

# Until He Comes



**The Transformation and Preparation of the  
Saints for His Coming**

**A compilation of teachings from 2012 and 2013  
REVIVAL MINISTRIES AUSTRALIA**

# **UNTIL HE COMES**

**The transformation  
and Preparation of the Saints  
for His Coming**

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# Introduction: Until He comes

The Scripture says of Jesus Christ, *“whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things which God has spoken by the mouth of all His Holy Prophets since the world began”* Acts 3:21. While we are waiting for the coming of the Lord, we can expect times of refreshing *“from the presence of the Lord”* (v.19).

The Lord has been emphasising the expectation of His coming. This has been through the restoration of the Lord’s Table and considering the importance of **1 Corinthians 11:26**, *“For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes.”*

There are many other Scriptural exhortations showing us that we should be ready for the coming of the Lord.

In this manual the Holy Spirit has enabled us to bring together various teachings that have come forth over the last period of time, that speak of **the preparation of the people of the Lord for His coming** and show that it is only by the transformation that God does through His word and the Spirit that really prepares us.

Some of us have experienced **revival** in the past and that was wonderful, but in these days we are looking for the great **revival that will bring a powerful anointing** from God through His Spirit to enable the last days’ church to preach the gospel and to teach the word of God to all nations. There has been some historical/prophetic word given through the late Smith Wigglesworth that Australia would be the place where the last great revival that God will release before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ will begin.

There have been some stirrings and God has been raising ministries in this nation. The word is going forth that:

- **it is time to seek the Lord;**
- **it is time to ask God for the Holy Spirit;**
- **it is time to be led by the Spirit** to fulfil the will and purpose of God;
- **it is time for the church to receive the last days’ anointing**, to bear witness to the risen exalted Messiah.

An important part of what God is doing among us is the **healing of the soul**. Many of us are experiencing deep healing and God is giving people closure within their individual lives to be free from fears and disappointments and hurts from the past.

Another important aspect is **an enlightened understanding of the glory of God**. For the glory of God to be manifest, there needs to be a growth to maturity. That growth is not only in revelatory understanding of the word, but it is also the development of Christian character in the lives of the saints.

We encourage you to read through this manual and let the word wash over you. Jesus Christ is Himself, *“sanctifying and cleansing the church with the washing of water by the word”* (Eph.5:26).

# TIMES OF REFRESHING

***“Repent therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord” Acts 3:19.***

## **Repent and convert**

Peter says this in the context of religious Jews, who believed in God, doing their religious duties at the temple, but they lacked power and reality in their experience.

Religious people generally do not see the need for repentance and conversion. Mostly we say something like this: ‘I repented twenty years ago and now I am saved!’ Even ‘saved’ people need to repent, because so much of our thinking and conversation and sometimes our behaviour is not according to the renewal of the Holy Spirit.

## **Regeneration and renewing**

***“According to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour” Titus 3:5.*** The washing of regeneration refers to our born again experience when we were cleansed of sin, based on Jesus Christ being the propitiation for our sins. The washing comes from a word referring to the ‘laver’ [in the outer court of the Tabernacle of Moses] and that washing is referred to in **Ephesians 5:26** where the Lord Himself is sanctifying and cleansing us ***“with the washing of water by the word”***.

Peter confirms this when he said, ***“Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever” 1Pet.1:23. “Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you” (v.25b).***

## **A full change**

The **renewing of the Holy Spirit** refers to the gradual conforming of the regenerated person to the new spiritual world in which he now lives. The Greek word suggests renovation, restoration, transformation and a change of heart and life, the adjustment of one’s moral and spiritual vision. This is what Paul means when he says, ***“Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” Rom.12:2.*** In this context the word ‘conform’ means following an outward fashion or outward appearance, but what we need is the full renewing that brings transformation.

- ❖ God is speaking to us today to **repent**, that is, to have a change of mind concerning the reality of God, or the lack thereof, in our lives;
- ❖ God is calling us to **convert**, that is, to turn toward Him and walk with Him in the Spirit. If we will do this our sins will be blotted out.
- ❖ It is time for all the body of Christ to **draw close** to Jesus, the Head.

**The word for sin (Acts 3:19) is *hamartia*:**

basically means sin and is translated as sin x172; and x2 by other words.

The word literally means *a missing of the mark*. The meaning of this word is well illustrated for us in **Romans 3:23**, ***“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”***. This is the essential understanding of sin: that we miss the glory of God; that we do not reflect the glory of God which according to **John 1:14** was manifest in Jesus the Messiah, ***“full of grace and truth”***.

## Historic times of refreshing

Can you begin to see that Peter is addressing all of us when he tells us to repent and convert that our sins may be blotted out and times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord. **Oh how we need the times of refreshing!** For some years now we have been labouring in the apostolic ministry and we have been given fruit by the Lord and even some of that fruit is multiplying, but in this time we are looking toward heaven for times of refreshing.

In history, there have been many and various revivals that have come as times of refreshing to encourage and redirect the church into bold witness for Jesus Christ and the declaration of the gospel of the kingdom of God.

Some of us who were involved in the founding of Revival Ministries at the beginning of 1998 had been passing through such a time of refreshing which began in early 1995. It was this time of refreshing that came from the presence of the Lord that ushered us into the apostolic ministry and into the worldwide apostolic restoration that we are now a part of.

