jesus’ words: “And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity”. You see, a true servant of God, therefore one of the priesthood, does not work iniquity by his lips or actions, but they turn others away from wickedness and deceit. So the Lord showed them away for they were being deceptive at heart.

We need to think therefore long and hard about Malachi 2, and consider what is on our lips. Is it truly the entire truth of God? Is it wholesome, pure, noble, and truthful and is what we say constantly influenced by the Spirit of the Lord, or is it full of anger, bitterness, deceit, lies, wickedness and heresy? Can people truly find the instruction on our lips, or do they find mere fables, myths, lies and deception? Do we edify, build up and instruct, or do we spread lies, break down and destroy with our lips?

How the Lord calls for His servants to once again have true instruction in their mouth, with nothing false found on their lips! How the Lord is again looking for people who will walk with Him in peace and uprightness, turning many from sin. As it says in ‘Matthew 6: 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you’.

Indeed, as verse seven of Malachi 2 says: “For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, because he is the messenger of the LORD Almighty and people seek instruction from his mouth.”

It needs to be impressed on our spirit that we cannot speak in any “truth” which is not the Truth of God, for then we speak falseness, for we then speak in the flesh or we speak worldly ‘truths’ and ideas. Or even worse, we speak the lies of the serpent (therefore speak by a forked tongue), for we must keep 1 Timothy 4 in mind: But the [Holy] Spirit explicitly and unmistakably declares that in later times some will turn away from the faith, paying attention instead to deceitful and seductive spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 [misled] by the hypocrisy of liars whose consciences are seared as with a branding iron [leaving them incapable of ethical functioning]

We live in a world of many ‘truths’ and many people proclaiming to be wise. We live in a world where many are instructing people how to live, if it be religious leaders, or academics, or politicians or philosophers or even scientists, yet such instructions if not grounded upon Jesus and His Way and if such instruction comes not from the Holy Spirit then such instruction and knowledge is mere foolishness designed to enslave and not liberate. For only in the Spirit of the Lord do we find true liberty, and only the truth of the Lord according to John sets us free. Today, masses of people are being instructed on what is right and wrong by celebrities who pursue their own secular, humanistic and even diabolical agendas of self-empowerment and enrichment.

In the midst of this ‘noise’ of worldly instruction and imparting of so-called truths, God is calling for His children to stand up and to speak out. In the midst of all this deception, lies and wickedness, even within churches, the true believers are called to be no longer silent

but to declare, pronounce and contend for the truth of the eternal Kingdom. If the true believers fail to provide pure instruction and impart pure truth and knowledge, then the world will continue to follow the Pipe Piper down the path of spiritual impoverishment, decay and darkness.

Of this foolish wisdom we see in the world today Paul writes the following in 1 Corinthians 1: 19 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. 22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: 23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, 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. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 26 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 ...

Right throughout Scriptures we find the importance of receiving sound instruction from the Lord. Moses led the people for 40 years based on the instructions of God. The 613 Laws of Moses were written down as instructions for godly living as received from the Lord directly. Noah built an ark based on the specific instructions of the Lord. Solomon build the palace along with the tabernacle as the Lord guided. And just so the early apostles and disciples constantly provided instruction on how we should lead godly lives, on how a marriage should function and so on.

More than ever this world is in great need for instruction to prevent man's own destruction. And then we are talking about godly instruction, thus the wisdom of the Kingdom. We are talking about instruction received directly from God that will impact every facet of our lives and society, be it politics, business, the media, the arts and education. And such instruction should rest upon the lips of the children of God.

Now we read in 2 Timothy 4: 2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. 5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

The Amplified Bible version reads as follows: preach the word [as an official messenger]; be ready when the time is right and even when it is not [keep your sense of urgency, whether the opportunity seems favorable or unfavorable, whether convenient or inconvenient, whether welcome or unwelcome]; correct [those who err in doctrine or behavior], warn

[those who sin], exhort and encourage [those who are growing toward spiritual maturity], with inexhaustible patience and [faithful] teaching. 3 For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine and accurate instruction [that challenges them with God's truth]; but wanting to have their ears tickled [with something pleasing], they will accumulate for themselves [many] teachers [one after another, chosen] to satisfy their own desires and to support the errors they hold, 4 and will turn their ears away from the truth and will wander off into myths and man-made fictions [and will accept the unacceptable]. 5 But as for you, be clear-headed in every situation [stay calm and cool and steady], endure every hardship [without flinching], do the work of an evangelist, fulfill [the duties of] your ministry.

So here we find the Apostle Paul urging and admonishing young Timothy to preach the Word of God, and to fight for the Truth and to uphold the Truth even if means to reprove, warn, rebuke and exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. Paul warned Timothy that many will turn away from the Truth and that the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine and accurate instruction [that challenges them with God's truth]; but wanting to have their ears tickled [with something pleasing].

Paul was therefore affirming the reality of Malachi 2. For God called the priest to walk in righteousness, in peace and in truth (therefore walking in the way of Jesus), preserving the knowledge and the instruction of the Lord. So here we find Paul saying to Timothy to do exactly that – he urged Timothy to preach the Word, therefore preach the Truth, and to stand for that Truth because this will then fulfil his duty as a priest unto the Lord!

Paul also wrote in 2 Timothy 3: 6 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. So how do we keep the pure knowledge and instruction upon our lips? By speaking and proclaiming the purity and truth of the Scripture, which is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. The Scripture is the plumb line by which all word is measured, and if it does not measure up, then the Scripture shall correct, reproof and instruct.

We have fallen in a time where, if we rebuke or reproof or correct those within the church for fallacies or speaking deception, than it is said one is being judgemental. This is not what Paul wrote, because he understood the role of the priest. We are encouraged to measure all deception, lies and myths against the Scripture, and if found lacking, wanting or in error, by Scripture it shall be rebuked or corrected! Why? Because the priests – therefore all believers – should preserve the knowledge and instruction of the Lord!

To preserve echoes the words of Jude who wrote: 3 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. We must earnestly contend for the truth of the Lord, for the purity of knowledge and the purity of His instruction. After all, it has been abundantly made clear in Scriptures many WITHIN THE CHURCH – therefore priests – would turn away from sound doctrine (purity of

knowledge and instruction) and will turn to fables and myths. We are finding this apostasy becoming more intensive and widespread in the church, because the purity of knowledge and instruction is no longer found on the lips of the priests.

Paul wrote in Galatians 1: 6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

Paul makes it clear if anyone preaches any other Gospel except the Truth of Jesus they are accursed. So what they will SPEAK is a curse, because they are accursed. So what is found on their lips is no the purity of the knowledge or instruction but a curse that will lead people away from the truth of the Lord. They lead people then down the path of iniquity. Right throughout Scriptures it is evident that we should be careful of what is on our lips, for the Lord shall not tolerate our lies, wickedness, curses, deception and falsehoods.

We read in Isaiah 6 (KJV): Isaiah's Commission: 5 Then said I, 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. 6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: 7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Isaiah saw himself unclean because he had unclean lips! So he cried out to God who then came to refine his lips by fire. Then we read something which is eye opening: Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

Isaiah deemed himself to be rid of iniquity because his lips were no longer unclean. This is how serious it was deemed to be one of unclean lips, speaking falsehoods, wickedness and lies. Isaiah took it to the edge by saying that iniquity was on his lips, instead of the purity of the knowledge and the instruction of the Lord. Consider Isaiah 59 Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: 2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. 3 For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. Again, Isaiah 59 connects iniquity with lips that have spoken lies and a deceitful tongue.

Therefore, what is on our lips as the church (the holy priesthood)? Is it the knowledge and the purity of His Word, or iniquity? If we think that we as priests can continue to serve the Lord with unclean lips we need to think again. Consider Revelations 21: 27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life and also Revelations 22 15: For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

So those who will find themselves outside the New Jerusalem are those who 'maketh a lie', or at least those who deal in falsehoods. Very serious indeed, It says in Revelations 22: 7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. To 'keepeth the sayings' is nothing more than to contend for the faith, and to stand for sound doctrine and the purity of knowledge and instruction.

Indeed, Isaiah was aware of his impure lips, but once he was touched by the Lord, he was anointed to speak God's truth as a prophet! We need the touch of the Lord and to walk in the fear of the Lord to be His pure messengers. Right throughout Scriptures it is clear that unclean lips of any form of falsehood or deception will be tolerated. And this has extended to our day and age with all the false doctrines and teachings, coupled with believers engaging in rumours and spreading lies or false propaganda that causes strife and division.

Paul writes in 2 Timothy 2 regarding Approved and Disapproved Workers: 15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 16 But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. 17 And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, 18 who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some. 19 Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity." 24 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, 25 in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, 26 and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

If we therefore read 2 Timothy 2, it is clear that a workers approved by the Lord is the one who keeps his lips pure and who speaks the knowledge and instruction of the Lord, instead of engaging in babbling, quarrelling and dividing the truth. Paul makes mention of in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, 26 and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will. This again speaks of instruction, and it speaks of standing for sound doctrine and how the Scriptures are the plumb line of Truth.

It says in Proverbs 6 that there are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him and that one of them is a lying tongue. As the priests of the Lord, be it servants, prophets, evangelists or preachers or teachers, we need to speak the purity of the Word, and not deception, lies, wickedness or any other kind of deception.

Also consider the following Scriptures:

Psalm 12:3 The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things:

Psalm 34:13 Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

Psalm 120:2 Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.

Psalm 141:3 Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.

Proverbs 5: 5 My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding:

Proverbs 8:7 For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips.

Proverbs 10:13 In the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found: but a rod is for the back of him that is void of understanding.

Proverbs 18:7 A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.

Proverbs 52 That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge.

Romans 3: 10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:

James warned of the power of the tongue in James 3: See how great a forest a little fire kindles! 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. 7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. 8 But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. 10 Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. 11 Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? 12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

Remember the Great Commission? Matthew 28: 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Yes, we are called as disciples to TEACH others in the way of the Lord. This again implies instruction, and sharing knowledge to bring others into spiritual maturity.

Now, considering the importance of a priesthood that should be operating with clean lips, consider what happened on the day of the Pentecost. It says in Acts 2: When the Day of Pentecost had 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 the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

On the day of Pentecost, the gift of languages and of tongues was given. Why? So that the people [priests] would fulfil the role of the priesthood who speaks only the Truth and purity of God and His instruction and knowledge! Of all the things that could have happened on that day, the first thing that happened is that the Lord empowered the new priesthood under the Covenant with Blood with the outpouring of the Spirit and the Lord cleansed their lips! For God it was important that the new priesthood should stay true to Malachi 2, which was to preserve the knowledge and instruction and not walk in iniquity.

What better to achieve this by allowing someone to speak purely in the Spirit, if it be a heavenly language or an early yet unknown language! On that day, no longer did the disciples speak with a tongue tainted by religion or tradition or by the flesh or the devil, but they spoke of the purity of knowledge and instruction! Yes, as God purified Isaiah with fire from his unclean lips and iniquity, so did God purify the priesthood with fire and their tongues (unclean lips)!

Nebuchadnezzar, the 'great' king of Babylon, was a man who served his god and spoke impure words for he clung to his religion and tradition. Yet, God humbled him, forcing the king to live like an animal for seven years. At the end of his time, we read the following in Daniel 4: 34 At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. 35 All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?" 36 At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honor and splendor were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored to my throne and became even greater than before. 37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.

What now came from the mouth of the king were pure words of praise and worship unto the King of kings! How the Church again needs such a humbling experience, so that the mouth of the Church may speak one again the pure instruction and wisdom of the Lord!

We see in the Old Testament how many times the Lord spoke against false prophecies. For example Ezekiel 13: False Prophets Condemned: 13 The word of the LORD came to me: 2 "Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who are now prophesying. Say to those who prophesy out of their own imagination: 'Hear the word of the LORD! 3 This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing! 4 Your prophets, Israel, are like jackals among ruins. 5 You have not gone up to the breaches in the wall to repair it for the people of Israel so that it will stand firm in the battle on the day of the LORD. 6 Their visions are false and their divinations a lie. Even though the LORD has not sent them, they say, "The LORD declares," and expect him to fulfill their words. 7 Have you not seen false visions and uttered lying divinations when you say, "The LORD declares," though I have not spoken? 8 "Therefore this is what the

Sovereign LORD says: Because of your false words and lying visions, I am against you, declares the Sovereign LORD. 9 My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations. They will not belong to the council of my people or be listed in the records of Israel, nor will they enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Sovereign LORD. 10 “Because they lead my people astray, saying, “Peace,” when there is no peace, and because, when a flimsy wall is built, they cover it with whitewash, 11 therefore tell those who cover it with whitewash that it is going to fall. Rain will come in torrents, and I will send hailstones hurtling down, and violent winds will burst forth. 12 When the wall collapses, will people not ask you, “Where is the whitewash you covered it with?”

The Lord has always and is still is against those who spread false word in the form of prophecy or teachings, or those who even twist the Word even how slightly. Why? Because what is then found on their lips is iniquity, and not the purity of knowledge and instruction. A false teaching or prophetic word certainly does not add to any sound instruction or knowledge.

We see especially how the workers of iniquity speak against God and against His Truth if we consider 1 Timothy 4: 4 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; 5 for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. 6 If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed. 7 But reject profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. 8 For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. 12 Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 13 Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

God calls us therefore to walk in truth, walk in holiness and let our lips speak of His Glory and Kingdom. This is summed up in Psalm 1: 1 Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, 2 but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. 3 That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither - whatever they do prospers.

Listen to the words of Proverbs 3: My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: 2 For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. 3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: 4 So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man. 5 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. 7 Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil. Here again it speaks of abiding in the Word of God,

obeying the Lord, and submitting to His wisdom and understanding (knowledge and instruction).

Proverbs 3 sums up the life of those who follow the Lord for it says in Malachi 2: 5 My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. God desires for those of the priesthood to lead a life of peace, but then we must walk in the fear of the Lord. This is also the instruction of Proverbs 3.

Those who walk with the Lord will speak the Truth of the Lord, for they walk in His Wisdom and Truth. Paul warned those who rebel against God's Truth in Romans 1: 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

It therefore remains clear the importance of walking with clean lips and guarding against those with unclean lips. 1 Timothy 6: 3 If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, 4 he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, 5 useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself. 6 Now godliness with contentment is great gain.

And also 2 Timothy 2: 23 But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. 24 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, 25 in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, 26 and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

Let us read what Jesus says in Mark 7: 6 He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 7 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'" 8 For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men -the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do." 20 And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within and defile a man." Here the Lord demonstrates the

dangers of speaking something which is not the purity of knowledge or truth, for in the end they speak one thing but their hearts betrayed a different truth. Let us remember, what comes from the mouth of the serpent is lies and corruption.

It says of the beast out of the sea in Revelations 13: 5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. 6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

The beast, which is the last great civil order of the devil, will indeed be SPEAKING, or in other words, declaring the lies and deception of the devil. And such lies are packaged in modern day philosophies, ideologies, religions and traditions. The devil after all is the father of lies, so surely God's children cannot walk in falseness or deception or iniquity. Our Father in Heaven calls us to speak only His Truth to His Glory.

We need to understand the only way we can truly walk in the purity of the knowledge and instruction, and to lead others away from iniquity is to be led by the Holy Spirit.

After all, it says in John 16 the following: 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. 8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. 12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

So the Spirit has been poured out so that we can be guided in all truth (knowledge and instruction), and to lead us in righteousness and to convict us of our sins. Again, according to Malachi 2, this is how a priest of the Lord should walk – as one who walks all truth, in righteousness and in peace (indeed, blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God – Matthew 7).

When Paul ministered, it was in the power of the Holy Spirit and not in the flesh, for when we speak the truth of God we share His instruction. 1 Corinthians 2: 4 My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, 5 so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power. 6 We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. 7 No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. 8 None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived - the things God has prepared for those who love him - 10 these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 11 For who knows a person's thoughts except their

own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. 13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. 14 The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. 15 The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, 16 for, "Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ. 6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. 8 See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.

Let us also take note of the writing of Paul in Galatians 5: 16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

It is only by the Holy Spirit that we truly walk as God's disciples and to be part of the priesthood that ministers the Covenant. The Church was born on the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit of the Lord came down and refined and purified, first and foremost the lips and the tongue of the disciples. Let us therefore remain humble and keep building on the foundation of Jesus BY preaching and teaching His Truth, His Word and His Wisdom as instructed in the Great Commission. For when we speak our own truths and lies, we built upon our own foundations and we construct our own kingdoms.

We are here as His servants to speak His pure instruction, not ours, to teach His Truth, not ours, and to declare His Way, and not ours. Let our lips then be pure and let our hearts be clean as we seek Him in all ways so that with our lips we may glorify and exalt Him.

Let us be constantly be led by the Holy Spirit, and let us be instructed by Him in all that we do, say and think. 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. More than ever we need to be taught again by the Spirit of the living Lord, and we need to be constantly reminded of His instruction and His teachings, so that we may remain pure in knowledge and truth and that we may guard ourselves against apostasy. It is written in 1 John 2: 27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught

you, ye shall abide in him. 28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

Yes, the anointing of the Spirit of the Lord must primarily teach and instruct us in godly living and empower us in service to the Lord. We must just abide in the Lord (John 15) and be led by the Spirit and not the dictates of the flesh (Romans 8).

Of the Holy Spirit resting upon the disciples of the Lord – thus all who believe and are worshippers in Spirit and Truth - it says in Isaiah 11: A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. 2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him - the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD -3 and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.

Only when we walk in the Holy Spirit can we walk in Truth and therefore speak and teach understanding and knowledge. Only when we walk in the counsel of the Lord and in His fear by the Spirit, will the Truth of the Kingdom of Heaven rest upon our lips, and no lies or deceit.

As the priesthood of the Lord, we can no longer condone the immorality in the church and in the world. We can no longer advocate spiritual idolatry, adulatory and fornication. Such things have led to the ministry of Ichabod, where God is absent from such a venture. We can no longer draw into our world, be demilitarised and become inactive. We can no longer stand back and watch as the spirit of this world destroys its children. No longer can we watch just as the Israelites sat back in Babylon, enjoying the comfort, the luxury and the good times. It is time to make a stand, to pray, to guard the spiritual gates and to be vigilant on the towers.

We must not be afraid to take on the corruption, immorality, depravity and the spiritual idolatry of all things. We need to speak out and we need to make our voices known. We need to speak God's truth, His instruction and walk in His wisdom.