## The felt-presence of God

The time of refreshing that we experienced then was characterised by some mighty signs and wonders, tangible anointings, and a release of the type of intercession that Paul speaks of in **Romans 8:26-27**. Many brethren received visions and some had remarkable experiences in the Holy Spirit whereby they knew the closeness and love of the Father.

We were sent by the Lord to teach the word of God and to be an agent of release of those times of refreshing in many parts of Australia and in far flung places such as northern Myanmar [Burma] and eastern Kenya.

In general we did not see a lot of lasting fruit; but God knows, we don't. We have always been thankful that through those streams of refreshing, God led us into a deeper and greater understanding of His purposes, and through that time He grew us up in the apostolic ministry.

## It is time for revival again

Now as we look and thirst for the times of refreshing, we are a very different people to what we were seventeen years ago. Now we are part of a related apostolic family that is active in the gospel in many nations. We are now believing that God will send forth His Spirit in a fresh dynamic, to breathe on and empower His ministers and all of the brethren, to be His witnesses in ways that we have not formerly experienced.

## Being filled with the Spirit again

Jesus told the disciples that they were not to be concerned about the times and seasons of the kingdom of Israel. ***"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"*** (Acts 1:6-8). When these disciples received the infilling of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4), they began to declare ***"the wonderful works of God"*** (v.11).

## There is more than one infilling of the Spirit

On a later occasion when Peter had to appear before the Jewish leaders and elders, the Scripture says ***"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them"*** (Acts 4:5-8). After Peter's companions prayed with him when he had been released, ***"They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness"*** (Acts 4:23-31). There is more than one infilling with the Holy Spirit. We are to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph.5:18).

## **To be His witnesses**

As we are entering in to this time of refreshing coming from the presence of the Lord, we are asking God to fill us with the Spirit to empower us to be His witnesses in every place that we find ourselves. The times of refreshing that we experienced in the mid to late nineties enabled us to do the work of the ministry in a much more spirit-filled way, but our witness was largely restricted to be within the 'church'. There was no outbreak of preaching outside of the confines of set ministries in church meetings. We are hungering for such an empowerment to enable all of God's people to be His witnesses in the church, in the market place, in the homes, wherever God's people are.

## **Strengthening the foundations**

There is a genuine stirring in our hearts at SHILOH base in Toowoomba. We are believing with our hearts and confessing with our mouths that times of refreshing are coming from the presence of the Lord. God has put this in our hearts. It is like a fire being kindled within us. The more we step out in faith, sharing the conviction of our hearts, the more we see the Lord beginning to move in a fresh way among us. As we the brethren, strengthen the primary foundations of repentance and faith in our lives, then we are able to focus and believe God for His empowering and sending forth to reach the nation.

## **As we wait for the Lord**

- Peter preached that times of refreshing will come as we wait for the Lord Jesus to be released from heaven.
- As we go about the work of the gospel, preaching the restoration of all things,
- we can expect times of refreshing, fresh infillings of the Holy Spirit;
- we can expect empowerment, but this empowerment is different to what we have experienced in the past.

The empowerment that God wants to release today is His **virtue**, which is His very character and nature being released through the anointing. This is the realm of glory being expressed in and through the body as the members of the body are truly set apart and fully committed to being His witnesses.

The need for revival is not to receive some 'special spiritual experience' that stirs our senses, but it is the need for the quickened word of God to come to us in the divine atmosphere of the ***"renewing of the Holy Spirit"*** (Titus 3:5). This is so we can become **witnesses to Jesus Christ in all the world.**

We are entering into a time of experiencing the reality of His glory which requires repentance and a full conversion to the Lord if we are to go on.

**Such refreshing releases true fellowship,  
which is evidenced by God manifesting  
in the midst of His people (Acts 2:42-47)**



# GRACE ABOUNDS

***“Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.”***

This is a typical greeting from the apostle Paul at the beginning of his letters, and Peter writes similarly. In the epistles of these two apostles, grace and peace is ministered to us.

## **Receiving the grace**

For many years as a Bible reading believer, I paid little attention to the beginnings of the letters, but in recent years, I pay much attention to every verse of Scripture that I read, and I especially receive the ministry of grace and peace from God, the Father of us, and the Lord Jesus Christ. I have come to know the grace of God in a tangible, life-changing, ever present way, and I purposefully minister in such a way, following the example of the original apostles, ministering grace and peace to the brethren.

## **The ministry of grace**

***“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you” 1Cor.16:23.*** Most of the epistles conclude with a ministry of grace. Grace is the operative effusion of God’s supernatural life into our lives as believers and ministers. We are ministers of His grace, and we minister His grace, especially to the believers (**1Pet.4:10-11**). This is the apostolic way of the Scriptures.

Some more examples of the blessings of grace in the Epistles, both at the beginning and at the end:

- ***“Grace to you and peace from God” Rom.1:7.*** The grace and peace coming from God, is our covering.
- ***“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, be with you all” Rom.16:24.*** This is the ministry of grace to others. We can minister the grace of God even as we bless people when we greet them or when we say goodbye to them.
- ***“Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord” 2Tim.1:2.*** This time Paul adds mercy to the blessing that he is ministering from God the Father and Jesus to us.
- ***“The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Grace be with you. Amen” 2Tim.4:22.*** This is an amazing farewell blessing. The fullness of the Godhead (**Col.2:9**) is able, and He wants to be with us, even with our spirit. This is the reality of Christ in us (**Col.1:27**), and this great blessing comes to us through His grace being released in us. Praise be to God!
- ***“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord” 2Pet.1:2.*** The grace of God is multiplied in us as we grow into a deeper and fuller knowledge of God.
- ***“Grace be with you all” Heb.13:25.*** Grace is for everyone.
- ***“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all” Rev.22:21.*** God’s last word in the Bible!