In 1 Kings 18 we read of the confrontation between Elijah and the false prophets on Mount Carmel. During this confrontation God's power and statement of His divinity was on display for all to see who were gathered. Fire fell from heaven to consume the prophet's water soaked burnt offering. What we, however, should notice is that even before the display of power Elijah gave the people a choice – to serve Baal or to choose God. And Elijah made a pertinent point that there is a choice and that a choice should be made. The prophet was insistent that the people couldn't be indecisive and double minded. And when he pressed for that decision, we read a shocking statement in verse 21: And the people answered him not a word. In some translations it says the people said nothing.

Yes, there was a silence. There was silence because the people didn't want to make a choice. There was a silence because they were too afraid to make up their minds. They rather wanted to remain indecisive. But indecisiveness wasn't good enough on that day. And to prove a point that there is only one God and that Baal is but a god of no worth or life, the Lord poured forth holy fire from heaven. The fire shattered the silence. The fire was the

cry from heaven that drowned the silence. On Mount Carmel we find a silent generation who was not willing to act, to speak or to decide. God had to thus act in order to bring them out of their paralytic state of doubt and uncertainty.

One fears that today we are also experiencing such a silencing among the true priesthood. Yet we are called not be silent, but to preach the Word, and by the Word to rebuke, correct and exhort! And this silencing extends not only to a point of making a decision to follow and to serve with passion and zeal, but it is also a question of expressing one's faith. To be a follower of the Lord requires not silence – it calls for prayer, for speaking His truth, for declaring His truth, standing up for His truth, telling all the Good News (Matthew 28:28).

Believers of this modern age are also confronted with vast cultural shifts, while many of us are also struggling with conflicted morals, ideas, and desires. This is after all the story of the world – always trying to adapt and to conform to the changes in society. Yet we must never conform to the morals or the truths of this world. We must keep on contending for the faith, no matter what. Despite all the upheavals in the world, we can and are called to maintain our footing and direction by standing upon the foundation of Jesus – He who is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

We cannot remain silent. We cannot remain indecisive. We need to choose God or the world. We need to choose His truth of the truth of the world. We need to choose to lead a life glorifying God or glorifying ourselves.

We need to make a choice, to make up our minds and to stand firm in the truth of the Bible and the Spirit or we will be in danger of being swept away by all the false spiritual teachers, false teachings and erroneous doctrines. Let us stand and be counted, let our voices be heard in prayer and preaching, and let our lives reflect not a silence of indecision and fear but a life of hope, truth and love.

Let His pure instruction and knowledge therefore rest on the lips of the priests to His Glory forever!

The Truth of the Kingdom

Consider the following: In order to preach or teach the Truth, you first need to know the Truth.

What is the Truth? Is the Truth of academics, theologians, scholars, the wise or the philosophers? No, it is Jesus. He is the Way, Truth and Life. For no other Truth will set you free (John 8:32) except the Truth of God. Nothing else. Not fame or money or education. For this reason it is written in “1 Corinthians 1: 20 Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.”

So in order to preach the Truth, we need to know Jesus, who is the Truth. Any other so-called truth is accursed according to the Apostle Paul as mentioned in Galatians 1. For any other gospel except for the Truth of the Kingdom only tickles the ears, and is void of life and power to redeem and restore. Some are even disguised as doctrines as taught by demons (! Timothy 4)!

Again, how can we teach or preach the Truth without knowing the Truth? Do we truly know Jesus anymore? Do we know the Father? Do we know the Holy Spirit? Do we know what the Kingdom is?

And how can we make sure we know the Truth to walk in the Truth in order to preach the Truth? Simple. One, know God. Not just to know about Him, but know Him personally, in intimacy. Do you call Him Abba Father? Do you cry Adonai? Thus seek the Kingdom, and the will of the Father. Two, be filled with the Spirit, for John 16 declares the Spirit will come to lead us in all Truth. And what is this truth? Is it my truth, your truth, or any other truth of the church? No, the truth of the Kingdom, for Jesus is the Truth. The Spirit leads us in all Truth of Jesus, and not the truth of man. And so we read in “1 Corinthians 2: 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

And such truth that sets free and the truth of 1 Corinthians 12 speaks of the truth of the Kingdom. For Jesus only taught the Gospel of the Kingdom. So when we are admonished to first seek His Kingdom and His righteousness above all according to Matthew 6:33, then we are called to first seek God above all, thus His Truth and His Will, for such Truth is what sets us free. For such Truth heals, delivers, restores and saved. For such Truth is the Trinity.

More than ever the Church needs to preach and teach sound doctrine again. Thus the truth. Thus Jesus. Thus the Kingdom. For that will set man free, and that will ignite a holy passion for a divine and holy God. Anything else will only enslave, and quench the fire of an all-consuming God. So to preach the Truth, we must know the Truth. Question thus remains, do the Church know God? Is the Church even filled or led by the Spirit of the Living God? For

only in God – abiding and yielding – do we know the Truth, thus in God we surrender to be adopted into His Kingdom by holy Blood and filled by the Spirit who is from God.

Therefore, faithful Christian, seek the truth, listen to the truth, learn the truth, love the truth, tell the truth, learn the truth, defend the truth even to death. ... "The letters of John Hus".

Restoring God's Tabernacle in the Last Days

Amos 9: In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old:

The restoration of the Bride, therefore the church, coincides with the restoration of the body to the order of the House of David, thus the Kingdom of God here on earth. Jesus said to Simon Peter that He will build His Church (His Kingdom) and that the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

The Lord made an everlasting covenant with King David in 2 Samuel 7. Under this covenant, the Lord said He would build a house for David and not David a house for the Lord. David's son, Solomon, did build the physical temple of the Lord. This temple was the greater extension and permanent structure of the tabernacle that was built by Moses while still in the desert.

2 Samuel 7: "The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: 12 When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. 15 But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever."

God implied in the David covenant that the promised house would be an eternal dynasty, and that a descendant of the line of David would forever occupy the throne. This eternal dynasty spoken by the Lord is the spiritual House of David, or in other words, the church, also known as the Body of Christ - the holy priesthood and the true spiritual tabernacle. This house is eternal, for Christ died for Jew and Gentile so that we may have eternal life. The descendant that sits forever on the throne of David is Jesus Christ, the true King of kings and Lord of lords.

We read the following in Isaiah 11 (New International Version): 1 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. 2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him -the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD - 3 and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.

This root refers to Jesus, and it comes from the stump of Jesse who was the father of David. So again the Lord points to the fulfilment of His promise regarding an everlasting spiritual household.

When God therefore said that He would build His house, He meant He would build the House of David, which implies the everlasting spiritual dynasty. To build implies a project still under construction, not yet completed and not yet finished. God promised this eternal

dynasty, and Jesus forever changed the physical House of David into one of a spiritual nature by His Blood.

Hebrews 9: 23 It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with human hands that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. 25 Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. 26 Otherwise Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But he has appeared once for all at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, 28 so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

When Jesus died on the cross, and rose from the grave, the House of David changed from a physical order to a spiritual order. Jesus sits upon the throne of David, as the king over His household, just as David was the physical king who sat on the throne leading Israel. By the Blood of Jesus, the Body of Christ has also become the spiritual Israel, since Jesus came from the bloodline of David and now occupies the throne of the king. It is important to note that much of the prophetic word of the Old Testament prophets and that of the New Testament apply to the ethnic Israel, the true seed of Abraham - therefore the Jews of the physical nation of Israel. So, God 's covenant with David spoke of the everlasting Body of Christ, to whom both Jews and Gentiles should belong if they wish to seek eternal life.

Interesting to note that David said in Psalm 16 that the Lord Jesus is always before him, and that Jesus is on his right hand. Jesus is also spoken of here as the Holy One who will never see decay. Jesus never saw the decay of the grave because He rose after three days. So, just as David the king over Israel placed Jesus on his right hand, so now Jesus, eternal king of the spiritual House of David, is still placed at the right hand, but this time of the Father.

Since God therefore says that He would build His Church, implying restoring the House of David, the question arises to what nature or order would Jesus restore the Church? Is it not that Jesus would restore the spiritual House of David to the order of the physical House of David! However, since we now deal with an eternal king and an eternal house, compared to the physical king and physical kingdom of Israel, such a restoration would be the ultimate epitome, the completeness and the fullness of the physical House of David.

In other words, the spiritual House of David would be the epitome, completeness and fullness of the physical House of David. This is why it is also said in ... that the glory of the latter house will be greater than the former. This implies that the nature and the order of the spiritual House of David would be one of complete fullness that was never achieved by the physical House of David.

It stands to logic that the physical House of David was therefore but a shadowy blueprint of how the spiritual House of David would be restored. Once again, since Christ is the eternal

true king, all the spiritual fruits of physical House of David and everything that the reign of David represent and promotes, would be completed by the reign of Jesus!

It is therefore important to study the physical House of David, compared to the House of Saul, to understand to what order Jesus will restore His House. It is important to remember that Jesus will without a doubt restore His House to the right order and nature. To understand the House of David, would enable the saints to move along the right lines of teaching and equipping, while it would empower the saints to walk in the anointing and the authority. Such restoration would take place both corporately and individually. This will happen corporately, since the Church had to be restored as a Body, and individually since we need to overcome, but also because we are part of the Body of Christ. It is a simultaneous process of restoration. This restoration would yet reach its peak like never before!

Ultimately, the rise of the church to the order of the House of David, which means the effective restoration of the saints as a spiritual force on earth, would see an army of God rise who will reign as kings spiritually, who will be called to be warriors but who will walk with the heart of the servant - full of love and joy.

David was a king, prophet, a warrior and servant. The spiritual House of David is a house where the Bride acts in unity as a king, prophet, warrior and servant. It is therefore vital to understand the concepts of servant, of reigning as a king and fighting for the rights of the kingdom as a warrior.

The saints of the spiritual House of David, which is the epitome and personification of the physical House of David, would be restored in function kingdom power when they are restored in relationship authority and anointing according to the blueprint of the tabernacle as given by God to Moses.

The physical House of David after all functioned according to the blueprint of the tabernacle, for such a plan and outline paved the way for the correct foundations to be laid by King David so that he and the nation can live in favour with the Lord. The ministry of Paul on the other hand shows how the church must function in order to bring about this restoration based on the blueprint of the tabernacle, which is enfolded into the House of David.

Let us read from Haggai 1 (verses 3-11): Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your panelled houses, while his house remains a ruin?" Now this is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but have harvest little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it." This is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honoured," says the Lord. "You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the Lord Almighty, "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you

is busy with his own house. Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops. I called for a drought on the field and the mountains, on the grain, the new wine, the oil and whatever the ground produces, on men and cattle, and on the labour of your hands.”

What then are we building? The house of the Lord! The fullness of Christ means fullness in blessings, provision, healing, anointing, the Holy Spirit, God’s presence, God’s glory, and God’s treasures. We however can’t experience the fullness of such awesome wonders if we keep building our own houses (when placing ourselves above GOD). We can only discover such wonders when we build God’s house of glory. This means that we have to become God’s house of glory in Spirit and Truth, which will empower and enable us to honour and exalt God through all that we do, say and think!

As long as we fail to submit completely to God, meaning that we desire to satisfy our own needs then we are building our own houses. We however build the house of God when we live according the principles of His Word and Spirit. We must make sure that God’s house does not lie in ruins within us.

Without the fullness of Christ (verse six of Haggai 1), we can never experience the full harvest of our work, neither shall we experience the full blessing of abundance when it comes to God’s provision and protection (food, clothes, money). We must stop following our ways (building our own houses), but start building God’s house of glory.

When we become God’s house of glory, the Lord shall be pleased. The Lord does mighty wonders through those He favours. Verse 10 to 11 sounds the warning that God will actually withhold His full blessing while we keep running after our own desires. In the Bible, this withholding of blessing is compared to a drought that comes upon the land. Drought causes the soil and the ground to become infertile, therefore unable to produce crop (harvest). God’s blessing is like rain from heaven, and it causes the labour of our hands to grow and become fertile (Deuteronomy 28). It also causes us to grow spiritually, in order that we may become more like Jesus so that we can enjoy the blessings of the Lord.

As you come to him, the living Stone – rejected by men but chosen by God – you also, like living stones, are being build into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to GOD through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:4-5)

We must therefore as a holy priesthood built to God’s honour. We are called to be spiritual sacrifices, since Romans 12:1 says that we must offer our bodies as offerings, holy and pleasing to God. This is then our spiritual act of worship.

However, sadly, the Lord has spoken many times in my spirit that we have not built the Tabernacle of David but rather our own houses and not His house. And again He says we have built our houses (ministry, lives, and our kingdoms) in the best streets and in the best towns. We have sought the best for ourselves and for our own kingdom. Our houses are wonderfully adorned and wonderfully arrayed. We have sought fame and fortune and glory

and recognition here on earth. We have sought the best for ourselves and we have sought the approval of man.

But, while we labour for our own gain, His house stands unkempt, wasted and deserted. We have thought we have built His house yet the Lord says this is not so. Our houses carry mats that will not allow feet of blood and mud to stain it (for we keep the lost and sinner out - we keep the Lord Jesus out!) Our names glitter bright above our doorpost for it is all about our glory and us. So the Lord takes me back to Deuteronomy 6 - on our clothes and foreheads shall only His name be glorified. His name is no longer found above our doorpost. It is no longer found on our hearts. Corporately as the Bride we have deserted His house and the repercussions is that we walk not in His blessings and glory and the abundance of wine and oil as described in Haggai. Our sacrifices are defiled.

So the Lord said He will send fire in these last days like never before. It is a fire for those who serve Him - for them this fire will go before His children to level the path. It is a fire of such power and magnitude to get the Bride ready. It is a fire that leads us - a holy and pure fire. A power is waiting to be unleashed.

Yet there is also a purifying fire. For the Lord says these houses that are built not in His name and not to His glory will be destroyed. For you see this says the Lord: For those who do not repent and weep for their sins will be forced to sit on the ashes of their burned down houses and on that ashes they can then mourn and weep. Then the Lord led me to Job 18. It confirms the wicked will know fire and His hand of power. You will also read about roots. This too the Lord places on my heart: many followers have become like bare trees for their roots are decayed, old and rotten. Their soil is void of nourishment and therefore carries no fruit. We need to pray for such revival in the Bride that roots will come alive so that the Bride can bear fruit.

For this we have to understand: REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM IS NEAR. MAKE STRAIGHT THE PATH FOR THE LORD FOR HE COMES IN GLORY AND POWER.

For the Lord says we build not His Kingdom but our own. We toil under the sun dusk to dawn by the sweat of our brow and we quake in our labour but all in vain, dirt on our hands, yet we do not sweat by the anointing for His Kingdom and we should be quaking in the power and might of the Spirit. For dusk to dawn we toil for our own endeavours, yet we should toil in His power and anointing!

It is time to labour for His kingdom, there above the sun where true riches do not gather dirt or rust, riches formed by His Blood and Tears. He says toil for Me My Bride; let your hands be unto My service and thy lips unto my service. All things under the sun come to an end. For the Lord cries for us to worship Him yet our hearts and mind are far from Him.

We discover in Haggai chapter two, verses 15-19, the following accusation from the Lord against those who are not building His house: "Now give careful thought to this from this day on – consider how things were before one stone was laid on another in the Lord's temple. When anyone came to a heap of twenty measures, there were only ten. When

anyone went to a wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were only twenty. I struck all the work of your hands with blight, mildew and hail, yet you did not turn to me,' declares the Lord. 'From this day on, from this twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, give careful thought to day when the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid. Give careful thought. Is there yet any seed left in the barn? Until now, the vine and the fig tree, the pomegranate and the olive tree have not borne fruit.'

What do we learn from this Scripture? It speaks of a time of little abundance, but it also speaks of a time of half measures. When we fail to fully commit to the Lord, we suffer blight, mildew and hail (curses), because the Lord desires a fully build house. The Lord is not seeking those who live by half measures, but those who seek to bear the fruit of Christ, unlike the fig and olive trees. When we commit our lives fully to the Lord, then we will bear fruit and experience God's abundant blessing.

Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. (John 15:4)

We need Jesus in our lives so that we can be changed and guided. The Lord however needs a pure spiritual dwelling, which must become the house (temple) build in our spirit, soul and body.

Haggai 2 alludes to the importance of not forgetting when the foundation of the temple was laid. What is the foundation? Jesus Christ of course! We must therefore remember Jesus' sacrifice, as well as the day that we as living offerings committed our lives to Christ.

In 2 Timothy 2:20-21 we read: In a large house there are articles not of only gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.

We are the clay and God is the potter. However, as we grow spiritually, we must get rid of our clay and wood like qualities, becoming pure and holy (gold and silver), so that we can become noble for God. Clay speaks of a time when we are still being formed and moulded, meaning we are seeking to find our place in the potter's hands. When we build our own house, we remain like clay, not noble, but when we build God's house, we become like gold and silver.

When you refine clay and wood with fire, it gets burned and becomes of little use. Gold and silver becomes more pure when refined by fire. God's fire (holiness/purity) refines us, for He desires that we must be refined so that we can become like pure gold and silver.

Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purpose and some for common good? (Romans 9:21)

We find here the strong emphasis that God is Sovereign and that the clay will either be used for noble or common purposes. We have seen God's Sovereignty when it comes to sin and sickness. Romans mention that we have a choice. Since we can either choose the curse or the blessing, we can also choose to be noble (useful for the Lord) or common (not useful).

Solomon's temple was made with gold, and there were no half measures and no expenses spared. We must also build God's spiritual house with gold, which means that we as His holy living sacrifices can't live in a lukewarm spiritual state, because then we will retain our clay and wood-like qualities. We need to grow in the fullness of Christ so that we can become like gold and silver spiritually, worthy to build the King's house.

The Lord is intending to restore all things and the restoration begins in the sons and daughters, for them and this creation, unto His glory. The restoration is not for when we die or when the new heaven or earth arrives. It is for now – we are called to be the sons and daughters who have been bought by the Blood and renewed by the Spirit. We are called to walk the Ancient Ways in His power and authority to be good stewards of this earth, bringing light where there is darkness and establishing His Kingdom in the heart of man.

Yes, the victory has been won by the Lord Jesus, yet the challenge remains for us to bring people into that condition of victory. Under and in the covenant there is victory and so the war and the struggle in the spiritual realm continue to bring the lost into His care.

May we seek Him, yearn for Him and follow His path. May we hold onto His hand and draw strength in His might to overcome. Is overcoming easy on this path? It requires obedience, submission, persistence, perseverance and dedication to keep walking in and keep talking to His glory.

Oh Lord, may the ancient fires burn to light the path to the Ancient of Days. May your fires guide our feet and our ways so that we may stand victorious, in restoration and redemption, here and now as we prepare for the coming of the Lord.

A Plumb Line in the Midst of God's People

Let us read 1 Kings 6: 11 The word of the Lord came to Solomon: 12 "As for this temple you are building, if you follow my decrees, carry out my regulations and keep all my commands and obey them, I will fulfil through you the promise I gave to David your father. 13 And I will live among the Israelites and will not abandon my people Israel."

Any construction, development or project that is built, erected or designed has to adhere to certain regulations, by-laws and various criteria. This will ensure the construction is safe, sound and constructed according to set standards. In the days of Solomon, when he was building the grand temple, such regulations also applied. The Lord gave him clear and direct instructions on how to build the temple. But the Lord's instructions as read in 1 Kings 6 was also dualistic in nature – the Lord was not merely referring to a physical structure, He was also referring primarily to the spiritually well-being of the people. The Israelites in the ancient days represented very much a construction site when it came to their spiritual development, for they struggled to maintain a straight course in serving the Lord.

And so the Lord reminded Solomon that apart from it being critical for him to build the temple according to God's regulations, it was even more critical for the people to become a sound spiritual construction site by following the Lord's commandments and decrees and laws.

As we fast forward to the days of Amos, who was a prophet about forty years before the Israelite's captivity by the Assyrians, we read the following out of chapter 7 (from verse 7): This is what he showed me: The Lord was standing by a wall that had been built true to plumb, with a plumb line in his hand. 8 And the Lord asked me, "What do you see, Amos?" "A plumb line," I replied. Then the Lord said, "Look, I am setting a plumb line among my people Israel; I will spare them no longer.

A plumb line is an ancient device, used primarily by the Egyptians that ensure new constructions are perfectly upright. You cannot tell if a structure is built perfectly upright by merely looking at it, but a plumb line will soon reveal its soundness. Metaphorically, when God draws near with the plumb line, He is looking for those people who are living and abiding according to His Word [commandments, regulations]. When the Lord gave this word through Amos, it was because the Israelites' moral standards had degenerated. They were not upright in their endeavours to serve the Lord. They had therefore failed to follow the Lord's decrees and to carry out His regulations as instructed in the days of Solomon.

As we fast forward again to the days of Haggai, who lived after the return of Judah from exile (520AD), we read the following in chapter 1: "3Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: 4 "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your panelled houses, while this house remains a ruin?"

Indeed, here is more evidence that the Israelites had failed to pay close attention to their spiritual condition, rather seeking to abide by their own regulations and by seeking after their own will. They had instead sought to build not God's house but their own, which in

duality implies they rather sought to take care of their own matters instead of God's spiritual matters. So from the days of Solomon to the days of Haggai, the people had steadily failed to keep to God's commandments and regulations, and so it was no wonder they found the physical construction site of Jerusalem in ruins while they themselves spiritually struggled to follow the Lord.

Similarly, we read in 1 Corinthians 3 (verse 16) that we are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in us. We are also a spiritual construction site, for our journey towards God and to become more like Him never ends. We are called to be vessels to His honour, glorifying the King and the Kingdom. The words spoken by the Lord to Solomon still rings true ... we are also called to keep to the Lord's commandments and regulations, as stipulated in the teachings of Jesus, for they encapsulates the Old and New Testament, so that our spiritual construction site will be pleasing unto the Lord and so that we measure up to the Lord's plumb line, which is His Word and will. For then we shall truly be building upon the foundation of the Lord, and we shall walk in truth and in the power of God. Then we shall walk in the power of the Kingdom.

Only when we keep in step with the Lord, and only when we obey Him and desire to serve Him, will this construction site (our spiritual journey) flourish, will the Lord's hand be upon us and will we see God's purpose for our lives blossom.

It says in 1 Corinthians 3: 10By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. 11For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, 13his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. 14If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. 15If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

Let us then continue building according to God's regulations and commandments, for they are our guidelines, our by-laws and our standards of living, and by them we lay a good foundation and we become a true and strong temple unto His glory. For then we build His Kingdom. Let us continue to build on the only true and sound foundation which is Jesus, and not our own foundation. Indeed, any other foundation except the foundation of Jesus will not last. It will crumble and be no more.

We as believers are therefore called to continue building our spiritual lives as the true temple of the Lord here on earth upon the foundation of Jesus. If not, we are merely acting in foolishness, and our construction and efforts will crumble along with the foundation of sand and stone. To build upon the foundation of Jesus means to walk in His Truth, His holiness and to seek after His heart (therefore first seeking the Kingdom of God).

Break the Mould

There is a saying that goes “break the mould”. It means putting an end to a restrictive pattern of events or behaviour by doing things in a markedly different way. Therefore, if you say that someone breaks the mould, you mean that they do completely different things from what has been done before or from what is usually done.

The expression comes from manufacturing, and probably from casting, where moulds are created to shape molten metal into repeated identical form. If something “breaks the mould” during its creation, then it is free to form itself into an unexpected or new shape, not similar in any way to its predecessors. Remember, a mould is used to make multiple replicas of solid objects using moldable materials. Therefore a mould follows a traditional pattern, whereby to break the mould speaks about defying convention.

Why then are we talking about breaking the mould? Because this is a word the Lord has placed in my spirit. It is time, says the Lord, for those who worship in Spirit and truth, to break the mould. It is time that we put an end to a restrictive pattern of events or behaviour called tradition and religion that rules churches and dictates the spiritual life of so many. It is time to return to the Kingdom.

Let us understand, church as we know it has become a system of replicas, where we repeat a pattern of the way we see church, how we run church and function as a church. If one pastor wears white, then another will wear white and so the pastor becomes a replica. And this is what we find in churches – a constant replication of man-made habits and behaviours until it becomes the norm, a pattern and a way of church. Yet this system of replicas is based on the pattern of man-made traditions, influenced by religion, and very much void of God’s power. After all, the Word says there is liberty where the Spirit is, but a system that is cast and moulded is restrictive, and therefore void of true liberty and freedom. This is also not the way of the Kingdom.

In Mark 7, Jesus deals with the followers of tradition and says “13 so you nullify the [authority of the] word of God [acting as if it did not apply] because of your tradition which you have handed down [through the elders]. And you do many things such as that.” Tradition is something which is handed down, and it replicates the mould as seen before. It remains therefore restrictive.

And so the Lord says break the mould ... break the way things have been done, break the mould of religion and tradition. For too long churches have been doing things according to systems, agendas, traditions and methods ... but God is calling a people who will step out of the comfort and numbness of the system, to pursue the Kingdom and to move in the Spirit. The Lord is calling for a people to end the cycle of mindless repetition, shattering the replicas based on man’s ideas, perception, and influences. God has called for one Church – the Bride – which should function in the image of the Lord and should be a reflection of the Kingdom. Yet churches these days are moulded into a different pattern, becoming a replica and a reflection of the traditions, ways and methods of man and not God. It is time to set our gaze upon the Kingdom and seek and pursue the way of the Kingdom.

God is calling for a people to make straight the path for the Lord and to again show the way of the Lord ... this means breaking the mould. It means going against the flow. It means doing things out of the ordinary and beyond the comfort zones of churches. It means breaking the shackles of the way things are EXPECTED TO BE and to move as the Spirit of the Lord again leads, no matter if it may seem strange, different or uncomfortable in the beginning. For this will be a way which may seem strange, unusual and unexpected to so many, for it breaks with tradition, with the norm and the ideals of the system, but it is the way of the Lord and of the Kingdom. So break the mould says the Lord.

Yes, God is calling for a people who step out of religion and into the Kingdom. He is calling for a people to step out of the restrictive mind-sets of the tangible and the natural and the concrete, and into the liberty of the Kingdom. For indeed, the church has become shackled, enslaved and entombed by the naturalistic, tangible and the concrete, instead of moving beyond such confines to function in the complete and utter liberty of the Spirit which is supernatural, eternal, and invisible. Doing it the Lord's way is different to the usual way as we know it and it is time to step up and break the mould. Change the atmosphere. Change the tide. It time for God's Way.

For the Lord speaks of new wine in new wineskins. Matthew 9: 17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

You see, the Lord cannot pour into a system that is 'old', broken, set in its way and tainted by the world. God is calling for a Bride that will be like a new wineskin to receive the new wine of His last day move of the Spirit. A system of repetitive traditions and religion cannot hold the Spirit of the Lord. For this reason the Lord has shown the Holy Spirit wants to move mightily among the Lord's people, but so many will misunderstand such a move, or they will call it demonic, or they will mock it or some shall flee. Why? Because we are stuck in a mould of repetitive patterns of mind-sets, regarding the way we view church, and the Kingdom and even ministry. It says in 1 Corinthians 2: 11 For what person knows the thoughts and motives of a man except the man's spirit within him? So also no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the [Holy] Spirit who is from God, so that we may know and understand the [wonderful] things freely given to us by God. 13 We also speak of these things, not in words taught or supplied by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining and interpreting spiritual thoughts with spiritual words [for those being guided by the Holy Spirit].

We need to do it God's Way ... but how we have forgotten His Ways beyond religion and traditions! The Book of Acts is all about how the mould was broken ... so let the mould once last time be broken and God be glorified in spirit and truth! For the Lord says how He longs and yearns to move in might and power among His children, in fire and Glory, but so many are like old wineskins, stuck in a mould, unable to receive for they will have become hardened by the heat and furnace of religion. How the Lord longs to pour in and to flow and

to bring people up to the mountain but their minds and hearts and their very spirit is like old leather - tainted, broken, cracked and unable to hold the new wine.

It says in JEREMIAH 23:29 AMP: "Is not My word like fire [that consumes all that cannot endure the test]?" says the Lord , "and like a hammer that breaks the [most stubborn] rock [in pieces]? So yes, it is time to preach His Word which is like a hammer and fire. This means preaching the sound doctrine, declaring the Gospel of the Kingdom and proclaiming the Truth. After all, it is His Truth that sets free. For it says in Hebrews 4: 12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Indeed, the Lord's Word shall break the mould and it shall correct the fallen ways! The Word of the Lord inspires and is authoritative (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21). It is like a fire, for it is active and powerful. What a mighty force it is when it is released through the lips of the disciple and when it is received into the heart! Indeed, let us also remind ourselves of Malachi 3 where it says: "But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap."

A refiner's fire is an allusion to the process of purifying metal. A refiner uses a fire to heat metal to a molten state; then he skims off the dross that floats to the top. The refiner's fire is, of course, maintained at an extremely high temperature, and such a high degree of heat is the prophet's picture of the testing people will face on Judgment Day. All judgment has been entrusted to the Son (John 5:22). Upon Christ's return, the intense flame of God's judgment will purify the earth, removing the dross of sin.

Second, the Messiah will be like a launderer's soap. This type of soap was caustic and quite effective in producing bright white clothing. When Christ returns, He will cleanse the world of all impurity. Every stain of sin will be scrubbed away.

This is the Lord whom we serve. So let us walk in His will, to His Glory and let us seek Him and His Way above all. Let us break the mould, even if it peculiar, strange and out of place to many. It is time for God to be glorified, exalted and praised! Let us move in His Spirit, do as He commands, obey, yield to His Word for then we shall know His Kingdom is one of power!

Wherever the King is, may we also be

2 Samuel 15: 21 But Ittai replied to the king, "As surely as the Lord lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king may be, whether it means life or death, there will your servant be." 22 David said to Ittai, "Go ahead, march on." So Ittai the Gittite marched on with all his men and the families that were with him.

King David was a man who had to endure numerous struggles – one of them being the betrayal of his son, Absalom. Absalom had set himself up as a counterfeit king, conspiring to harm David's reputation. As a result David had to depart from Jerusalem, having for a time and while having to lay down his rule so that Absalom could have his day in the sun.

We read this account in 2 Samuel 15, and we note in verse 23 how the whole countryside wept aloud as all the people passed by. David was beloved, yet many throughout Israel had betrayed him, standing with the counterfeit king, while this anointed man of God was forced to flee to the desert.

It was in this exodus out of Jerusalem that David encountered Ittai, a foreigner who simply had no obligation to stand with the true king. But Ittai proved his love for David was not based on him being an Israelite, but his loyalty went far deeper than ethical connection, it was rather a matter of him showing his true loyalty as a servant to the true King.

The words of Ittai are indeed so powerful! What a testimony of his faithfulness, declaring that no matter if he faces life or death, he will stand with David.

Does this story ring any bells to another event that has shaped all our lives?

Indeed, 2000 years, Jesus also for a time and a being laid down His rule and authority, even though it was by His accord. John 10: 17 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

Jesus, the true King, willingly died on the cross for our sins, and He willingly departed Jerusalem to be seated at the right hand of God, allowing the prince of this world – the devil - to have his temporary day in the sun as the counterfeit king. John 14: 29 I [Jesus] have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. 30 I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me, 31 but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.

And just like in the days of David when so many people turned their backs on the true king, so it happened 2000 years ago when so many disciples rather opted not to remain true unto Jesus. For the last 2000 years, Jesus may not have been present here on earth, just as David was for a time not present in Jerusalem. Jesus' ascension however allowed for the Spirit to descend, so that we will not be alone in our spiritual quest to declare the truths and the ways of the true King.

David sent many of his faithful servants back to Jerusalem so that the people at the palace would be reminded of David. Their presence would remind the inhabitants of Jerusalem of the king's charismatic spirit and his ways and truths.

Indeed, how the people of Israel would have been reminded that David would surely return to take up his rightful throne. When he did return, as the story tells us in chapter 19, we read how he won over the hearts of all the men of Judah as though they were one man ... 15 Then the king returned and went as far as the Jordan. Now the men of Judah had come to Gilgal to go out and meet the king and bring him across the Jordan. 16 Shimei son of Gera, the Benjamite from Bahurim, hurried down with the men of Judah to meet King David. 17 With him were a thousand Benjamites, along with Ziba, the steward of Saul's household, and his fifteen sons and twenty servants. They rushed to the Jordan, where the king was. 18 They crossed at the ford to take the king's household over and to do whatever he wished.

Jesus likewise has called us His servants to remain here on earth to remind the lost and the needy of the True King. We are called like the servants of David to remind the inhabitants of this world of the true King's Truth (Great Commission). Jesus is returning soon, like David returned to Jerusalem, to once again and for the last time take up his rightful rule. And just as Absalom died in his attempts to overthrow David for good, so satan will meet his end as he has tried for thousands upon thousands of years to overthrow the true king.

Jesus is indeed returning in triumph and with great tumultuous activity, with the angels by His side just as David returned in triumph. Jesus will indeed take His rightful place once and for all in the New Jerusalem, with the prince of this world vanquished and his dark plans thwarted.

Question is, in the absence of the King, despite His Spirit being with us, how faithful have we remained and will we be found wanting on the day of His return? Are we anxiously waiting for the true King to take up His rule? Or we truly serving Him and His Kingdom?

Just like Ittai the Gittite, a foreigner who served David, just so we as the Gentiles are foreigners who by the sacrifice of Jesus have been allowed to serve the true Master. What a joy and what a hope! Shall we then also be like Ittai, who even in this day, can say to the true King who is seated in heaven until His return. Can we say that we will always follow Him, be it through the good and the bad, through the valley of death or through the Jordan River of life?

Are we declaring it in our hearts and to this world, right now in this moment, that Jesus is our true King and that we as His servants shall remain to serve Him in faithfulness, love and respect until His return, no matter the price or the cost? Are we also like Ittai by seeking the Lord and pursuing Him? Are we also like Ittai who refused to serve any other god or master except the true king?

When Jesus first came to earth He chose 12 disciples and asked them to follow Him. At one stage when Jesus was arrested many of the disciples, including Peter, did not want to admit

that they served the true king out of fear of death. It was a tragic denial, but the Lord restored His disciples.

Praise the Lord! The Lord is coming, and He is crossing the proverbial River Jordan, ushering in a new dawn for His Bride just as in the days when Israel entered the Promised Land when they crossed the Jordan. Indeed, many of us have at some or other time betrayed the true King as we have followed our own desires and needs, seeking intentionally or unintentionally after other gods, but the Lord is merciful and true. He is seeking a people who will remain true to Him in spirit and in heart.

In this day, do we still long for Him, do we yearn for Him, do we truly follow Him and do we earnestly seek to honour His Name wherever we may go? Let us then not be found wanting, for the King is returning – let us welcome Him with joy and gladness, not with mourning. Let us truly say our place is by the side of the true King.

We build under His authority

Praise the Lord – for let the following Word serve a great encouragement and make us bold to continue building His House. Read Ezra 5 – this is the passage where Ezra is rebuilding the wall and the temple after the exile in Babylon.

Hear what the Spirit is saying ...

2Then rose up Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel [heir to the throne of Judah] and Jeshua son of Jozadak and began to build the house of God in Jerusalem; and with them were the prophets of God [Haggai and Zechariah], helping them. 3Then Tattenai, governor on the west side of the [Euphrates] River, and Shethar-bozenai and their companions came to them and said, Who authorized you to build this house and to restore this wall? 4Then we told them [in reply] the names of the men who were building this building. 5But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, so the enemy could not make them stop until the matter came before Darius [I] and an answer was returned by letter concerning it. 6This is a copy of the letter that Tattenai, governor on this side of the River, and Shethar-bozenai and his associates, the Apharsachites who were on this [west] side of the River, sent to Darius [I] the king ...

They received a letter back from Darius which reads: Ezra 6 1THEN KING Darius [I] decreed, and a search was made in Babylonia in the house where the treasured records were stored. 2And at Ecbatana in the capital in the province of Media, a scroll was found on which this was recorded: 3In the first year of King Cyrus, [he] made a decree: Concerning the house of God in Jerusalem, let the house, the place where they offer sacrifices, be built, and let its foundations be strongly laid, its height and its breadth each 60 cubits,

There was anger against Israel for building the house, because Zerubbabel and Joshua had told Tattenai that they had been given the authority and right by the king of Persia to do so:

Ezra 5: But in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, the same King Cyrus made a decree to rebuild this house of God. 14And the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple in Jerusalem and brought into the temple of Babylon, King Cyrus took from the temple of Babylon and delivered to a man named Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor. 15And King Cyrus said to him, Go, take these vessels to Jerusalem and carry them into the temple, and let the house of God be built upon its site. 16Then came this Sheshbazzar and laid the foundation of the house of God in Jerusalem; and since that time until now it has been in the process of being rebuilt and is not completed yet.