## Word Wealth

**Grace** is the Greek word '*charis*'; it means graciousness, [of manner or act], especially referring to a spiritual dimension.

Grace is the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life; it includes gratitude.

Translated: *grace* x130, *favour* x6, *thank(s)* x8, also by the following words: *acceptable, benefit, gift, gracious, joy, bounty, liberality*.

Grace is the power and equipment for ministry, to carry out the Great Commission.

**Let us look at some of the translations that only appear once or a few times:**

**1) Thanked:** *"God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered [entrusted]" Rom.6:17.*

The word *charis* is translated *thanked*. We were entrusted to the word of God to be delivered, and enabled to believe, so that we were released from the bondage of sin. This is a work of grace. God by His grace brought each one of us to a place where we would hear and receive this gospel [that form of doctrine]. So God be *graced*! This does not make a lot of sense, so the word *charis* is translated *thanks*. Very interesting!

**2) Gift: 1 Corinthians 16:3** is talking about a collection of money which had been received for needy saints. Paul says, *"I will send to bear your gift [grace, bounty, liberality,] to Jerusalem"*. The overflow of generous financial giving was a work of grace, and grace is a gift. Grace is an overflow of liberality, of generosity; grace is bountiful!

## HOW DOES GRACE COME?

### Through the fullness of Christ

Grace comes out of the fullness of Jesus the Christ: *"And of His fullness [Christ] we have all received grace upon [for] grace" Jn.1:16*. There is no limit because grace comes to us from Jesus who is the Almighty God in the flesh. This is the way that God has designed it.

### Through the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ

This grace was always available. *"God who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ" 2Tim.1:9*. This grace is unlimited and we receive it by believing in Jesus Christ. God's grace is only available through Jesus Christ.

### Through being placed as sons by Jesus Christ

Paul teaches us in **Ephesians 1:5-6** that grace is released even more abundantly when we receive the spiritual blessing of *"adoption as sons, by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted [bestowed grace upon us] in the beloved."* This is grace upon grace, coming to us through Jesus Christ, as we become His sons.

### Through faith in Jesus Christ

Grace comes through faith. When we believe and trust in Jesus, we receive grace which saves us. Faith is the door way to grace (**Eph.2:8**).

## GRACE TO GROW

- a) Firstly grace brings salvation: this is the beginning of our life in Christ. ***“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men” Titus 2:11.*** It is this grace which teaches us to deny ***“ungodliness and worldly lusts”*** and teaches us to ***“live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age” (v.12).*** It is this grace which enables us to look for ***“the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ” (v.13).***
- b) Secondly, we have been ***“justified by His grace”*** so that we can ***“become heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3:7).*** If we try to be justified by the keeping of the law, we have fallen from grace (**Gal. 5:4**).
- c) Thirdly, because of grace we are able to have victory over sin. If we remain under the law, sin will have dominion over us. Because we live under grace, we are not stressing about how to keep the law. Grace and truth came through Jesus (**Jn.1:17**). Grace brings us to the true doctrine, which sets us free from sin (**Rom.6:17**).
- d) Fourthly we have a standing in grace: ***“We have access by faith into this grace in which we stand” (Rom.5:2).*** This standing in grace enables us to grow. The first thing that causes us to grow is learning how to endure tribulation or pressure (**Rom.5:3-5**). This leads to patience developing in our lives (**James 1:2-4**). We have been made acceptable by the grace (**Eph.1:6**).
- e) Fifthly, we grow in our Christian life by grace; this growth does not come as a reward for something we do; it cannot be earned (**Rom.4:4**). We live by grace; it is not deserved; it is not our wages. Out of His fullness we have received all the grace we need (**Jn.1:16**).  
Grace is not received because of good works, but grace enables us to do the good works.
- f) Sixthly, we are to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. This will keep us from falling from steadfastness and ***“being led away with the error of the wicked” (2Pet.3:17-18).***
- g) Seventhly, we serve God acceptably by grace. ***“Therefore since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” Heb.12:28.***  
God’s grace enables us to serve him.
- h) Eighthly, by grace we are enabled to receive the promise (**Rom.4:16**), and walk in the inheritance (**Titus 3:7**).
- i) Lastly, grace can be seen working in the lives of the saints. ***“When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue in the Lord” Acts 11:23.*** The grace on the new believers in the church at Antioch, was enabling them to grow.

## GRACE TO MINISTER

Grace is the power and equipment for ministry to carry out the Great Commission.