And so the Lord says that His children have been given the right, the authority and the permission by God Himself, the Most Mighty of Kings, to build His house, thus the Kingdom ! Are we hearing the Lord? For the Lord says the decree issued for the rebuilding of His house is settled in heaven. The decree has been signed by the Living God Himself and it is found in the very halls of the Mighty Throne Room.

Children of the Lord, we have been given a mandate by the Living God to go forth and build His house. For it has been decreed and settled says the Lord. And those who are building His house, their names shall be recorded and be remembered. For when Moses went to the Pharaoh, he was commissioned to speak under the authority of the Great I AM. He went before Ramses and said that he had come in the name of I AM. Moses went in the authority of God, for the Lord had decreed that the people of Yisrael shall be set free. Praise the Lord – Moses could not fail and he did not fail for the Lord had decreed and His mark of authority was on the action.

Jesus' authority was questioned, as was the authority of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua, yet the Son of the Living God had been commissioned by the Most Almighty Father to establish His Kingdom among all races on earth. Jesus' authority was challenged, yet the Son of the Living God was not operating by His own might and strength, but the might and strength of the one who had sent him.

For those who serve the Lord and are faithful to Him, to those who seek to follow Him by carrying the cross and denying themselves, they have been given the authority to do His work. For this reason the Holy Spirit has come on us with power. For the Lord says to His children do not fear persecutions, trials and resistance. We have been given a mandate, as decreed by Him, to accomplish what He has called to finish. Jesus is the author of our faith and all good works shall be completed. Let us then be strong and stand bold – for the wall shall be build, for the House shall be restored, no matter the resistance, no matter the danger, no matter the attempts to halt it, for what the Lord commands shall not return to Him empty.

For we build under the authority of the highest authority ... so be encouraged and be full of hope. Let a cry arise in the hearts of the children of God that we are powerful, loosed, walking with authority, walking with faith, dancing, singing, rejoicing, for the hand of the Lord is upon us, His Spirit moves us to greater heights and destinies, that we are magnificent, not yet perfect, not yet pure, but broken in humility, filled with praise, filled with a new song for the Lord, filled with great wisdom and knowledge, all to the glory of the Lord!

Let us then stop making excuses, stop bowing low to the world, but let us raise our heads, for this world and all eternity belongs to our King and we shall inherit it! Let us not be faint at the words of man, but let us be strong in the Word of the Lord! Let us then walk tall and proud as God's children, not in our strength or ability, but because God is so great and wonderful! Let the nations know that our God lives and we are alive!

MOVE OF THE SPIRIT: Speak the Truth of God Fearlessly

Believers of our Lord Jesus, it is time to speak God's Word with boldness and without fear. It is time to declare the Kingdom of God, and His Truth and Glory. The Lord placed it on my spirit that the Church has chosen not to speak God's complete truth because of fear of man. We distort, twist and interpret the word out of fear that we might offend man or that we might upset man because we are afraid of what people will say of us, what people will think

of us and we are afraid of what will happen to our reputation. It is not about us but about God and His Kingdom!

If we truly want to move with God in these last days and see His might and glory manifested, and if we truly want to see revival and great salvation, we need to speak the Truth of God in the fear of God and not the fear of man! If we truly want God to use us mightily then we need to walk in the fear of God. God throughout the New Testament used men like Paul and Peter powerfully because they feared Him! He used mere individuals to spark great revival – not because they were special but because they feared the Lord! Because Paul stood in the fear of God we read for example in “Acts 9: 31 So the church throughout the whole of Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was edified [growing in wisdom, virtue, and piety] and walking in the respect and reverential fear of the Lord and in the consolation and exhortation of the Holy Spirit, continued to increase and was multiplied.”

All that God is calling for is a people who lay down the Self and who will seek God above all! The Lord is about to do great works in those who simply fear Him ...

It is time again we need to realise it is better to be a fool in the eyes of man than to be a fool in the eyes of God! Paul after all wrote in “1 Corinthians 1: 23 We preach Christ (the Messiah) crucified, [preaching which] to the Jews is a scandal and an offensive stumbling block [that springs a snare or trap], and to the Gentiles it is absurd and utterly unphilosophical nonsense 24 But to those who are called, whether Jew or Greek (Gentile), Christ [is] the Power of God and the Wisdom of God ... 27 [No] for God selected (deliberately chose) what in the world is foolish to put the wise to shame, and what the world calls weak to put the strong to shame..”

The last great move of the Holy Spirit will truly revive the age of Acts, but it will be even more powerful and glorious. In the days of Acts, we see a powerful move of the Holy Spirit because the disciples were united with God and with each other and they were humble, they were hungry for the Lord and they obeyed and yielded!

Yet, there was another key characteristic of why great signs, miracles and wonders were performed and witnessed – they feared God! Right throughout Acts it is clear they feared not man or what people thought of them. They continued to preach boldly the truth of Jesus despite danger and threat. They were not afraid to offend people, they were not afraid to upset people, because they were dealing with the Gospel of Jesus which is the Gospel of life! The disciples were afraid of God above anything else and they did not dare to twist or interpret the Truth according to own agendas, gain or benefit. They did not seek to be popular or to be famous – they wanted people to be saved! And the only way people will be saved was through the Truth because the Truth of Jesus sets us free (John 8), not the truth of this world, not the truth of a denomination but only God!

The disciples surely would have remembered what Jesus taught them in Matthew 10: And Jesus summoned to Him His twelve disciples and gave them power and authority over unclean spirits, to drive them out, and to cure all kinds of disease and all kinds of weakness and infirmity 7 And as you go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand! 8 Cure

the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, drive out demons. Freely (without pay) you have received, freely (without charge) give ... 16 Behold, I am sending you out like sheep in the midst of wolves; be wary and wise as serpents, and be innocent (harmless, guileless, and without falsity) as doves. 17 Be on guard against men [whose way or nature is to act in opposition to God]; for they will deliver you up to councils and flog you in their synagogues, 18 And you will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a witness to bear testimony before them and to the Gentiles (the nations). 19 But when they deliver you up, do not be anxious about how or what you are to speak; for what you are to say will be given you in that very hour and moment, 20 For it is not you who are speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. 21 Brother will deliver up brother to death, and the father his child; and children will take a stand against their parents and will have them put to death. 22 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake, but he who perseveres and endures to the end will be saved [from spiritual disease and death in the world to come]. 23 When they persecute you in one town [that is, pursue you in a manner that would injure you and cause you to suffer because of your belief], flee to another town; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes. 24 A disciple is not above his teacher, nor is a servant or slave above his master .., 6 So have no fear of them; for nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, or kept secret that will not become known. 27 What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops. 28 And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; but rather be afraid of Him who can destroy both soul and body in hell (Gehenna). 29 Are not two little sparrows sold for a penny? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father's leave (consent) and notice. 30 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 Fear not, then; you are of more value than many sparrows. 32 Therefore, everyone who acknowledges Me before men and confesses Me [out of a state of oneness with Me], I will also acknowledge him before My Father Who is in heaven and confess [that I am abiding in] him. 33 But whoever denies and disowns Me before men, I also will deny and disown him before My Father Who is in heaven. 34 Do not think that I have come to bring peace upon the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

Glory to God! The message from Jesus was clear – fear not! Preach without fear! Heal without fear! Deliver without fear! Yes, danger will come, and yes, times will not be easy, but fear not! The disciples held onto these words of Jesus and boldly and with power in the Holy Spirit healed, delivered, and preached to the Glory of God because they feared not man but God and God alone! After all, we read in 2 Timothy 1:7 Amplified Bible (AMP): 7 For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear), but [He has given us a spirit] of power and of love and of calm and well-balanced mind and discipline and self-control.

It is time again the Church begins to fear the Lord, and begins to stand up for God and speak out against all things false, detestable, immoral and impure within the Church! Yes, we need to get our house in order first. We need to get united first with God's Truth and then with each other, for then revival will come in the land! A church that is not delivered from the

bondages of impurity, religion and idolatry cannot deliver a broken world! A church living in the fear of the devil will not be able to counter the fear of the devil in the world!

Listen to what the Lord said to His disciples (and keep in mind He is speaking to believers) in Mark 16: 15 And He said to them, Go into all the world and preach and publish openly the good news (the Gospel) to every creature [of the whole human race]. 16 He who believes [who adheres to and trusts in and relies on the Gospel and Him Whom it sets forth] and is baptized will be saved [from the penalty of eternal death]; but he who does not believe [who does not adhere to and trust in and rely on the Gospel and Him Whom it sets forth] will be condemned. 17 And these attesting signs will accompany those who believe: in My name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new languages; 18 They will pick up serpents; and [even] if they drink anything deadly, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will get well. 19 So then the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and He sat down at the right hand of God. 20 And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord kept working with them and confirming the message by the attesting signs and miracles that closely accompanied [it]. Amen (so be it).

Glory to God! Jesus commanded His disciples to preach the good news openly without fear. Compare this to what He told them in “Matthew 10: 6 So have no fear of them; for nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, or kept secret that will not become known. 27 What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops.”

And what happened when the disciples did exactly as the Lord commanded? Signs and wonders followed! There was a great move of the Spirit! There was revival! There was salvation! There was healing and deliverance! Why? BECAUSE THEY OPENLY PREACHED THE TRUTH OF GOD WITHOUT FEAR OF MAN OR WHAT MAN WILL SAY OR THINK OF THEM! SIGNS FOLLOWED BECAUSE THEY STOOD UP FOR GOD AND NOT THE WORLD!

After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, we read of THE DISCIPLES’ preaching that showed no fear for man - Acts 2 from verse 37: Now when they heard this they were stung (cut) to the heart, and they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles (special messengers), Brethren, what shall we do? 38 And Peter answered them, Repent (change your views and purpose to accept the will of God in your inner selves instead of rejecting it) and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of and release from your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise [of the Holy Spirit] is to and for you and your children, and to and for all that are far away, [even] to and for as many as the Lord our God invites and bids to come to Himself. 40 And [Peter] solemnly and earnestly witnessed (testified) and admonished (exhorted) with much more continuous speaking and warned (reproved, advised, encouraged) them, saying, Be saved from this crooked (perverse, wicked, unjust) generation. 41 Therefore those who accepted and welcomed his message were baptized, and there were added that day about 3,000 souls. 42 And they steadfastly persevered, devoting themselves constantly to the instruction and fellowship of the apostles, to the breaking of bread [including the Lord’s Supper] and prayers. 43 And a

sense of awe (reverential fear) came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were performed through the apostles (the special messengers). 44 And all who believed (who adhered to and trusted in and relied on Jesus Christ) were united and [together] they had everything in common;

Glory to God! There was revival – 3000 souls! Why? Because the apostles preached without fear! They preached boldly the Truth of God. They did not preach their own version of Truth but God’s Truth. They were united, they were humble (shared their own wealth) and they continued to seek God’s wisdom and guidance (constant prayer). And did we catch verse 43 and 44? “And a sense of awe (reverential fear) came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were performed through the apostles (the special messengers). And all who believed (who adhered to and trusted in and relied on Jesus Christ) were united and [together] they had everything in common ...”

The disciples walked in the fear of God and so the spiritual atmosphere was so changed that they who believed also walked in the fear of God! And let us remember again Mark 16 about those who believe (signs and wonders, healing and deliverance) ... you see, God is calling for a people who believes in Him and who preach His Word and Truth without fear. He is calling a people who will just believe in Him and do as He commands – openly and without fear!

And all those who believe – all those who openly walk in the fear of God – SHALL LAY HANDS ON THE SICK AND SEE HEALING, THEY SHALL LAY HANDS ON THE OPPRESSED AND SEE DELIVERANCE AND THEY SHALL SEE SALVATION AND REVIVAL. Not just the pastor or the bishop, BUT ALL THOSE WHO BELIEVE. It is not about race, colour, status, education or titles in the church – it is about God and it is about believing in Him and doing as He commands!

If we simply believe and do without fear we shall SEE the manifestation of God’s Kingdom because the Spirit of the Lord shall move to the Glory of God.

Again, we remember Mark 16 that speaks of picking up snakes and one will not be hurt. God backed His word when Paul was bit by a viper when making a fire (Acts 28:3). Why was Paul not hurt? Because after his conversion, he feared God and preached the Truth of God without fear! It says of Paul in “Acts 9: 29 Preaching freely and confidently and boldly in the name of the Lord. And he spoke and discussed with and disputed against the Hellenists (the Grecian Jews), but they were seeking to slay him.”

Take note, Paul preached the Truth even though he knew people were plotting to kill him. Sure, all the disciples knew people were plotting to kill them, and yes, most of them did die in horrible ways, but this did not prevent them from preaching the Good News [the Truth of Jesus] without fear of persecution. They still did so in power because God was their master! Indeed, if God is with us who can then be against us! We are more than conquerors in the Lord, for the Lord is greater than he who is in the world!

Hear the prayer of the disciples in Acts 4: “For in this city there actually met and plotted together against Your holy Child and Servant Jesus, Whom You consecrated by anointing,

both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and peoples of Israel, 28 To carry out all that Your hand and Your will and purpose had predestined (predetermined) should occur. 29 And now, Lord, observe their threats and grant to Your bond servants [full freedom] to declare Your message fearlessly, 30 While You stretch out Your hand to cure and to perform signs and wonders through the authority and by the power of the name of Your holy Child and Servant Jesus. 31 And when they had prayed, the place in which they were assembled was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they continued to speak the Word of God with freedom and boldness and courage.”

They prayed for boldness, they prayed for protection and they prayed that God will be manifested in them – they did so because they feared God and not man! And so they were shaken by the Holy Spirit to speak the Word [Jesus] in freedom and with courage. Glory to God! Should not this be our prayer? Lord, give us boldness and liberty to speak Your Word without fear of persecution.

Listen to what Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 4: I charge [you] in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, Who is to judge the living and the dead, and by (in the light of) His coming and His kingdom: 2 Herald and preach the Word! Keep your sense of urgency [stand by, be at hand and ready], whether the opportunity seems to be favorable or unfavorable. [Whether it is convenient or inconvenient, whether it is welcome or unwelcome, you as preacher of the Word are to show people in what way their lives are wrong.] And convince them, rebuking and correcting, warning and urging and encouraging them, being unflagging and inexhaustible in patience and teaching. 3 For the time is coming when [people] will not tolerate (endure) sound and wholesome instruction, but, having ears itching [for something pleasing and gratifying], they will gather to themselves one teacher after another to a considerable number, chosen to satisfy their own liking and to foster the errors they hold, 4 And will turn aside from hearing the truth and wander off into myths and man-made fictions. 5 As for you, be calm and cool and steady, accept and suffer unflinchingly every hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fully perform all the duties of your ministry.

Glory to God! Paul encouraged the followers of the Lord to stand up for the Truth even if it means to correct or to rebuke, to warn or to encourage, because it is all about the Truth of the Lord for there is power of healing, deliverance and salvation in the Name of Jesus! We need to preach the Truth no matter the danger or the threat, no matter if it is comfortable or uncomfortable, even if it is hard or difficult, convenient or not, because people need to know the Truth of God! More and more people these days are turning away from the Truth to listen to false doctrines and teachings, therefore going into deeper bondage, even though Paul warned in Galatians 5 that we should no longer allow ourselves to be enslaved. The Truth shall set people free, not our clever sermons, or our motivations!

Lastly, here is a powerful truth and revelation in Acts 5 (At this time the disciples had been arrested for speaking the Truth) and so we read from verse 34 (pay particular attention to verse 38 and 39): But a certain Pharisee in the council (Sanhedrin) named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law, highly esteemed by all the people, standing up, ordered that the apostles be taken outside for a little while. 35 Then he addressed them [the council, saying]:

Men of Israel, take care in regard to what you propose to do concerning these men. 36 For before our time there arose Theudas, asserting himself to be a person of importance, with whom a number of men allied themselves, about 400; but he was killed and all who had listened to and adhered to him were scattered and brought to nothing. 37 And after this one rose up Judas the Galilean, [who led an uprising] during the time of the census, and drew away a popular following after him; he also perished and all his adherents were scattered. 38 Now in the present case let me say to you, stand off (withdraw) from these men and let them alone. For if this doctrine or purpose or undertaking or movement is of human origin, it will fail (be overthrown and come to nothing); 39 But if it is of God, you will not be able to stop or overthrow or destroy them; you might even be found fighting against God!

Glory to God! Anything that is not from God within the church is destined to fail for it carries no power or authority from the Lord! Life comes from the Lord, so if we want to see the Spirit move – bringing life to the dead bones – we need to get back in the will of God! Indeed, if we continue to do the work of the Lord by speaking His Word and Truth, by proclaiming His Kingdom, and by standing up for what is right and wrong then nothing shall come against the work of the Lord! Gamaliel knew this – if these disciples were of God then there is no use to resist them because they were fighting against God Himself! And they were of God and so they walked in the reality of Psalm 91.

If we are truly following God's mandate and His purpose for our lives – speaking boldly and without fear the Truth God – nothing but nothing shall stand in the way of God's work! Yes, not even the gates of hell! Not the threats of mankind! Yet if we pursue our own agendas and programmes, seeking to do it in the flesh and by the imagination, we shall surely fail.

Indeed, many is the plans of man but the plan of the Lord prevails (Proverbs 19:21) ! Indeed, God's Kingdom shall not be shaken! Are we going to listen to God? Are we going to follow Him? Are we going to speak His Word boldly? It is time to do so, in the fear of God, for then we shall see revival like never before.

What does it mean to be a Christian in the Kingdom of God?

This is probably the quintessential question of our salvation. To refine it, one should rather ask, what does it mean to be a Christian in the eyes of the Lord? Ever since the days that man ploughed through the Dark Ages emerging into the days of high hopes of the Renaissance, well quite frankly, man has shifted his focus from God to himself and from the supernatural to the natural.

To answer this quintessential question therefore begins with correcting our postmodern thinking, or rather our viewpoint that is grounded in a sense of moral relativism, where universal truths seemingly no longer exist. To even begin tackling this enigma we begin at the very core of its distortion, where man in his Nietzsche outlook wants to reign supreme as the ruler of his own destiny, declaring himself to be that sovereign being who shapes his own future.

To begin to wade through layers and layers of dogma and doctrine and theology to reach the core of the meaning of being Christian, requires the strong-willed and the strong-minded to grab an axe and to start cutting down the roots that has given birth to the seeds of rationalistic perceptions and Enlightened humanism.

Maybe, from the outset, with bravado and courage, let us simply correct a floundering perception: to be a Christian means we are not just following Christ but also the Father and the Holy Spirit. We are not only following Jesus, but God the Trinity. That is why the term Christian was only used in Antioch to describe what the heathen understood a follower of the Lord meant. So, already we require a mind-shift. We are not only followers of Jesus. In fact, Jesus came to show us the Father and lead us to the Father. We follow God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Therefore, even though Jesus is God, He wanted to shift the focus from Him to the Father. Indeed, through belief and following in Him do we reach the Father; the Father therefore remains the focal point. This of course neither diminishes Jesus or the Holy Spirit for this will diminish Elohim as the Trinity as a whole, which to our fallible minds is impossible.

Let us recognise we follow Elohim, who is the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We are after all not called Ruach Elohimist, meaning followers of the Holy Spirit or only followers of the Father. We serve and submit to the Lord in His totality. We must be careful to realise that even though through the Blood of the Son we are saved, it is by that Blood that ultimately brings us into alignment within the Father's Covenant. It pleased the Father to send His Son so that we can be saved (John 3:16).

So, anybody who has ever followed the Lord is a servant of His Majesty and by logical deduction can be called a Christian (to keep to our modern thinking!?). For as we seek to discover the bare and raw answer to our conundrum to what it means to be a Christian, we surely shall surely falter if we remain on the throne. How can we begin to acknowledge the truth when in our post-modern world, man has become the centre and the very theology that has shaped "church" is self-centred and fuels the fires of enlightenment?

Let us be blunt and some say even cruel by admitting that man is not at the centre of the universe. Let us be truthful in our selfish vanity and begin to acknowledge that man is not the ruler of his own destiny and cannot shape his future with every whim and action. For the very roots of those ages of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment is so deeply buried in our societies and our churches that we would surely choke on it rather to declare that God is the ruler of all and that the very breath we take is by His mercy and grace. We may strive and vex ourselves in our attempts to create some sort of Utopia as once described by Thomas Moore, close advisor of Henry VIII, but such postmodern Utopias are but the ideal and dreams of men who have placed man on a higher pedestal than the Lord.

Thomas Paine in all his robust gusto to attack Christianity in his Age of Reason could surely not have believed man is capable to rise from his state of sin to become noble and pure. He surely could not have believed that through the rationalistic approach and through reason we could defeat death and live forever?

So, we have to begin by stepping out of the picture, just for a while and to seek to answer the question from God's point of view. Shall we deem this to be impossible? Not all. The very history of Israel, the chosen Nation, and then the birth and death of the Messiah reveals the answer we are seeking.

One can arguably find traces and clues and bits of truth to this quintessential question in the writings of Augustine's Confessions, Martin Luther's commentaries and Thomas A Kempis' Imitation of Christ.

We can even go a long way by studying Thomas Aquinas, who sought to combine faith and reason, or in other words, merge Christianity with the values of the Greek philosophers. Great philosophers who were Catholic like Voltaire can surely shed some illumination on our quest, or even thinkers like Peter Abelard? Throw in men like Immanuel Kant and how about Plato?

Yet, dogma and doctrine was hardly formed only in the halls and chambers of the universities where scholars dwelled, but in the very rooms of monasteries where the monks took the inward journey of finding the calmness and peace needed to be good servants.

Shall we dismiss the great Mystics like Madam Guyon or Mignon, who delved deep inwardly to find that encounter with the Lord? How about men of true humble nature such as Bernard and Francis of Assisi? For surely the Lord has placed beacons in history to help us derive an answer or to attempt to derive some sort of an idea what it means to be a Christian.

Yet, somehow, there in the murkiness of doubt and in the shadows of postulation, it still seems, looking at society today, that we have lost the very idea of what it means to be a Christian. And this is all due to our self-centred nature of living and our pride in that we seek to become gods and superstars of this world.

In order to dig through the layers of confusion and deception we need to dig deep within ourselves to realise that we have become the greatest idols. If we seek the truth, we need

to seek it with God in places and in times long before man even began to walk the earth. Again, Jesus has always provided the answer and so does the Holy Spirit.

Shall we then stop and ponder for a while what it means to be a Christian? Unfortunately, there are a myriad of vague answers that now can introduce itself. How about going to church on a Sunday? Caring for people? Bringing goodness into the world? Fighting demons? Changing lives? So I could continue. All thought-provoking but yet, if one stops for a while, consider how much of man is involved in this and how much this has all become about us and our self-centeredness?

Theology today and sermons all sound great, yet, despite all the books and all the teachings, somewhere along the line we have still come short in realising what it means to being a Christian. Maybe this still lies in ignorance or in the inability to understand the spiritual realm.

We can contemplate forming an answer to this question by firmly seeking the answer among the events that happened 2000 years ago, desiring to sift through time and rubble to find the knowledge. For surely when we equate salvation today with Christianity and being Christian we have to after all return to the Lord Jesus for our daily bread of satisfaction.

Does our answer then lie in that time period when Rome was the ruler of Israel? For surely we are dealing with a Blood Covenant so therefore surely what it means to be a Christian is solely locked up in the events that transpired in those towns called Bethlehem and Nazareth?

Most likely, but there is a problem attached to this enigma. Being a Christian cannot be solely linked to those events. For almost six thousand years people were called by the Lord and dwelled in His presence before the Son came to earth and died on the cross. Before Israel was even called and before Abram became Abraham there was a history of Adam and Eve. There was also Cane and Abel. And Noah and Enoch.

Yet, even before Adam and Eve existed there was eternity. There was the Trinity and there were angels. If this world is a mirror image of heaven and we are made in the image of the Lord, stand it not to reason and does it not deserve some sort of argument that what God intended in terms of being a Christian is not locked up in the events of 2000 years ago but rather locked up in the heavenlies where no time exists?

God's plan and design for mankind was sealed and designed before the foundation of the earth was laid. That plan has no dimension, exists in no space and is not altered by time. It simply is. It was the design for mankind before we breathed and remains long after we have shed our mortal skin.

If the answer lies in the heavenlies where no politician or ruler or philosopher or scholar can touch it, then can we dare to find the answer? Naturally, for the answer was given to Adam and Eve. It was given to the patriarchs and to Israel. And yes, if we all missed it, if we all failed to grasp the simplicity of it all, then the one and only Jesus came Himself to plainly and simply demonstrate it.

Man's grand quest to find the answers to our divine living has failed rather miserably. Apart from destruction and mayhem caused by the "churches", the division today among the Bride smacks of our slavery to a man-made religion. One could say the Bride in general has moved so far away from the essence of our salvation and this eternal design of heaven. The child of God, as professed by his lips, quake more than ever in fear of this world and has succumbed to a barrage of fluctuating emotions that has caused his character and nature to belie his state of grace.

If this modern day generation with all its knowledge and great thirst for wisdom so struggle to find some security in the inner corridors of the soul, then our quest seems to fail. For this modern man with all his moral relativism tearing at his mind, he who is called Christian trembles ever more so in his insecurity, unstable in his truth and so misguided in his quest for meaning. This modern day Christian attends the Sunday service religiously simply because he has to find a way to cage the demons in his soul and he has to pave a way to find some stability for another week.

For this modern day Christian watches the storms of life and is blown apart, spluttering in his hopes but he will drown in the chaos of it all. Faith and trust in the Lord are beautiful concepts he has learned, yet his deep inner fears and even deeper inner flaws speak a different tale not of divinity but of a modern man blinded by religion.

This modern day Christian carelessly chases after every wind and teaching, his knees bleeding from every time he stumbles, but the light seems to evade him. On his tongue he has tasted sweet nectar of freedom, yet the flames of ancient fires have not burned away the dross, for our souls cling to this world.

Freud, the father of psychology, argued that man is a prey to the base and brutal instincts that we inherited from our animal and primitive human ancestors. He says civilization tames the brutal savagery that lies within all of us, but it cannot rid us of our instincts. Occasionally the beast is unleashed leading man to commit extraordinary acts of violence.

Augustine, the church father, said in his radical pessimism that the nature of the beast comes from the sins that we inherited from Adam and Eve. He argued that without laws, man's brazen capacity to do harm and their urge for self-indulgence would then rage to the full.

It is no wonder then that since the days of the Greek philosophers that the first place man has looked to find answers to the great questions of war, cruelty, progress, hatred, creativity and destruction has been the individual mind.

Augustine's theory that man is ready to sin at any time was seen to be rather negative. For centuries philosophers have been debating the morality of man, if he is inherently good (Enlightenment) or if he is but a primitive creature that needs to be constantly restrained as argued by Freud.

Both Augustine and Freud were right. Even though philosophy has done its bit in destroying pure faith, many such arguments contain essential truths. Each individual is made by the

Lord's hand and therefore we contain Him in our genes and DNA makeup. Man has been made in God's image, in the secret place even before the foundation of the world was laid.

Man's destiny and purposes were mapped out, confirmed by the Trinity Lord, witnessed most probably by the angels. Yet man, with his divine purpose and divine makeup, is then born through sinful flesh into a sinful world. Man is left to embark on a journey for his spirit to once again be united with his creator before death comes knocking.

What then in the first place is the beast? The beast is simply the expression and manifestation of the corrupt world and its sin within each and every individual. It is the actions and reactions of man void of the Lord's goodness, holiness, truths and purity. Paul wrote of the war that wages inside him in Romans 7.

He speaks of two different forces; one wanting him to do what is just and good as determined by the Spirit and the other is the darkness that wants him to sin against his better judgment. That darkness is the beast, born into our soul and flesh when we are physically born. Peter also talks about the beast in 2 Peter 2, describing a long list of actions by man that defiles and corrupts them. Such men who are controlled by the desires and urges of the world are led by deception and speak falseness.

History is the great testifier that the only answer to a valued society, to morality and high norms is not the pressure applied by external laws but is the need for inner laws. Throughout history man has sought to lay down laws and conduct that would bring about a just and pure society, where its citizens' actions are moral, just and their norms and ethics speaks of goodness. This has been evident not only in Israel, but long before the coming of Jesus.

The simple reason is that the Lord has made man and within him is the DNA of divinity that drives him to seek out moral and ethical action. We see this will in the Code of Hammurabi, which was the Babylonian code of conduct. It also advocated a tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye. The code tried to impose laws that would lead to a just and morally sound society.

We see this in Greece, under the influence of Plato and Socrates, who advocated ethical governments. We see this with "civilized" Rome, with many of its laws still applying to the Western societies today. We see this theme repeating itself throughout history, as man seeks to improve himself, his environment and the government that governs him. Shining examples of such endeavours throughout history is cities like ancient Athens, thriving Rome and Renaissance Florence.

This effort has led to many just codes of conduct being drawn up, such as the Bill of Rights, Common Law, Universal Declaration of Human Rights and many others, some abolishing slavery, some abolishing torture and some abolishing genocide. These are all true and just codes, enforced by the League of Nations, later by the United Nations, NATO and so forth.

The question therefore to ask, has the external laws and man's noble ideas led to continuous "civilized" and "just" behaviour? Revolutions, massacres and wars for the last

2000 years speak of man not becoming much enlightened or godlike. The 20th C speaks rather of mankind that is barbaric, uncivilized and brutal. The two great wars, the massacres applied by Hitler and Stalin, ethnical fighting and the constant dangers of wide destruction by nuclear weapons speak of external laws and of our conduct failing miserably. It testifies that man's noble ideas, philosophies and social contracts have not changed man to become better.

The question remains why? Man's behaviour and his conduct cannot be enforced or determined by external laws but only internal laws. Such internal laws are one of a spiritual and divine nature. As Jesus Himself said, it is what is inside a man that makes him unclean. Countries have strict laws, yet this doesn't deter man from breaking them. The answer to a true and noble society is a people who live under the spiritual banner of the Lord, meaning that they have been spiritually reborn. Once man is made into a new creation, only then will he live justly, morally and ethically.

Today, the modern day Christian struggles from morning to night with this beast and he clings hopefully to vague sermons claiming that he is more than a conqueror in Christ and that he is capable to do the extraordinary. Yet, somehow, this Christian man with his heart filled with good words hardly understands or grasps the concept of a divine life rebirthing us.

The problem is Christianity has been shrouded in vagueness, as we stumble to grope the practical meaning. Hundreds of years ago scientists distinguished between theory and practice, yet today we still flounder when all we know is theory.

Practice implies reality. It is as if we have to know the theory of God and His works to be good Christians. For thousands of years man knew not anything of theory.

The great men of faith walked in God's reality, therefore in His presence. How to be a Christian is also shrouded in vagueness, for in theory we might have an idea and a concept, but the reality of walking in the Spirit and breathing the supernatural is quite astutely beyond theory, words or comprehension.

To begin to live as Christians also acquires of us to step out of the theoretical mindset of limiting and defining God in every aspect and stepping into a practical and living relationship. God is too great for theory and definitions. He is all-powerful and He is beyond language.

Yet man has been kept so busy with the external and the theoretical, as he is driven further away from the Lord who is the true answer to the much sought after noble behaviour and conduct. As long as man seeks answers externally or even internally but void of the spirit, then he chases after wind and set himself up for a fall. Many great philosophers have graced the world stage, yet have they truly caused man to be good? The only answer is with the Lord and eternity, yet the world in the last 2000 years have failed to seek Him but rather sought their salvation through their own deeds and intellectual faculties.

If this modern day Christian has become so insecure and so driven by the winds of this world, then surely along the way blindness and deafness has set in.

Were Adam and Eve Christians? But of course. They followed the Lord, who is the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Did Jesus only appear on earth 2000 years ago? Did the Holy Spirit only show up on the day of Pentecost? There, in the Paradise was the Father walking among His first creations, Adam and Eve.

Where were Jesus and the Spirit? Mostly in Heaven of course for the Father had personally gone down to earth to show His design and purpose of being a Christian to Adam and Eve. The Spirit didn't need to be an advocate. Jesus didn't need to be a teacher or prophet and didn't need to die. The Father was taking care of business. - from the beginning. The Father showed the way. Adam and Eve spoke with the Lord - He is the Trinity so Adam and Eve were Christians. But wait - there was no New Covenant or blood sacrifice. Were they saved? Well, they had the most perfect relationship with the Lord than anyone has ever had! Adam walked with the Lord, the Father Himself!

Genesis is very vague, just as the history of Jesus, but we get the point: Adam and Eve knew what it meant to be a Christian. But wait - there was no church, no tithing, no service - nothing! What did they do to earn such an honour? They walked with the Lord in complete fellowship, obedience and submission.

What was Adam doing? He was being the perfect son! And Eve? Yes, the perfect daughter.

Sonship. Daughtership.

But wait ... if we are still troubled by the fact that Jesus was absent from the Garden as well as the Holy Spirit, well, they weren't really! All the theology and all prophetic understanding, the Spirit makes it clear Jesus is the Tree of Life in the Garden, as demonstrated in Revelations. And the Spirit? How about the sword that protected the Tree of Life, or rather, prevented Adam and Eve from eating from it! You see Elohim as the Trinity was in the Garden. Adam and Eve followed God as a whole.

And they were the greatest mortal Christians!

How many times did not the Holy Spirit come upon the Christians of old to empower them for a certain task?

Then came the sin ... Adam and Eve ate from the tree. What did they do? They acted not as a son or daughter and suffered the consequences.

Now, we have Cane and Abel. Two more sons of Adam and of the Lord. They were taught by Adam to obey the Lord and to act as good sons. They followed the Lord. They were Christians. Was Jesus needed at that time? God the Father rather said He will for a time rise up a generation, small and exclusive, and show them His grand design.

What was God's perfect design for being a Christian? How to be a perfect son and daughter! So, here was Cane and Abel. Already the Father had set rules in place because of the sins of their parents. Already the Father was teaching about being set apart. The Lord is a holy God

and He is righteous judge. Such a Father wants to instil in His sons and daughters His values and norms and character and nature. He wants His sons and daughters to be set apart - for He is a holy and a pure Father.

Are we getting this? Cane and Abel - two good sons of the Lord. No religion. No church. Yet the Father spoke to them - yes, the Father spoke to them! They lived by a couple of requests made a by a loving Father. After all, this Father had seen what happened to his other son and daughter - they caused sin to enter the world.

We have the first notion of sacrifice and even more importantly, the first notion of spilled blood. Here was Cane who slew Abel and the Lord asked Cane what had happened to his brother? Cane did not confess. Yet, the Lord knew because the blood cried out from the earth that an injustice had been done!

The Lord heard the cry of the blood, for there is life in the Blood. Blood was spilled. Even worse, the blood of a son of the Lord was spilled. Yes, the blood of man speaks to the Lord. Again, it shows our misunderstanding and vague understanding of what the Lord sees, smells, hears and touches. It is supernatural and beyond theory.

But the Father has a plan for all of mankind in the future - a plan involving His Son who the Father had already said would defeat the serpent. Now, the seeds of the Blood Covenant are laid. Sonship had taken a serious knock. So the Father says, "That just as one son spilled the blood of another to add to the curse of the ground, so would My heavenly Son spill His blood for all His brothers and sisters to restore the blessings that I had intended for them in the Garden of Paradise. And just as the Blood of Abel cried out to Me from the cursed ground so the Blood of My Son Jesus cried out on Cavalry to heal the wounds and to bring all mankind under the hand of the Father.

Just as the blood of Abel brought pain and suffering between a son and a Father, so did the Blood of Jesus bring healing between a Father and all sons and daughters who call upon His name.

The Blood of Abel spoke to the Lord demanding justice for a Christian and a son killed. Yet the Blood of the Jesus cried out for justice for all mankind who like Cain wandered the earth without a Heavenly Father and that by the spilled Blood the Christian after 1AD would also have the right and privilege of being a son or a daughter.

It says in Genesis that the earth opened its mouth to swallow the blood of Abel. What happened when Jesus was crucified? The earth opened to swallow the Blood of the Righteous Son. For as the earth opened its mouth so the Lord opened His mouth to announce to all mankind that this is His beloved Son. By that Blood, God the Father arose from His seat in Heaven and pointed to His Son and justified Him. By the Blood and by the Covenant God the Father points to us His sons and daughters and justifies us before all heavenly hosts.

Still today, the blood of the martyrs cries to the Lord, so too does the blood of the innocent and the blood of the guilty. For the day Cain killed Abel, the Lord made Himself known as the Righteous Judge. So, by the Blood of the Lamb, the Father judges us righteously.

Since the days of Abraham and Moses the Lord has taught Israel about Sonship and about Daughtership. He just did it differently, for this an exclusive group of people. Yet, the Lord kept reminding us of the very essence of it being Sonship or Daughtership by keeping the blood sacrifice.

The Lord called on Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. However, before Abraham sacrificed his son, the Lord gave him a goat to sacrifice. The father and son relationship remained intact between Abraham and Isaac, even though Abraham was willing to offer up a sacrifice. The Lord taught Abraham about Sonship and the importance of the father and son/daughter relationship.