- 1) Grace enables us to do the apostolic work in every nation. ***“Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name” Rom.1:5.***
- 2) The grace enabled the apostles to do and complete the work they had been sent out to do. ***“From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed” Acts 14:26.***
- 3) It is through the grace of God that we are put into ministry. ***“And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant” (1Tim.1:12-14).*** Paul attributes the great change in his life and his being enabled to minister, as the work of God’s abundant grace in his life.
- 4) We receive gifts through grace, to do the ministry. ***“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them” (Rom.12:6).***  
Each member of the body of Christ has received a gift from God in Christ.
- 5) Grace enables us to receive revelation of the mystery. ***“If indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation, He made known to me the mystery” Eph.3:2-3.***
- 6) We minister ***“according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power” Eph.3:7.*** It is the gift of grace that administers the power of God to work effectively through us as we minister in His name.
- 7) Grace enables us to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. ***“To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ” Eph.3:8.*** Bible study and training is one thing, but effective preaching of the mystery is by and through grace.
- 8) Grace gives us boldness to speak and to write. ***“Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God” Rom.15:15.***
- 9) Grace enables us to lay foundations, as wise master builders. ***“According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation ... which is Jesus Christ” (1Cor.3:10-11).*** Apostolic ministry and all effective ministry is done according to the grace of God.
- 10) We are to do the work of the ministry by the power of the grace of God working in us and through us. ***“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me” 1Cor.15:10.***

## HOW DO WE RECEIVE GRACE?

### ❖ By faith

*“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of your selves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” Eph.2:8-9.*

*“Therefore having been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God” Rom.5:1-2.*

### ❖ Through humility

*“But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: ‘God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble’” James 4:6.*

*“Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for ‘God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble’” 1Pet.5:5.*

*“Mercy there was great and grace was free,  
Pardon there was multiplied to me,  
There the burdened heart finds liberty,  
At Calvary!”*

# BEING ON WATCH

## THE COMING OF THE LORD

In **1 Thessalonians 5** verses 1-3, the apostle Paul is writing in the context of the coming of the Lord. He then goes on to say: *“But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness”* **1 Thess.5:4-5**.

In **verse 4** he is encouraging the brethren that the day of the Lord shall not *‘overtake you as a thief’* because you are all **sons of light and sons of the day**. In preparing for His coming we need to know who we are in Christ and thus we will know how we ought to function and behave as we live the Christian life.

### Sons of the day

In **John 9:4**, Jesus is speaking and says, *“I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day, the night is coming when no one can work”*. We are called ‘sons of day’ because we are given a work to do by Jesus. Jesus said ‘I must work... **while it is day**’. As ‘sons of day’ we need to know and do the works of Him who has sent us.

### Sons of Light

In **John 9:5**, Jesus says *‘As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world’*. As ‘sons of light’ we need to be in the world. The light of Messiah comes through His sons. In **2 Corinthians 4:6**, the apostle Paul tells us that the light is *‘the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ’*.

### Watch and be Sober

**1 Thessalonians 5:6**, *“Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober”*. In the context of Jesus’ coming and our position and responsibility as sons in the earth, we are told to not sleep but to **‘watch and be sober’**.

Many people slumber and sleep spiritually and do not see the seriousness of being prepared and ready for the coming of the Lord. To those who sleep He shall come as a *‘thief in the night’* (**1Thes.5:2**).

The time to awaken is now! *“Therefore He says: Awake you who sleep, Arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light”* **Eph.5:14**. *“And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed”* **Rom.13:11**.

### Being on Watch

In **1 Thessalonians 5:12-22**, the apostle Paul gives seventeen instructions that are necessary for us to continue in, as we **‘watch’** and prepare for the coming of the Lord. We need to consider and put into practice these instructions as sons of day and sons of light.

## THE CHECK LIST – 1Thessalonians 5:12-22

### 1) Recognize those who labour among you, and are over you in the Lord (v12)

*“And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers”* (**1Cor.12:28**)

*“And He [Christ] Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists and some pastors and teachers”* **Eph.4:11**. We need to **recognize** and **receive** the gifts and ministries that Christ has given to His church – He has appointed them.

Jesus said, “*He who receives you (the apostles) receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me*” (Matthew 10:40).

### **‘Those who labour among you’**

There are two main areas mentioned in Scripture of how they ought to labor among us.

- a) **In prayer** – “*Epaphras... always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God*” (Col.4:12).
- b) **In the Word** – “*but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word*” (Acts 6:4).

### **They are ‘among you and are over you in the Lord’**

In Christ’s ascension when He gave gifts to men (Ephesians 4:8-11), He did not give them as ‘positions’ of hierarchy in the church. **True ministers come from among you and their authority and gifting comes from Christ who is above.**

Being ‘**over you in the Lord**’ means that they have been given by Christ to His body and they carry His grace and authority to function among us. We need to recognise and submit ourselves to those whom He has appointed and we will be submitting ourselves unto Christ.

## **2) Esteem them very highly in love for their works sake (v13)**

We are to esteem them highly for **their works’ sake**, or in other words, for the work of ministry they are doing.

### **The work of Ministry**

In Ephesians 4:12-13 we are told what the work of ministry is: “*for the equipping of the saints, for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*”.

In the context of the coming of the Lord we must recognize those among us whom Christ has appointed, who are doing the work of the ministry and we are to esteem such men very highly in love. If we do this we are ‘being on watch’ and we will be prepared for his coming.

## **3) Be at peace among yourselves (v13)**

In Mark 9:50 Jesus says, “*Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavour, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another*”. What does salt have to do with having peace with one another? In verse 49 Jesus says, “*For everyone will be seasoned with fire and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt*”. The salt speaks of a sacrifice. We are called to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God (Rom 12:1).