Abraham as a Christian understood and realised the very essence of Christianity is that relationship between father and son. But like Adam in the Garden, Abraham as a good son remained faithful and true unto the Father. The story of Abraham and Isaac is naturally the allegory for the heavenly Father and Son, yet the Son Jesus had to shed His blood once and for all to secure that relationship covenant between the Father and His Children. Yet again, what did Christianity mean to Abraham? Sonship! Relationship! Fellowship - talking one on one with the Father.

From the beginning it was about the Blood and the Law. The Blood seals the Covenant and by the Law who adhere to it. This Law has come in many forms. Abraham had to follow laws. So did Noah. Moses introduced Israel to 613 laws. In Jesus is the perfect and divine law that encapsulates all laws. There have always been blood sacrifices. Yet with the perfect Blood of Jesus came the perfect higher law. With this came the perfect and highest form of Covenant and therefore the highest form of sonship!

We have Joseph - whose life is the perfect allegory for the life lived by Jesus. And just as his brothers betrayed Joseph, so was Jesus was betrayed by some of his brothers but he still secured their salvation. Joseph was the son sent to fallen Egypt and so Jesus was sent by the Father to a broken world. The story speaks of reconciliation and redemption between father and son and between brothers. By the Blood, reconciliation and redemption between the Father and us and between Jesus, our brother, and us, have been secured.

So we have Moses. His life is an allegory of living in this world and yet being a Christian, just as he grew up as an Egyptian but also as a Hebrew. Like Adam and Abraham and like Noah, Moses talked face to face with the Lord. It was about Sonship. The Lord, who is the Father, setting Moses apart as His son to teach others also to become sons and daughters of the Lord. What did Moses understand as a Christian? Fellowship, intimacy, trust, faith - he understood Sonship and the importance of having a heavenly Father.

What did the Lord teach in the Ten Commandments? Respect and how to revere the Lord your Father. Respect your father and mother. Respect each other for you are each other's brothers and sisters, and therefore sons and daughters together in the Lord.

What did the Israelites learn? How to be good sons and daughters of the Lord! They learned to be set apart, to be holy and to be pure of heart, even though externally to the greatest measure. They had the privilege of having a Father wander through the dessert with them - as a cloud by day and by fire by night. What did the 613 commandments teach them?

How to be holy! How to be set apart! Simply, how to be proper Christians as sons and daughters who revere and respect their Father and how to respect each other as brothers and sisters. The Father Himself showed up at the Tent of Meeting. The Father Himself made Himself a home in the Holy of Holies in the Temple. The Father Himself dealt with the Israelites - they were taught firsthand about Sonship and Daughtership under the tutorship of the Father.

And the sacrifice of the Blood was not forgotten - as the Blood was shed of animals that blood cried out to the Lord for mercy and grace so that the Father would forgive His sons and daughters. And as these Christians who led simple lives obeyed and submitted to Him, then the Father would place His hand upon them and bless them and hear them. These were Christians who encountered the Lord Jesus as the Angel of the Lord and who encountered the Holy Spirit.

They encountered the presence of the Father. What did Christianity mean to them? Being a holy and set-apart nation who simply fellowshiped and loved Him. They were farmers and peasants and warriors - they had no purpose but to obey the Lord and to be good sons and daughters.

And then came Jesus. The perfect Son.

Jesus grew up and lived the life of the perfect Son. He came to show us how to live as the perfect Son or Daughter. He lived in pure relationship with the Father just as Adam had done. Jesus being the second Adam.

Where did Jesus learn to be the perfect Son, or in our logical thinking, the perfect Christian? Was he trained or taught? Did He attend any services?

No. He learned it before the foundation of the earth was laid.

Before mankind, there was perfect fellowship in heaven between Father and the Son and the Spirit. Jesus was the Perfect Son in heaven before Adam was born and when He came to earth He kept on being the perfect Son. He just lived the way He did in heaven!

What did this Christian Jesus do? He walked in fellowship and relationship with the Father. He showed others the way to the Father through Him. He showed Himself so that we can see the Father. He was the perfect Son so that we could find the perfect Father. It is time we looked more closely at what Jesus did and also what He didn't do. His external works were to glorify the Father through Him.

He died so that we can be sons and daughters of the Father. Jesus did all those miraculous things because of His perfect sonship. He never betrayed the King of the Kingdom. He was full of power as God and human because He knew what it meant to be a son. Jesus showed his perfect sonship in His relationship with His earthly mother.

He showed His perfect sonship to us all so that we could all become that because He wants to be our brother, serving the Father together. What is then Sonship? It is a living, breathing faith relationship. Sonship is not something external, feeding off rituals. It is that all day fusion of your Spirit and His, His blood running in our veins, mind connecting with mind, heart with heart, soul with soul, fibre with fibre, bone with bone and morality and immorality. Sonship is that something alive, something pulsating, something eternal, and something so real. Sonship does not end or begin, it is forever moving and flowing.

It cannot be defined, caged or captured. It begins not on a Sunday or with prayer and neither does it end so. It is continuous, it is birth, it is our blood flowing, and it is our hope and dreams. It is love and endless hope. Sonship and fatherhood mingled and intertwined, every second and every moment. It is not external or temporary. It is not institutional or rationalistic or abstract. It is alive. It is divine.

The Word says the Lord has known us in the secret place and has formed us in the secret place before we were born. Sonship is born in the secret place. Before we had breath, the Lord made us in the secret place to be a son or daughter.

There in the Tent of Meeting or there in the Holy Place and here in His presence the Israelites returned to the secret place and this is where sonship was forged and shaped and rebirthed. When Moses went up the mountain, he sat 40 days in the presence of the Father - Moses was taught sonship and sonship was sealed and rebirthed in his heart. Moses wrote in Psalm 91 how he found refuge under the wing of the Lord - that is the secret place, the meeting place, the place of His presence.

The day we are reborn in spirit, we enter His presence, His secret place where sonship is again rebirthed in us and given full bloom. Sonship flourishes and grows and strengthens and gains power like a mighty flood and like a mighty thunder there in the secret place, there where the Father first created His child, there in His presence where He hears the Blood of His Son Jesus that now covers us.

Sonship gains momentum and grows like a tree when we return as a son and a daughter to that secret place, meaning when we return and walk in the presence of the Lord. For this is how it has always been - the Father teaching His son or daughter, one on one, in His presence, in His way, us covered by His wings and us covered by the Blood.

From the beginning of time ever since Adam and Eve, the Lord showed how to live as a son and daughter and also how to attain it. This is vital for our understanding. The covenants was a way of attainment, yet the Lord's will for how we should live as a son or daughter, epitomized by Jesus, has never changed. His idea of being a Christian has never changed but only the means of attainment. Yet these covenants in themselves shone bright with the

ways of sonship and daughtership, ultimately preparing all mankind, including Israel, to embrace the perfect covenant of grace.

The Blood of Jesus sealed the perfect covenant of Father and Sonship and Daughtership, allowing us to return to the state of Adam and Eve.

The entire history of Israel speaks of sonship. Look at their family structures. Interesting, a man's worth was reckoned to him by who his father and grandfather are. The Jewish people still hold to this belief, citing their worthiness because their lineage can be traced back to Abraham and Adam. Those from the tribe of Judah are proud of their lineage as it is traced back to David. This is why we find all the chronologies in the Bible. It speaks about Sonship and Daughtership.

Similarly, our bloodline can be traced and our forefathers are known. Yet, by the Blood of the Lamb, spiritually, the blood that runs in our veins can only be traced back to the Lord Himself! It is pure, clean and righteous blood! It is blood without a curse or a sickness or anything. It is royal blood. So as sons and daughters our lineage is directly traced back the Father of all heaven.

Look at the relationship between some of the most prominent father and son or father and daughter relationships in the Bible and see God's reaction. We think of Abraham and his sons, Isaac and his sons, David and his sons and so forth.

Throughout the history God has made His intention clear: How to live as that perfect son or daughter. That is what He wants. No rituals. He wants sons and daughters who make Him and His Kingdom proud.

Sonship and Daughtership is a question of being. And this is where the Bride still sadly fails in her understanding. We are called to simply be a son or a daughter. That is Christianity. That is truth. Ultimately, we are not called to be mere Christians, but called to be sons and daughters. And there, in that state of being, lies our strength and security.

In short, a prince in a Kingdom knows he is a prince and acts thus. He is the son of the King. He knows he has security and provision. His Father's Kingdom is his. He knows this and acts in a state of being so, not doubting it nor questioning neither probing the King if this is so. He is a son. He asks not for these things for he knows it is his. His Father is the King. But what does the son do? As a prince, He upholds the principles, values and morals and ethics of the Kingdom. He is still loyal to the King, His Father. He follows His Father. He obeys Him. Follows Him, serves Him and even fights for Him.

This is what the prodigal son story is all about. A son returning and knowing what is his.

We are sons and daughters. Royalty. By the covenant and by the Blood, His Kingdom is ours. The angels are at our command. All the protection and provision is ours. Seeking the Kingdom is seeking to please the King by upholding all that the Kingdom stands for. Loyalty. Obedience. Serving. Yet we doubt for we walk not as sons and daughters. We are not being a son or daughter, for it should be as normal as breathing and sleeping.

What we do does not define what it means to be a Christian. It is the outflow and the result. Being a Christian is being a son and daughter, every waking second. It is being that son or daughter in the secret place. It is being there where the Spirit resides in us and us in the Throne Room. Talking to the your Father. Laughing with Him. Walking with Him. Dancing with Him. Fighting with Him. Relationship. In short - it is what Adam had with the Lord, and so did Moses and the rest. It is not external or theoretical holiness. It is that something internal, eternal and secretive that defines our relationship.

So it comes down to our character, behaviour, attitude, norms, values, priorities, outlooks, perceptions and mindsets. All internal things. Does this all speak naturally of one being a son or a king? Does it portray the value of the Kingdom?

Going to a Sunday service or Bible study has got nothing to do with sonship or daughtership. It is an external ploy. The Father knows who are His. It is those who are and want to be His children in soul and spirit. That is Sonship and Daughtership. There, in that Secret Place, we are forged, in His presence where logic does not exist.

And there, in His presence, in our Sonship and Daughtership, we know who we are and act so, thereby caging that inner beast and walking with inner assurance. There our fears and insecurities perish at the hand of the one who made us.

In that perfect walk of being, we know the Father as being true and just and loyal, and we can rest from our labours. Finally, by being and knowing, we trust and have faith. We we are His children.

Look at the life of Jesus. Perfectly cared for. Loved. Strengthened. Yet He walked with the Father, and His Kingdom is what he cherishes. If we are true sons and daughters, then our Father and His Kingdom are our delight and soul desire. Sonship and Daughtership. This is what the Lord desires. Children who will sit on his lap and talk to Him and hold Him and love Him. Our greatest purpose then in life? Sonship. Daughtership.

Interwoven into God's Kingdom by the Spirit

It is by the Spirit that we truly comprehend that we serve a God who is Spirit, and that the supernatural realm is real, even more real than the natural. Yes, the Kingdom of God is real. It is by the Spirit that we move into the spiritual, into the supernatural, and we begin to understand and comprehend the Kingdom of God which is not bound by dimensions, time or the physical.

After all, as believers of the Lord, we need to understand, comprehend, grasp and intricately behold the spiritual fabric of the Church, thus the Kingdom of God. This means we need to realise we ARE the Church – the Ecclesia - for the church is not the building of brick and stone but of a people who have been reborn spiritually and who serve God as worshippers in spirit and truth. And when we speak of the Church, we are referring to the Bride - the true followers of God, and not merely those who follow a religion.

For too long we have become aware of and understand through our senses and knowledge, be it of the flesh or of the spirit, the physical fabric of the church. We comprehend the Church to be a building, filled with services. Such a church service implies the process of singing, worshipping, praying, preaching, serving and ministering, but the texture of such activity remains physical in nature and not spiritual by nature.

We have still failed to grasp and understand the spiritual fabric of the Church, implying worshipping and ministering and praying in the Spirit and through the Spirit. For a long time now we have allowed for our focus to shift away from the spiritual to the physical, in such a way that the Church has become the physical building instead of a spiritual organism, and in such a way that we are more concerned about our temporary wealth and welfare in the physical than our eternal wealth and welfare in the spiritual.

And so we must first comprehend at the outset the church is not the physical form of the building or the physical chairs – for such is the physical fabric that we perceive. And this reality can only become known and real to us through the Holy Spirit opening our spiritual eyes to see and to comprehend.

We see how King David himself was focused upon the physical fabric of tangible worship, as we read out of 2 Samuel 7: God's Promise to David: 1 After the king was settled in his palace and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, 2 he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent." 3 Nathan replied to the king, "Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the LORD is with you." 4 But that night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying: 5 "Go and tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? 6 I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. 7 Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"' " "The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you:

God wanted David to think spiritual. He wanted David to think beyond the concrete walls and the tent of meeting. David needed to think of the eternal and spiritual Kingdom. He needed to think beyond the construction and the temporary dynasty, and think spiritually. David therefore needed to change his perception from being physical to spiritual. Solomon, David's son, however was tasked to build the temple by its physical fabric, but for David, the temple was within a spiritual context designed to contain dimensions, depths and heights beyond earthly understanding. The spiritual concept of the heavenly temple was later on in Revelation and also in Ezekiel (from chapter 40) highlighted.

2 Samuel 7 also established the spiritual fabric by which all things are interwoven - Jesus. The Lord made it clear to David that Jesus will rule as the eternal king on the throne of the eternal dynasty which encompasses the House of David. It is because of our flesh and temporal perception that we have become physical orientated to such a degree that we struggle to really perceive what it means to move in the Spirit.

We have after all become so used to the physical way of worshipping, of praying or ministering that we fail to see beyond the tangible and the natural and so move in the supernatural. The physical fabric is imbedded in our outlook and understanding of the Church, to such extent that we attend church rather than being the church. This obscures our vision so that it becomes one of temporary nature instead of spiritual. This results in us living by sight and not faith. The church is the Body of Christ. It says in Romans 12 we are the living sacrifices: 1Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

The Church is thus not an organisation [physical] but a spiritual organism, which is alive and breathing, with its blood being the Blood of Jesus, with its breath being the breath of God and with its heartbeat being the heartbeat of God. We follow a faith and not a religion. We follow not mere dogma and teaching, but a living God who is the alpha and the omega of our faith. To understand the spiritual fabric of the Church we need to grasp we are dealing here with a living body of many members, yet joined by one Spirit, by one Blood, by one Lord and by one Truth.

To understand the mysteries and depths of moving into the spiritual realm, thus functioning and operating in the Holy of Holies, we need to come to an understanding that there is a far deeper divine working of holiness within the Church, but such a working is within the spiritual fabric, and not within the physical. It is a working where the very fabric and nature of the Bride is transformed into the likeness of God, and into the supernatural, by the ordinary and extraordinary power of God.

Once we move beyond the scope and limitations of being interwoven into the physical nature of attending a church and thus following a set of rules that make up a religion, we can then move into a state of beholding as regards to our spiritual nature and will we move and operate as a Body according to the glorious manifestations settled in the Holy of Holies.

To understand the spiritual fabric of our nature let us read Psalm 139: 15 My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the

depths of the earth, 16 your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. The spiritual fabric of the church was woven by the Lord's hand in the secret place – at the beginning and end of all. The texture was created and woven by His hand. Man's spirit was woven with the beauty of heaven and so the Lord called man's spirit to awaken from spiritual slumber to return unto such a spiritual state to be interwoven within Him. To be interwoven in the Lord is when man rediscovers from what fabric he is made and woven for such fabric is the fabric of true existence. And this reality we can only understand by the Spirit of the Lord.

We as the Ecclesia are functioning and operating within the boundaries and limitations of the physical fabric, but we remain unable to be flexible and pliable within the spiritual realm, where the church was formed. And through the physical, the flesh has upstaged the spirit, and by the flesh we have become enslaved and have been captured by the temporary temptations and gratifications.

In regard to the secret place where the Church was formed, and in regard to that fabric and state of being and beholding, we must return here and now to move within the complexities and the liberating power of the Spirit to function as intended – to function as a living organism, spirit driven, spirit conscious and spirit liberated. We need to therefore move past the physical fabric of the body/flesh and into the secret place beyond the veil, under His Shadow, so that we by texture are interwoven into the Blood by Grace. Psalm 91: 1 Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. 2 I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

Unto Moses was given the physical fabric of the church – the Law, Tabernacle, and Customs – but interwoven into the physical was the spiritual essence of God through obedience and holiness. Within the spiritual walk through the Tabernacle, we realise that we no longer serve a God bound to a physical dwelling but a God who dwells within.

The Old Testament serves as a shadow of the true spiritual nature of God's eternal principles and truths. For this reason, the Law, the festivals and many of the customs pointed to the spiritual reality as introduced and fulfilled in Jesus. It is therefore time for the Bride to move beyond the physical and tangible fabric of the Church and move into the intricate spiritual fabric of our spiritual existence, from which we were born and unto which we return with the second rebirth and our death.

How then can we understand the difference between the physical and the spiritual in order for us to move in the greater freedom of the Spirit?

Let us look at wood. When we deal with the physical fabric of wood, we know we can physically see it, touch it, taste it, and smell it. We know wood can be used for many purposes, primarily as a fuel or as a construction material for making houses, tools, weapons, furniture, packaging, artworks, and paper. When we touch wood we can detect its texture. When we apply heat we can test its durability. When we use it for construction, we can test its pliability.

We can also see the colour of wood, but we need to access deeper knowledge than merely our senses to understand the different species. We need a deeper knowledge for example to understand the distinct difference between heartwood and sapwood, since the natural colour of heartwood is usually darker than that of the sapwood, and very frequently the contrast is conspicuous.

Wider knowledge also determines that such a darker colour is produced by deposits in the heartwood of chemical substances, so that a dramatic colour difference does not mean a dramatic difference in the mechanical properties of heartwood and sapwood, although there may be a dramatic chemical difference.

But, this is still wood in its most simplest of physicality. Now, if we apply our minds to wood and look beyond the fabric and texture, we know by knowledge that wood is a heterogeneous, hygroscopic, cellular and anisotropic material. It is composed of cells, and the cell walls are composed of micro-fibrils of cellulose and hemicellulose impregnated with lignin. Knowledge of wood also tells us that the structure of hardwoods and softwoods, and between hardwood and sapwoods, differ and they are rather complex.

So from the outset, our five senses can tell us a lot about wood. We can know its colour, its texture, its height and width. We can even know what kind of tree it is. What our senses can't tell us from the outset is what the wood is made of, how such a structure and composition of things function in harmony to produce the colour and the texture and so. For that we rely on knowledge of the deeper characteristics of wood.

But even such knowledge cannot really cause us to delve deep into the intricate functionality of the heterogeneous, hygroscopic, cellular and anisotropic material that makes up the wood. We cannot be one in knowledge with the cells and we will struggle through knowledge to understand how all of these things come together to form something which is tangible and what can be seen, touched, smelled or tasted.

Faith is very much like this ... faith can be understood through knowledge, but to understand how faith truly works on a spiritual level you then have to move in the spiritual to grasp the spiritual complexities of God's divine working. This is what we deal with when it comes to the physical and spiritual fabric of the Church.

When we think of Church, we can see, taste and feel the building. We can hear the music. We can hear the sermon. We can feel the carpet beneath our feet. We can feel those around us attending Church. We can feel the physical presence, therefore the physical fabric of the Church.

Now, let us delve deeper. We read the Bible [also physical], so we have knowledge of the Kingdom of God and we have knowledge of God. We read books. We gain knowledge, until our physical understanding of the workings of the Kingdom of the Lord is like someone having a physical understanding of how wood is structured and of what fabric wood is made from.

Such knowledge is valuable. It teaches us many things, and teaches us how the Church functions, how it should function, how it is made up, how the Kingdom works but yet, we cannot quite fathom on a deep intricate level how this all gels together to produce the church of faith on earth.

Let us pause here for a minute and consider the following ... when we look at a curtain in day time we will see the light behind the curtain. We can touch the curtain, taste it, smell it, and see it. We can feel its fabric. We can feel its texture. A deeper knowledge will tell us more about the structure of the fabric and its characteristics.

Now, what about the light? We cannot touch it, taste it or smell it. But it is there ... we can by knowledge know how light functions and operates. We can now that light is electromagnetic radiation that is visible to the human eye, and is responsible for the sense of sight. Visible light has wavelength in a range from about 380 nanometres to about 740 nm, with a frequency range of about 405 THz to 790 THz. We know primary properties of light are intensity, propagation direction, frequency or wavelength spectrum, and polarisation, while its speed in a vacuum is 299,792,458 meters per second (about 300,000 kilometers per second).

This, however, explains lights, but can we really understand the intricacies of light on a deep level? After all, when God called forth light, then light – the light we understand by knowledge and science – came forth from Him. Light, as understood by us scientifically, was birthed by the Lord when He spoke. Can we comprehend it? We can't, because light is still for us a physical and scientific constant of nature, instead of being spiritual and supernatural. Light is technically spiritually born. Our lack of understanding the spiritual nature of light causes us not to move intimately in essence with the light even though we can feel the light on our skin and we can see it.

From the days of old until now, the old and tangible has become the spiritual, and this is illustrated throughout Scriptures.

It says in Colossians 2: 16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, 17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. 18 Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19 and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God. 20 Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations— 21 “Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,” 22 which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men? 23 These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

The shadow of things past is a shadow of the truth and this truth is one of substance. The Law was but a shadow of the real substance of God. The tangible things of the past – the

temple, the laws, and the customs – remain by the shadow of the spiritual and of the eternal, which is settled in heaven.

The feasts of Israel were but the shadow of the true substance of things to come, as fulfilled in Jesus. Paul refers to the Jewish Feasts as a "mere shadow" of things to come, the substance of them being found in Jesus, the Messiah. What Paul is saying here is that the feasts were prophetic types, or symbols, that pointed to the Messiah and which would be fulfilled in Him.

Remember that the feasts were a part of the Mosaic Law that was given to the Children of Israel by God through Moses (Exodus 12; 23:14-17; Leviticus 23; Numbers 28 and 29; and Deuteronomy 16). The Jewish nation was commanded by God to celebrate seven feasts over a seven month period of time, beginning in the spring of the year and continuing through the fall. The feasts remain but an illustration of how one has to look beyond the physical to grasp the spiritual, for everything in the Old and New Testament has a far deeper spiritual foundation, meaning and truth.

Such is the nature with the Lord. The old of the shadow therefore became the tangible presence of the now that casts the reflection of the old of the shadow. This is what happened with the Law, the Feasts, and the Tabernacle [we are now the holy temple of the Lord]. Just so, God is the spiritual fulfilment and completion of the physical Ark of the Covenant. God has always intended to dwell with man, but first His presence was presented tangibly in the Ark, and this Ark is now mankind for we are the carriers of this glorious vessel. With the outpouring of the Spirit, His presence is for us now eternal, real, near and spiritual. There is no more need for the physical Holy of Holies, for this chamber is now the chamber of our inner most chambers of our soul where we allow God to come and dwell to His glory. Indeed, in the Ark was found the Staff, the golden jar of the manna, and the Commandments.

Yet, God is the fulfilment of the Commandments. Jesus is the Bread of Heaven for He is the true Manna. Revelation 2:17: Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it. Psalm 105:40: They asked, and he brought them quail; he fed them well with the bread of heaven. John 6:33: For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." John 6:51: I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

God rules with the rod and the staff of authority (Psalm 23). By the Blood of Jesus we enter into a new covenant (Jeremiah 33). Therefore, the physical speaks of the physical realities of the Law and the Covenant as represented by the Staff and the Tablets, while the manna spoke of the tangible presence of His Almighty Provision. Today, we as the Ark of the New Covenant, make room for God to dwell in us through the Spirit, and thus by His indwelling by Spirit we operate in the spiritual and eternal reality of His authority and His Truth and

Commandments that have been sealed by Blood and Water. Praise the Lord, He is the Hidden Manna, He is the Authority over all, and He is the fulfilment of the Law and all commandments. How we need to begin to seek Him deeper and beyond the veil of time and season and physical fabric and flesh and mind and thought. How we need to seek Him beyond the veil of the Self, for there you will find the Glory of the Lord.

Physically, the Church feels the heat of the Lord, the goose bumps, the slaying of the flesh, the speaking of tongues – but we are only dealing with the physical fabric of the church. We need to delve deeper and move to the spiritual fabric. We slowly come into contact with the inter unseen and intangible workings of the Kingdom, manifested through the physical fabric of the Church, when we move in the gifts of the Spirit, speak in His tongue and minister in His power. But then again, our knowledge remains limited as to how this is happening. Again, we are aware of God's power of healing and deliverance, we are aware of the power of the Blood, but we cannot understand how it functions to bring about a manifestations. In order for this to happen, we need the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us beyond the physical comprehension and into the spiritual fabric ... For when we are truly interwoven with God, returned unto spiritual state unto the secret place, will we not merely be functioning as a church according to our physical fabric, operating by senses and knowledge, but we will be operating in Spirit and according to Spirit, free of limitations and restrictions.

In the Spirit, we will be able to see beyond the Church as a building in order to see the Kingdom. We will be able to see not the curtain but the light. We will be able to touch and feel the light. We will thus be able to see, hear and understand the inner workings of the Kingdom. We will do so because our fabric is spiritual, encased in flesh! We need to move with the Spirit so that we can see deeper, understand wider, so that we can ultimately in a state of beholding and a state of being and a state of existence become the spiritual fabric as woven by the hand of God. Then our senses of the physical fabric of the church will be transplanted by the inner workings of the Kingdom.

Our visions, our words, our spirit and soul will then flow from beyond the physical – we will not sing worship sings, but be worship. We will not preach words, but be the Word. We will not act as a Church, but be the Church. We can only be the Church when we function according to our original state, which is the spiritual fabric woven in the heavenlies.

Prophetic thoughts on the Kingdom

John 3 is a well-known Scripture. It says from verse 3 Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.” 4 “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!” 5 Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.”

The Amplified speaks about seeing and experience the Kingdom of God. No matter what Bible translation we look at it, it speaks about being reborn in order to see, thus experience, the Kingdom on earth. Jesus took it further and said to be truly reborn requires a rebirth in the Spirit, thus the infilling or baptism of the Spirit, and to be born of water also speaks of the water baptism. Remember, at the time of our natural birth we are born out of water, and so in our spiritual rebirth the water speaks of laying down the old to walk in the new, filled and regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit. Granted, some might never be offered the chance at such a water baptism, but with a true rebirth the Spirit of God must be present, for the Spirit of God gives life (Matthew 1:18, Genesis 1).

So, to see and to experience the Kingdom, implies knowing and understanding the truths and ways of the Kingdom. In 1 Corinthians 2 we read: 14 But the natural [unbelieving] man does not accept the things [the teachings and revelations] of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness [absurd and illogical] to him; and he is incapable of understanding them, because they are spiritually discerned and appreciated, [and he is unqualified to judge spiritual matters]. 15 But the spiritual man [the spiritually mature Christian] judges all things [questions, examines and applies what the Holy Spirit reveals], yet is himself judged by no one [the unbeliever cannot judge and understand the believer’s spiritual nature]. 16 For who has known the mind and purposes of the Lord, so as to instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ [to be guided by His thoughts and purposes].

So according to verse 16, we have the mind of Christ, thus the Kingdom by the indwelling of the Spirit of God. Thus, we need to be reborn in the Spirit to receive the mind of Jesus in order to understand and to know Kingdom. Of the Spirit it is also written in John 16: 12 “I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear [to hear] them now. 13 But when He, the Spirit of Truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth [full and complete truth]. For He will not speak on His own initiative, but He will speak whatever He hears [from the Father—the message regarding the Son], and He will disclose to you what is to come [in the future]. 14 He will glorify and honor Me, because He (the Holy Spirit) will take from what is Mine and will disclose it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Because of this I said that He [the Spirit] will take from what is Mine and will reveal it to you.”

It is therefore clear that the Spirit of God is of vital importance in our rebirth, for to know the Lord and His Kingdom we need to be led by the wisdom, counsel and understanding (Isaiah 11) of the Spirit. As the Spirit leads, we shall have the insight, revelation and truth of the Kingdom dwelling within us.

Take note of what Paul writes in Ephesians 1: 15 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers; 17 [I always pray] that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may grant you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation [that gives you a deep and personal and intimate insight] into the true knowledge of Him [for we know the Father through the Son]. 18 And [I pray] that the eyes of your heart [the very center and core of your being] may be enlightened [flooded with light by the Holy Spirit], so that you will know and cherish the [f]hope [the divine guarantee, the confident expectation] to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the [g]saints (God's people), 19 and [so that you will begin to know] what the immeasurable and unlimited and surpassing greatness of His [active, spiritual] power is in us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of His mighty strength 20 which He [h]produced in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion [whether angelic or human], and [far above] every name that is named [above every title that can be conferred], not only in this age and world but also in the one to come. 22 And He]put all things [in every realm] in subjection under Christ's feet, and [j]appointed Him as [supreme and authoritative] head over all things in the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills and completes all things in all [believers].

So Paul speaks of being granted "a spirit of wisdom and of revelation [that gives you a deep and personal and intimate insight] into the true knowledge of Him", thus Jesus. This can only happen with the leading and inner dwelling of the Spirit with a believer, and by such knowledge, wisdom and revelation we understand and know the Kingdom. He also writes how "that the eyes of your heart [the very center and core of your being] may be enlightened [flooded with light by the Holy Spirit]". This of course know refers back to John 3, which speaks of seeing the Kingdom. To see thus connects with revelations, discernment and insight into the matters of the spiritual.

Therefore, we can only know the Kingdom when we are reborn. We can only know the truth and the way of the Kingdom when we are infilled by the abiding power and presence of the Holy Spirit. A believer who is thus not truly reborn in the Spirit cannot know the ways of the Kingdom, for only by the Spirit at true spiritual rebirth can we know the King and His Kingdom. Jesus said in Matthew 26: "but first and most importantly seek (aim at, strive after) His kingdom and His righteousness [His way of doing and being right—the attitude and character of God], and all these things will be given to you also." So in order for us to seek after His Kingdom, we need to be led by the Spirit of God. There is simply no way to pursue to Kingdom without the Spirit of God, thus without being truly reborn. This implies a real relationship with God. In verse 9 the Lord teaches us to pray and so He teaches: "'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, 10 your kingdom come, your will be done.'" If we thus truly want to follow God, know His will, know what is Kingdom and know the ways of Kingdom, we need to be born in the Spirit and by water so that we can see, experience and understand the Kingdom. It is that simply.

It says in “Matthew 4:23 (NKJV): And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.” And also “Matthew 24:14 and this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” Take note, Jesus taught The Gospel of the Kingdom, not church doctrine. There is a big difference between the Kingdom of God and the man-made culture of church of today. One is the Truth of God, and the other the doctrines, ideas, agendas and traditions of man. In the Kingdom, there is one Truth, one Faith and one Spirit. We are all as believers supposed to preach Kingdom, teach Kingdom, follow Kingdom and seek Kingdom, which speaks of relationship, divine life, eternal truths and not a truth distorted by religion, by man’s intellect or ambition or desire. Yet we can only preach and teach and know Kingdom when we see and understand Kingdom, which is a result of being born in the Spirit and led in the Spirit as a new creation. And in such Kingdom is life, power, truth and love in order to redeem, restore, heal and deliver.

The church is after all failing to make an impact for too many are trying to teach and preach Jesus while still carrying the old wine skins, instead of being renewed and reborn by the Spirit. We need to be reborn in order to carry Kingdom, and to know Kingdom and the Truth of divine Lord. Jesus taught this in “Matthew 9: 17 Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.” By being reborn, thus the new wineskins to carry the new wine of the Spirit, we shall be able to preach and teach Kingdom from a point of deep revelation and understanding into the Kingdom. And to know the King and the Kingdom also speaks of walking in true authority, which cannot be faked in the spiritual realm.

Jesus says to His disciples, following the teaching in the parable of the Sower, the following in Matthew 13: 11 He answered and said to them, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. 12 For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. 13 Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. ‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive.’”

In Matthew 13, the Lord speaks of the mysteries of the Kingdom, which becomes for all believers clear when led by the Spirit of God and when we stand in a relationship with God. There is nothing hidden in the Kingdom for the child of God, yet for those who follow not the Lord in Spirit and truth they shall not understand the Kingdom. Again, Matthew 13 alludes to “seeing” and “hearing”, for we shall only see and hear the truths of the Kingdom and experience the Kingdom, considering faith comes by hearing, when we truly follow Jesus. For then in relationship and by the Spirit we shall understand, see and perceive the Kingdom.

Paul writes in “Romans 1: 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.” Debased speaks of a reduction in quality or value. So for those who do not walk in the knowledge of God, thus who abide not in the Spirit to abide in the Lord (John 15), follow not the ways of the Kingdom, but the ways of the world which is all those that are opposed to the ways and truths of God. Their thinking has suffered a loss in quality, and they cannot value the values of the Kingdom. Those who follow the world ultimately seek after the values of the world, or they shall only value what is important unto them.

Of the Kingdom, Jesus teaches in Matthew 13: 44 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. 45 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, 46 who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. 47 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, 48 which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. 49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, 50 and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” 51 Jesus said to them, “Have you understood all these things?” They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.” 52 Then He said to them, “Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old.”

In Matthew 13, Jesus teaches in the importance of the Kingdom, and then He asks the disciples if they understood. And this is the crux of the matter. Only by the Spirit and abiding in God can we understand the Kingdom, its value, its true and nature. He pertinently made the point that as disciples they shall understand His teachings. A true disciple follows the Lord, and shall understand the ways and teachings of the Master. And then if we understand and know the Kingdom, will we be “like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old.” This was referring to the truths of the Kingdom settled in the Old and New Testament, and settled in the ancient of days and in the now. For God is the Alpha and the Omega, and all from the beginning to the end is Kingdom, and thus to know the Kingdom and its vast scope we need to know the Lord, who is also the author and finisher of our faith. May we thus truly know Kingdom, and what it truly means to pursue Kingdom. For then we shall understand, and all shall be added in spirit and soul.

A Kingdom not of this world

It says in John 18:36 (Amplified Bible): Jesus replied, “My kingdom is not of this world [nor does it have its origin in this world]. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would be fighting [hard] to keep Me from being handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this world.”

Jesus thus made it very clear His Kingdom is not of this world, therefore it does not subscribe to the laws and the nature of this world. Understand, the Kingdom of God will one day be a physical Kingdom established on earth, but even that Kingdom will never be part or of this world. It will be a new restored Kingdom of God’s order and God’s truth. For now, the Kingdom still dwells in us through the Holy Spirit. And the Lord is asking the Church why are we then making His Church OF THIS WORLD? To make something ‘of this world’ speaks of conforming, yet we are not called to conform the Kingdom to this world, thus change or adapt it, but as the church we are called to conform the world to the Kingdom! This we have to ponder, for we have compromised far too long, and we have allowed this world to dictate our thoughts, actions and beliefs. We are called to walk by the faith in a Kingdom not of this world, and not by the sight of this world.

We have to remember as His followers, disciples are members of His Kingdom which is “not of this world,” that is, heaven (Philippians 3:20). Yes, we are on earth for now, but our earthly lives are nothing but a vapor (James 4:14). Our focus should be on the Kingdom (1 Peter 5:10), yet again, this Kingdom is not of this world. Its values, its norms, its truth, its operations and nature does not subscribe to this world, but is set apart, divine, eternal, spiritual and never changes. We are called to be Kingdom-centered, Kingdom-minded, Kingdom-driven and Kingdom-conscious.

Thus, while we may be part of this world and are impacted by its laws and the nature of things we have to mindful we are still in this world but we are no longer of it (John 17:14). We are still surrounded by all the horrors and tragedy of this life, but this is not our life (Philippians 3:8-14). The knowledge that we are not of this world gives Christians hope even in the darkest times (1 Peter 1:6-9); hope that this will pass and at the end of it we will be in heaven with our God, face to face forever (Revelation 21:3-4). We have been adopted as heirs of heaven by God Himself and that is our world, our citizenship (Titus 3:7).

We are taught to pray in Matthew 6 as follows: ‘9 Our Father, who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.’ And also “Matthew 6: 33 But first and most importantly seek (aim at, strive after) His kingdom and His righteousness [His way of doing and being right—the attitude and character of God], and all these things will be given to you also.”