In Judges 6, Gideon made an offering and sacrifice to God upon the altar (v.18-20). Fire came out of the rock and consumed the offering – it was an acceptable sacrifice and Yahweh ministered His peace to Gideon (v.23). Gideon called that altar ‘The LORD is Peace’ or ‘Yahweh Shalom’ (v.24). When we lay our lives upon the altar willingly as an acceptable offering unto the Lord, He will minister His peace to us and we can then minister His peace to others.

## **4) Warn those who are unruly [idle] (v14)**

In 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15, the apostle Paul warns the brethren against idleness and commands them to even “*withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us*”. In verse 11, he describes how they

walk *“for we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busy bodies”*.

Part of being ‘on watch’ is to warn such people and allow opportunity for them to repent and change. In **verse 15**, Paul writes, *“Do not count him as an enemy, but admonish or warn him as a brother”*. Why? Because the Day of the Lord is coming and we are to be found ready.

### **5) Comfort the fainthearted (v14)**

There are three main areas mentioned in Scripture where we need to comfort one another:

- Comfort those in tribulation (**2 Cor.1:4**)
- Comfort those who have lost loved ones in Christ (**1 Thess.4:18**)
- Comfort those who are fearful hearted (**Isa.35:3-4**)

### **6) Uphold the weak (v14)**

We need to recognise those who are weak among us and uphold and strengthen them. In **Ezekiel 34:21-22**, Ezekiel warns against the shepherds who *“butted all the weak ones and scattered them abroad”*.

In **Exodus 17:8-12**, Moses is in battle against Amalek. *“When Moses held up his hands Israel prevailed, and when he let down his hands Amalek prevailed”* (v.11) Moses’ hands became weary in the battle and he needed someone to ‘uphold him’. When Aaron and Hur upheld him on either side and supported his hands Amalek was defeated (v.12-13).

Whenever two or three are together, it is God in the midst who upholds us and enables us to uphold one another. *“For where two or three are gathered together in My name I am there in the midst”* (Matt.18:20) and *“Where two of you agree on earth concerning anything it will be done by My Father in heaven”* (Matt.18:19).

### **7) Be patient with all (v14)**

We need to have the heart and nature of Christ towards all people. For Christ has shown all longsuffering towards us that none of us should perish but believe on Him for everlasting life (**1 Tim.1:16**). The apostle Paul also writes, *‘my little children in whom I labour in birth again until Christ is formed in you’* (Gal.4:19). Paul needed patience as a spiritual father to see Christ formed in the people. This needs to be our heart as well.

We can ask God to help us as the apostle Paul prayed, *“now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another”* (Rom.15:5).

### **8) See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone (v15)**

**Romans 12:21** says, *“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good”*. In **Matthew 5:43-48**, Jesus tells us how we are to overcome evil in the world. The world says we are to hate our enemies but Jesus tells us to love our enemies and do good towards them.

### **9) Always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all (v15)**

**Philippians 4:8** says, *“Finally brethren, whatever things are ... of good report ... meditate on these things”*. What we meditate and think upon will determine our actions towards ourselves and others. Do you meditate on things that are good?

Pursuing what is good can involve suffering. *“For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil”* 1 Pet.3:17,



## 10) Rejoice always (v16)

There are five areas in which we are to rejoice.

- Rejoice **in the Lord** (**Philippians 4:4**):
- Rejoice **in hope** (**Romans 12:12**)
- Rejoice **in the truth** (**1 Corinthians 13:6**):
- Rejoice **with those who rejoice** (**Romans 12:15**):
- Rejoice **in suffering** (**Colossians 1:24**)

## 11) Pray without ceasing (v17)

*“But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God” Jude v20.* Prayer without ceasing is prayer that is in the Holy Spirit (**Eph.6:18**). If we are faithful to ‘keep watch’ in this area we will be built up in the holy faith and keeping ourselves in the love of God.

## 12) In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you (v18)

*“Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving”. Ps.107:22.* It is a sacrifice unto God when we offer up thanksgiving in every circumstance. God requires it of us to offer Him thanksgiving (**Ps.50:14**). This is part of ‘being on watch’.

## 13) Do not quench the Spirit (v19)

The apostle Paul writes, *“Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?”* (**Gal. 3:3**). We need to make sure that we continue to walk and be led by the Spirit of God. When we walk in the flesh we are ‘quenching the Spirit’. Sons of God are led by the Spirit of God (**Rom.8:14**).

## 14) Do not despise prophecies (v20)

*“For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” Rev.19:10.*

Word Wealth: ‘prophecies’ , propheteia (prof-ay-tie-ah); Strong’s #4394: From pro, “forth,” and phemi, “to speak.” The primary use of the word is not predictive, in the sense of foretelling, **but interpretive, declaring, or forth-telling, the will and counsel of God.**

Hayford Jack (2002-08-01) New Spirit-Filled Life Bible. Thomas Nelson. Kindle Edition.

## 15) Test all things (v21)

We need to:

- ❖ Test what we hear. Does it measure up with Christ? (**Eph.4:13**). Is it in the word of God?
- ❖ Test the spirits – do they confess Jesus Christ came in the flesh? (**1Jn 4:1-3**).
- ❖ Test yourselves – ‘is Jesus the Christ in you?’ (**2 Cor.13:5**).

## 16) Hold fast what is good (v21)

We are not only to pursue what is good but we also need to hold fast to it. *“Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good”* (**Rom.12:9**).