So according to Matthew 6 we are called to seek the will of the Father, seated in the heaven, and thus the Kingdom of God which is not of this word. Jesus taught us to first seek the Kingdom, which is a well-known verse, but are we truly seeking the Kingdom which is not of this word or are seeking an idea of God’s kingdom which by our plans, agendas, programs and ideas we have made of this world? For the Kingdom we must seek is certainly

not of this world. Yet it seems we are continuously making His Kingdom of this world, and so the church today has adopted so many ways of the world that we have lost the purity and the holiness of the eternal reign of God. After all, how many believers have not adopted worldly mind-sets or the ways of modern day culture? How many believers have not conformed to the spirit of the age and all its deceptions and delusions, instead of striving to seek the Kingdom in order to bring a darken world into the light of God?

It says in Matthew 6:24: “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon [money, possessions, fame, status, or whatever is valued more than the Lord].” It is thus made clear that we have to choose the Kingdom which is not of this world or the kingdoms of this world, thus mammon and all its golden calves. For in the true Kingdom there is no limit or lack, but in this world there is only lack and limit. Yes, this world and God’s Kingdom does not mix and so we are called as disciples to lead people of this world to a Kingdom which is not of this world. The ways of the world is fallen, corrupt, and dark. The ways of the Kingdom is love, purity, holiness, liberty, redemption and hope. It says in “James 3:17: But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.” The Kingdom of God is not of this world, so we must stop trying to conform it according to man’s beliefs, perceptions, ideas and agendas!

At the time of Jesus, the Zealots were operational. They were a political movement in 1st-century Second Temple Judaism, which sought to incite the people of Judea Province to rebel against the Roman Empire and expel it from the Holy Land by force of arms, most notably during the First Jewish–Roman War (66–70). A Zealot is someone who is fanatical and uncompromising in pursuit of their religious, political, or other ideals. The Zealots wanted their long awaited Messiah to come into their world and shake things up. They wanted him to come and save their people, but in the ways and with the force they envisioned. They wanted salvation – not from their own brokenness, sin, and regrets – but rather from their physical enemies and from the oppression they lived under. They wanted their Roman oppressors to pay, both literally and figuratively.

This was also might likely the hope of Judas the Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus. Remember, at this particular moment, the disciples had been waiting for something dramatic to happen. While some first-century Jews thought the Messiah would be a priestly figure, the assumption that the Messiah would help liberate the people was extremely widespread. The disciples most likely had similar expectations. At one point two of the other disciples—James and John, the sons of Zebedee—ask Jesus for positions of authority when that happens. At another moment Peter declares that he will not allow Jesus to die. None of the disciples have an accurate sense of what kind of Messiah Jesus actually is; they all misunderstand His message.

They could not comprehend His Kingdom was not of this world. They could not comprehend that true power would come from a great act of humility on the cross. So many wanted deliverance, but not according to the ways of Jesus. Still today, so many want deliverance,

or blessings, or some sort of great life but in accordance to the ways of the world, and not in accordance to the Kingdom of God, where love, kindness, generosity and faith resides.

The week before Jesus was crucified, at the event we know as Palm Sunday, Jesus entered Jerusalem in triumph on the back of a donkey. The whole scene—with crowds assembled waving branches, a leader riding into the city, and the shouts of the people that Jesus comes in the name of the Lord—was reminiscent of a Roman Triumph, the celebratory ritual in which a great military leader was welcomed into the city in a procession. Everything about this moment suggested that Jesus was a political figure. Then Jesus proceeded to the Jewish Temple, where he overturned tables and throws out the money changers. To many people, but arguably especially the disciples, it seems as if things are about to happen. The revolution is beginning. But nothing like that actually happens; there's no rebellion. Jesus does not raise an army, organize troops, or even try to evangelize the pilgrims who were visiting Jerusalem for Passover.

At this juncture, maybe Judas is tired and disappointed and just wants to go home and try to pick up the pieces of his life. Alternatively, perhaps he thinks he can force Jesus' hand and propel him towards a rebellion. If Jesus is arrested, one might imagine, maybe God will intervene. We read in Matthew 26 at the time of Jesus' betrayal: 51 And one of those who were with Jesus reached out and drew his sword, and struck [Malchus] the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear. 52 Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back in its place; for all those who habitually draw the sword will die by the sword. 53 Do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will immediately provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? 54 How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen this way?"

Jesus made it clear He has no intention of making His Kingdom of this world. If this was so, He could have raised an army to conquer the world. And still today many Christians misunderstand or interpret the Kingdom of God and even the type of Messiah Jesus is. Many still want God to establish a rule and reign on earth to overthrow the wickedness. Yes it says in "Isaiah 9:6: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." It is mostly likely this Scripture that fueled the fire of the Zealots. Yet this government is never of this world. It is the eternal kingdom. It is the Kingdom that will forever last, of which we read in Isaiah 2:1 Now it will come to pass that In the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord will be [firmly] established as the highest of the mountains, and will be exalted above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it. 3 And many peoples shall come and say, "come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house (temple) of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us His ways and that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go out from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

Yes, God will reign forever at the end of all things as we celebrate the New Jerusalem, but God's Kingdom is beyond politics, philosophy or ideologies (1 Corinthians 1). He has established His Kingdom on earth in the form of the Church. And what is the purpose of the Church? To be of this world? No, to serve the Kingdom which is not of this world by fulfilling the Great Commission. Jesus came to show us what the Kingdom is, how to seek the

Kingdom, how to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom and how to live Kingdom. This is the will of the Father. The entire Book of Acts is about Kingdom. Kingdom is relationship and not religion. It is discipleship. The disciples had a mighty impact because they were Kingdom-driven.

Church these days looks sadly so much like this world. Our ideals, our mission and motive are many times man-centered or earthly bound, instead of seeking the ways, the truth and the life of the Kingdom. The problem was that many Jews, and maybe even Judas, made the mistake of making the Kingdom of God of this earth. And we still make the same mistake today. We want to drag the Kingdom down to our level, instead of meeting God. There is thus the necessity to follow the principles of how to lead a life of a true disciple as taught by Jesus Christ. We need to know what is Kingdom, and to pursue it, for then all shall be added. We receive God's blessings when we abide in Him and live according to His ways.

In Matthew 5 we read of the Beatitudes, preached on the mount by Jesus, which serves as important spiritual guidelines. These spiritual principles aim for us to live a holy and pure in our spirit, soul and body. This will release God's anointing, glory and presence. Many of course back then actually expected Jesus to preach revolution, yet He offered them the hard hitting truths of the Kingdom, which speaks of forgiveness, love and hope. Many Jews did not want to hear such a message, but it is because they were still of the world!

We need to realise and see that Jesus came to establish an eternal kingdom, spiritual in nature, even though those around him wanted a physical kingdom LIKE THE kingdoms of this world. Yes, God's Kingdom will one day be established during the 1000 years reign of peace, but it will never be like those on the earth. It will not be run by politics or governments. It will be run by God. Yet we make His Kingdom of this world – thus conform it - when we seek tangible solutions, temporary answers and wealth. We really do not want spiritual solutions to our physical problems either. But Jesus's ways are not our ways, so why would we think His Kingdom would be like anything we could envision? For now Jesus's Kingdom is spiritual. It has no boundary lines but resides in the hearts of those who love Him. In His Kingdom there are no political lines or denominations. The weapons of this Kingdom is spiritual: prayer, forgiveness, truth, and love.

Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 10: 3 For though we walk in the flesh [as mortal men], we are not carrying on our [spiritual] warfare according to the flesh and using the weapons of man. 4 The weapons of our warfare are not physical [weapons of flesh and blood]. Our weapons are divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5 We are destroying sophisticated arguments and every exalted and proud thing that sets itself up against the [true] knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought and purpose captive to the obedience of Christ, 6 being ready to punish every act of disobedience, when your own obedience [as a church] is complete.

These weapons of the Kingdom are more powerful than any military can fashion. They are weapons that can change the course of our families and nations – our very lives – if we choose to use them. Paul understood this. He after all wrote in "Ephesians 6: 12 For our

struggle is not against flesh and blood [contending only with physical opponents], but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this [present] darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural) places.”

Paul in the same chapter wrote on the spiritual armour, and he likened it to the armour of the Romans. He did this for a specific reason, so that believers may realise that the Kingdom of God is not of this world, which includes our true enemy, and the weapons of our warfare. These weapons are at our disposal and are unlike anything the world has ever seen. But we have a choice. We must choose to fight back through the power of prayer instead of with words that tear each other down. We must choose to fight back with God’s truth instead of our opinions. We must choose to fight back by choosing love over hate, forgiveness over grudges, and unity over discord. We must not forget that Jesus’s kingdom has an enemy – satan, which is also not of this world. Yet still today the church fights among itself, or make enemies of this world, all because we have departed from the truth we serve a Kingdom not of this world.

Indeed, men like David understood this reality when he slew the giant, unlike Saul who wanted to defeat the enemy by resorting to the methods which are of this world. Gideon, Moses, Abraham and all the prophets of old understood the spiritual nature of God and His Kingdom, and so did Daniel when he survived the pit of lions. Yes Daniel never bowed before the Babylonian kingdom of this world, for he truly served a Kingdom not of this world!

It says in Romans 12: 2 And do not be conformed to this world [any longer with its superficial values and customs], but be transformed and progressively changed [as you mature spiritually] by the renewing of your mind [focusing on godly values and ethical attitudes], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His plan and purpose for you].

In order for us to truly understand the Kingdom, we need our minds renewed and conformed. Even though we are from the world, our lives are thus determined by a Kingdom not of this world. We are called to seek the will of the King whose Kingdom is not touched by famine, plagues, economic disasters or social upheavals. The Kingdom of God is not impacted by wars, violence, or science, philosophy, ideologies or political games. The Kingdom of God is set in its values, norms, ways and truth. The church thus stands guilty of trying to conform His Kingdom to the ways of this world, which has resulted in believers’ truth and values also conforming. Yet the Kingdom of God is set apart, and abides by its own culture, by its own eternal and divine. For this reason it is written in Colossians 3:2 Set your mind and keep focused habitually on the things above [the heavenly things], not on things that are on the earth [which have only temporal value].

It says in “John 15:19: If you belonged to the world, the world would love [you as] its own and would treat you with affection. But you are not of the world [you no longer belong to it], but I have chosen you out of the world. And because of this the world hates you.” And

also” 1 John 2 15 Do not love the world [of sin that opposes God and His precepts], nor the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.:

For the Lord reminds us that Jesus took the last supper in the Upper Room, and we are reminded that the Holy Spirit was poured out in the Upper Room because it is God’s intention for us to reign seated in a higher place of spiritual authority. By the Blood of Jesus we are seated on the right hand of God and thus we are called to operate in this higher dimension. It says in “Ephesians 2: 6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

We are called to sit in a “higher place”, and because we are seated in a higher place, our victory is secure for we abide in the Lord. In the higher place is the Kingdom which is not of this world. Indeed, according to Ephesians 6, we wrestle not against flesh and blood but the principalities of darkness, but the Lord is the captain of the hosts and our commander. We are called to be exalted spiritually by the Blood and by the calling of God and the table of Lord is this higher place.

How we need to come and sit at the higher place to understand the Kingdom. The Lord shows when Jesus was having the last supper in the Upper Room He was taking the highest seat prophetically. He was seated on high within the inner city of Jerusalem, even though the room technically was surrounded by His enemies - Pharisees and the Sadducees. But the Lord did not fear and the disciples did not fear because they were seated at the table of the Lord. They were seated in a higher place spiritually and they were in the counsel of Lord. Despite being surrounded by their enemies, they were covered by the shadow of the Almighty where nothing could harm them.

Even though we are beleaguered and surrounded by trials and tribulations, and the chaos threatens to overwhelm us, then we do not have to fear for God is with us. We do not have to fear for if we sit at the table of God we are seated on a higher place at the right hand of God and we have been raised up by the blood of Jesus. We do not have to fear the devil or his demons, for we are seated in a higher place spiritually. In Christ, we take the highest place when it comes to authority, and thus, we are victorious. At the table of God we find our rest and peace in the name of Jesus.

Indeed, we need to stand with God, for even though we are from this world, we are not to be of this world. Paul makes it clear in Scriptures such as Ephesians 4 and 5 and Colossians 3 how believers are to behave, thus in such a manner that are not of this world. Jesus said in “John 17:14: I have given to them Your word [the message You gave Me]; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world and do not belong to the world, just as I am not of the world and do not belong to it.” We need to realise we belong to a different

Kingdom, where there is no lack, doubt, corruption or division. Yet we need to seek the Kingdom and conform to it, and not to conform to this world.

It thus about making a decision and a stand. It is written in “James 4:4: You adulteresses [disloyal sinners—flirting with the world and breaking your vow to God]! Do you not know that being the world’s friend [that is, loving the things of the world] is being God’s enemy? So whoever chooses to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” So if we wish to conform to this world or even try to conform Church to the ways of the world through our traditions and ideas, then we eventually become an enemy of God!

Take a look at what it says in 1 John 4: 1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit [speaking through a self-proclaimed prophet]; instead test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets and teachers have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know and recognize the Spirit of God: every spirit that acknowledges and confesses [the fact] that Jesus Christ has [actually] come in the flesh [as a man] is from God [God is its source]; 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus [acknowledging that He has come in the flesh, but would deny any of the Son’s true nature] is not of God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and is now already in the world. 4 Little children (believers, dear ones), you are of God and you belong to Him and have [already] overcome them [the agents of the antichrist]; because He who is in you is greater than he (Satan) who is in the world [of sinful mankind]. 5 They [who teach twisted doctrine] are of the world and belong to it; therefore they speak from the [viewpoint of the] world [with its immoral freedom and baseless theories—demanding compliance with their opinions and ridiculing the values of the upright], and the [gullible one of the] world listens closely and pays attention to them. 6 We [who teach God’s word] are from God [energized by the Holy Spirit], and whoever knows God [through personal experience] listens to us [and has a deeper understanding of Him]. Whoever is not of God does not listen to us. By this we know [without any doubt] the spirit of truth [motivated by God] and the spirit of error [motivated by Satan].

So those who belong to God should speak Truth and they should overcome this world because they serve a Kingdom not of this world, thus they abide by the Covenant, sealed by the Blood of the slain yet risen Lamb. Yet those who belong not to God are those who speak as if they are of the world, and thus they shall resist the true Kingdom and they shall defy it. For those who belong to God walk in the spirit of truth [motivated by God], yet for those who truly do not abide in God (John 15) remain of the world and thus walk by the spirit of error [motivated by Satan]. It is that simple. True believers worship in Spirit and truth, and they conform to the eternal Kingdom, and they seek His Kingdom above all else. The rest is depravity, moral corruption and spiritual bankruptcy. Indeed, may we never as true believers make His Kingdom of this world, lest we depart from God’s ways and fall into the darken confusion and deception of the ancient serpent.

The Keys to the Kingdom of Heaven: A prophetic word

In Matthew 16:19 we read: "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

The keys are simply God granting His Church – as the official representative of the Kingdom on earth - the authority to act as custodians of the Gospel. Thus, His disciples have been granted the legal right to preach and teach the Gospel, and thus what they declare according to the Word of God, as settled in Heaven, shall be bound or loosened. Therefore, those who carry the keys do so with great RESPONSIBILITY. It is the same concept as having the keys to a house or a car. It denotes ownership. After all, as disciples of God we are heirs to the Kingdom as citizens of the Kingdom (Romans 8:17). Jesus also said in Revelation 1:18 that He has the keys of Hades and of Death. These keys have never been passed on to anyone. So our focus is on the keys to the kingdom of heaven.

Now, regarding the specific keys as spoken about in Matthew 16, the Lord spoke the other in my spirit that many have DISPLACED or even LOST the keys. This word followed after I had displaced my own car keys for almost three weeks, and by accident found them while rummaging in a cupboard looking for something else. Fortunately, I have a spare key for the car, but not for the house. So it was a huge inconvenience, but just as I had DISPLACED the keys by accident, the Lord spoke that some believers had by intention stored away the divine keys, while others have simply ignored them while some do not even know where they are anymore.

You see, a key is only useful if you use it. The keys as granted by God are only of use if we actually use them by declaring, teaching, preaching and announcing the Kingdom of God. Thus standing upon Scripture, speaking God's Word and His Will, thus the summary of the Lord's Prayer. They only become effective if we use the keys to declare what is immoral and unnatural in the Kingdom of Heaven compared to what is right, pure and holy. So yes, God has given us keys. Great. Wonderful. But what are we doing with the keys? Some have forsaken their call in the Kingdom, so they have stored away the keys. Some know of their call and mandate or purpose, but have become so busy with the world and life they have displaced or even lost the keys. Some have become so deceived by the world and by the devil they do not even know what the right keys to use anymore.

And I use the word DISPLACED for a reason, for it means "to move (something) from its proper or usual position." Just like we are called to always wear the armour of God of Ephesians 6 by walking in God's salvation, in faith, in righteousness, in truth and in the Holy Spirit, the keys should always be with us. As we are called to be trained and equipped to use the sword and shield, thus learning how to walk in the Spirit and how to exercise the Scriptures to the glory of God, so we need to learn and be equipped how to use the KEYS as given by God. Yes, we need to know how to exercise Matthew 16:19, so that the keys are not just an accessory item but a vital weapon in our arsenal to establish God's Kingdom in the hearts of mankind. But are they part and parcel of our lives when we wake up and when

we go throughout the day. Or have they been “moved away from the proper place”. And where should the keys be found on the armour? Yes, tied to the belt of truth, for the Kingdom of God is all about Truth, for the Truth sets us free and because Jesus is the Truth.

We live in perilous times where some are trying to unlock the DOOR (Jesus – John 10) with the wrong keys. Some are even handing out wrong keys, promising these are the divine keys that will unlock the store houses to heaven. Some are even selling such fake keys! And yes, some are trying to declare they have the only authentic and right key and no one else. There is only one set of keys that are genuine that unlocks heaven, and grants the authority to the user to loose and bind, and it is certainly not any keys of the devil, or the world or of any clever locksmith that appears pious and holy yet denies the power of the kingdom of heaven.

So yes, are you still in possession of the keys the Lord gave you? Are you still using them? Do we even know how to use them anymore? Or have they become displaced, lost or even stored away? For with the keys come great responsibility and authority, but the pretender, the liar, the false, the carnal and the sorcerer will never know how to use the real keys. Just like the pretender knows not how to properly use the armour of God. Yes, there are many counterfeit keys floating around, and many users of such keys who proclaim “Jesus, Jesus” yet they seek more to unlock the gates of hell instead of declaring the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Kingdom of God. So be alert, be watchful, for such perilous days of the false and the counterfeit are upon us. Now is the time more than ever to walk in the Spirit to know how to use the keys, not for the sake of the Self, but to the glory of God and to the glory of the eternal Kingdom.