**17) Abstain from every form of evil (v22)**

*“I will set nothing wicked before my eyes...a perverse heart shall depart from me; I will not know wickedness” Ps.101:3-4.* There is a lot of evil that we can allow into our lives by what we watch and look at with our eyes. We are to *“Flee also youthful lusts” (2 Tim. 2:22).*

**IF YOU DO THESE THINGS THERE IS AN AWESOME PROMISE GIVEN:**

*“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess.5:23).*

- ✓ Are you being on watch?
- ✓ Are you being obedient to these instructions?
- ✓ Are you being prepared for the coming of the Lord?

# THE WISDOM OF GOD

## The wisdom of God releases glory

There is a wisdom we must come to understand if we as the Body of Christ are to walk in the glory of God. It is a wisdom that the world does not know nor function in. This wisdom is spoken to *“those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing” (1Cor.2:6)*. The wisdom of this age and the rulers of this age are coming to **nothing**. The wisdom of the world leads people to **nothing!** The wisdom of this world makes itself look very appealing but it is in fact a lie and falsehood lacking any weight or substance.

*“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory” (1Cor.2:7)*. There is a wisdom that has been hidden in God before time began. This wisdom reveals the very glory, substance and nature of God.

## The search for wisdom

Since creation man has been looking for wisdom. In fact the temptation that the serpent brought to the woman in the garden was to cause her to be attracted to a type of wisdom: *“So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit” (Gen.3:6)*. She was looking for wisdom. The wrong tree brought the wrong wisdom. The wisdom of God was hidden from her and so she partook of a counterfeit wisdom that all of mankind has walked in ever since.

## Earthly wisdom

The woman did not realise that there was a deeper wisdom for her to understand. God’s wisdom was *hidden in a mystery* and that mystery had *“from the beginning of the ages been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ” (Eph.3:9b)*.

The wisdom we need is hidden in the God who is manifested in Jesus Christ! By going to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil she was looking for a wisdom that would satisfy herself. She wanted wisdom for herself apart from God. The wisdom she received, did *“not descend from above but is earthly, sensual, demonic”* because it involves *“bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts” (James.3:14-15)*.

## The wisdom of God is a tree of Life

The true wisdom releases eternal life, joy, true spiritual riches and peace. *“Happy is the man who finds wisdom...she is more precious than rubies...her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to all those who take hold of her” (Prov.3:13a,15a,17-18)*. The wisdom the human race needs is at the tree of life. It confounds the wisdom of this world and is released through simple trust and obedience in God. The woman and the man in the garden did not trust God’s simple instructions and thus forfeited His wisdom and the right to eat of the tree of life.

## The wisdom of God is Eternal

In the context of writing on the excellence of wisdom, Solomon was inspired to write, *“The LORD [the Eternal One] possessed me [wisdom] at the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I have been established from everlasting, from the beginning, before there was ever an earth” (Prov.8:22-23)*. The wisdom of God has been with God from the beginning. Before creation, before God created man, wisdom was there.

## Wisdom in creation

Wisdom was guiding the creation. All things were made through the wisdom of God. *“When He prepared the heavens, I was there, when He drew a circle on the face of the deep, when He established the clouds above, when He strengthened the fountains of the deep...Then I was beside Him as a master craftsman; and I was daily His delight”* Prov.8:27-28, 30.

Wisdom was the **“master craftsman”** of the created world. This wisdom was **“hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ”** (Eph.3:9b). The apostle Paul said that the grace he had received as an apostle was as a **“wise master builder”** and that through this wisdom he has **“laid the foundation”** (1Cor.3:10). There is only one foundation **“for no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid which is Jesus Christ”** 1Cor.3:11.

The house of God, the new creation, the one new man can only be built through apostolic wisdom and that wisdom is Jesus the Christ! **“Wisdom has built her house”** (Prov.9:1a).

## The wisdom of God is a person

When the apostle Paul writes of God’s wisdom he expresses how the world in its wisdom **“did not know God”** (1Cor.1:21). Worldly wisdom brings no knowledge of God. Wisdom in this world is earthy and demonic and leads people into **“bondage to the elements of the world”** (Gal.4:3) and bound to **“philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ”** (Col.2:8).

But **“it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe...we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called...Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God”** (1Cor.1:21b,23-24).

### Jesus the Messiah is the wisdom of God!

He was with God in the beginning and all things were created through Him (Jn.1:1-3). He is the full expression of God’s wisdom and our example. Paul as **“a wise master builder”** laid the apostolic foundation for the house of God (1Cor.3:10). That foundation is Jesus Christ (v.11) who is the expression of the **“wisdom that is from above”** which **“is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield [to God’s will], full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy”** (Jam.3:17).

## THE WISDOM OF GOD BRINGS VICTORY OVER THE DEVIL

### The King on a Cross – the wisdom of God

**“The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men”** (1Cor.1:25). How foolish it seems in the world’s eyes for someone who claims to be a king to submit to being killed on a cross.

**“Christ crucified...the wisdom of God”** (1Cor.1:23,24). This is our example of how to walk in the wisdom of God. It is by saying **“not My will, but Yours, be done”** (Lu.22:42). It is living a life crucified to our own ways and alive to His ways, **“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, says the LORD”** (Is.55:8).

### Wisdom brings the victory

As a result of Jesus submitting to the will of God, God’s eternal purpose was accomplished (Eph.3:11) and this brought about complete victory over the devil. **“Having**

*disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it [the cross]*” (Col.2:15). Not only did Jesus defeat the devil’s powers through the wisdom of the cross but He exposed them completely and made them a public disgrace for all to see.

### **This wisdom is to manifest in the Church**

God’s eternal plan is for this wisdom, that was displayed in Christ dying on the cross and rising again, to be demonstrated and revealed through His people, the church. *“To the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to His eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Eph.3:10-11).

When the church walks in this wisdom, being submitted to the will of God, living the crucified life, we will find ourselves *“raised up together and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ ... far above all principality and power”* (Eph.2:6, 1:21a).

### **Promoted by the wisdom of God**

Solomon wrote *“Exalt her [wisdom] and she will promote you; she will bring you honour when you embrace her. She will place on your head an ornament of grace; a crown of glory she will deliver to you”* (Prov.4:8-9). When we submit to the wisdom of God, which is doing things His way, we will end up being promoted and lifted up. God’s glory, His very essence and nature, will be revealed as a crown of glory on us if we submit to His wisdom.

### **Stephen was filled with the wisdom of God**

One of the requirements for the deacons in the New Testament was that they must be *“men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom”* (Acts 6:2a). Stephen was chosen as one of these men and functioned in power with signs and wonders (v.8). There arose demonic opposition to Stephen in the form of a sect of the Jews from a particular synagogue and *“they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke”* (v.9-10).

Stephen was revealing the hidden wisdom, the mystery of God and His eternal plan through the church. The principalities and powers were angered and they sent religious opposition to quieten him down. They could not resist him because of the **wisdom!** The only option left was to bring false accusation against him to kill him – just like they did with Jesus.

### **The wisdom reveals the glory**

When Stephen was brought to the council they were *“looking steadfastly at him”* and they *“saw his face as the face of an angel”* (Acts6:15). Stephen was manifesting the glory of the eternal God! The wisdom of God brings us into the glory and like Moses, our faces will reveal the One who is in us – Christ the wisdom of God!

Stephen then preached the *“unsearchable riches of Christ...making them to see what is the fellowship of the mystery...making known the manifold wisdom of God”* (Eph.3:8-10). Stephen was seeking to show that the physical temple, which was the symbol of religious Judaism, was not God’s dwelling place (Acts7:48-49). He was manifesting to them by His life, that now the Holy Spirit dwells in a new temple – those who **do not resist Him** (v.51).

This angered them. *“But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and he said, ‘Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!’”* (Acts7:55-56). The wisdom of God reveals the reality of who Jesus is and where He is positioned. Stephen was now receiving a **crown of glory!**

## Wisdom in death

Some may think that Stephen's death was a waste. He could have lived much longer doing the work, preaching in many other places and reaching more people. When Stephen was being stoned by the angry religious zealots for his confession of faith he was *"calling on God, saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not charge them with this sin.' And when he had said this, he fell asleep"* (Acts7:59-60).

What purpose was being outworked here? How does the wisdom of God triumph when a son of God is murdered? The answer is that a man named Saul was there consenting to and witnessing Stephen's death (Acts8:1). The enemy of the church and the one who *"persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it"* (Gal.1:13) saw something that day that troubled him. How could a man die happily, being stoned, and pray forgiveness on those who are murdering him?

## Jesus revealed

Saul was troubled but kept on his task until the same One that Stephen saw at his death arrested Saul, shining light from heaven on him and saying, *"Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he said, 'Who are you Lord?' Then the Lord said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads"* (Acts9:4-5). Saul had been *kicking against the goads*. His conscience had troubled him since the time of Stephen's death.

God, in his wisdom, was preparing Saul to become the apostle Paul. He had witnessed a man who did not fear death and did not fight to stay alive. This was not the wisdom that Saul knew before. The wisdom of God revealed in Stephen's death prepared Saul to receive Jesus by revelation and become the apostle that brought the gospel of Christ, the wisdom of God, to the Gentiles!

## Wisdom cries out

There is a need for the Body of Christ to heed the call to listen to wisdom. If the Church is to rule and reign with Jesus the Messiah and walk in triumph over principalities and powers it will only come through the church displaying the *"manifold wisdom of God"* (Eph.3:10). We must come to understand the manifold wisdom of God. In the book of Proverbs, Solomon writes, *"wisdom calls aloud outside: She raises her voice in the open squares. She cries out in the chief concourses, at the opening of the gates in the city she speaks her words"* (Prov.1:20-21).

## Let the Spirit of wisdom be poured out on you

Wisdom is calling out to us. We must listen! The wisdom of God says, *"Turn at my rebuke; surely I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you"* (Prov.1:23). We must turn to God's wisdom and then He will give us *"the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him [Jesus the Messiah]"* (Eph.1:17).

## So "Get wisdom"

*"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him"* (Jam.1:5). It is time to ask God for wisdom and see His wisdom released in us so that Christ, the wisdom of God, can manifest in us.

Solomon exhorted us many years ago and may we receive the exhortation in our day, *"Get wisdom! Do not forsake her, love her. Wisdom is the principal thing! Get wisdom"* (Prov.4:5-7).

# THE MINISTRY OF TRANSFORMATION

## 2 CORINTHIANS 4:1-7

*“Therefore, since we have received this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.*

*But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to everyman’s conscience in the sight of God.*

*But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,*

*Whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

*For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake.*

*For it is God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

*But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us”*

## WHAT IS THIS MINISTRY

*“Therefore, since we have received this ministry”*: which ministry have we received? If we go back to **1Corinthians 3:18**, we see that it is a ministry of transformation, **from glory to glory, being changed into the same image**. This is very exciting: the ministry that we have received is the ministry of transformation in and through the Holy Spirit, from one level of glory to another, *“until we are conformed to the image of His Son”* (**Rom.8:29**).

Paul says that because we have *“received mercy we do not lose heart”* (**1Cor.4:1**). We do not lose heart because our confidence is in the Lord, the Spirit. The ministry of transformation is only possible because of the supernatural working of the Spirit through the word. It is according to God’s mercy that God has put us into the ministry (**1Tim.1:12-13**) and it is a ministry that reveals the glory of God in Christ. The work of God among us in these days is the work of **manifesting His glory**.

## Jesus will manifest Himself

Jesus said, *“He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him”* **Jn.14:21**. The glory is in Christ and Christ is in us, so that the glory of God is to be revealed in us.

The word *manifest* means literally *to cause to shine in*; thus, *to appear, come to view, reveal, exhibit, make visible, present oneself in the sight of another*.

Jesus will reveal Himself to the world through His chosen ones who are being obedient.

## TRUE DOCTRINE CAUSES GROWTH

As ministers of His word *“we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness”* (**2Cor.4:2**). Through the preaching and teaching of the word we are to bring all of the believers from childhood to maturity; *“That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting”* **Eph.4:14**.

## Manifestation of truth

***“Nor handling the word of God deceitfully [not adulterating the word of God], but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to everyman’s conscience in the sight of God” 2Cor.4:2.*** The word ‘manifestation’ means *exhibition, expression, a bestowment*. We are to speak the word as it is written. There is to be a manifestation of the truth; there is to be an exhibition of the veracity, the reality, the sincerity, the accuracy and integrity, the truthfulness, dependability and propriety of the word of God {Word Wealth SFLB at John 4:24}. Jesus said, ***“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth” Jn.17:17.***

## The true word pierces the conscience

If we speak the word of God truthfully, the word will be witnessed to in the conscience of every man, because we speak for God, ***“in the sight of God”***. This was our experience in the nation of Papua New Guinea, where Janet and I ministered in May 2013. God sent us to speak His word, not to bring correction or try to change the church who received us, but by speaking the word in the purest form that was possible for us, we saw God transforming the brethren. The word went straight into their conscience.

## Presenting the word distinctly

***“For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” Jn.1:17.*** When the word is ministered in grace, the word is received. Ministering the word in grace is presenting the word distinctly and in a way that the brethren can understand the word itself. The word is exalted! Jesus the Messiah is revealed!

In **Nehemiah 8:1-8**, we have a wonderful example of the word being presented distinctly, in a way that all the people could understand.

- When the wall was built, ***“All the people gathered together as one man in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the Scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses” v.1.***
- ***“The ears of the people were attentive to the Book of the Law” v.3***
- Ezra stood with many other ministering brethren to bring the word of God. This reminds us of Peter on the day of Pentecost, ***“standing up with the eleven” (Acts 2:14).***
- When Ezra opened the Book, ***“All the people stood up” v.5.***
- All the people, ***“bowed their heads and worshiped YAHWEH with their faces to the ground” v.6.***
- A number of ministering Levites ***“helped the people to understand the Law” v.7.***
- ***“So they read distinctly from the Book, in the Law of God, and they gave the sense and helped them to understand the reading” v.8***

## The veil is removed by faith

***“But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe” 2Cor.4:3-4a.*** Not all have faith. The judgement when Christ comes will be ***“on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2Thess.1:8b).***



## The light of the gospel

***“Least the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them” 2Cor.4:4b.*** The gospel brings light because it is the gospel of the glory of Christ. When Saul [Paul] was travelling to Damascus to arrest Christians, ***“suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’ And he said, ‘Who are you Lord?’ Then the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus’” (Acts 9:2-5).*** This is an example of the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.

## The image of God

Christ is the image of God.

- **Colossians 1:15** says ***“He is the image of the invisible God.”***
- **Hebrews 1:3** says He is ***“the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person.”***
- Jesus said, ***“He who has seen Me has seen the Father” (Jn.14:9).***
- **John 1:18** says, ***“no one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.”***
- ***“But we see Jesus ... crowned with glory and honour” (Heb.2:9a).***

## CHRIST JESUS THE LORD

***“For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake” 2Cor.4:5.***

- ❖ We are preaching Christ, the Messiah, the anointed King;
- ❖ the One who was promised in the Old Testament and prophesied about many times.
- ❖ We are preaching Jesus, the Eternal God manifesting in the flesh to save us.
- ❖ We are preaching that Jesus is the Lord;
- ❖ that He is the *Kurios* {Greek}, the owner, the controller, the One in authority.

## Jesus is Adonai

In the Old Testament the word for Lord was Adonai, referring to Jehovah God as the owner, master and Lord of all. Adonai was only ever used in reference to God, and when He was called Adonai, it refers to the glorious Lord in all His power and attributes.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter declared that, ***“God has made this Jesus whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36).***

## Be a bondservant

It is surprising how many ministries preach in such a way that they become famous ministers because of their personality, or because of their gifting or their particular presentation of doctrine.

A true minister of the word does not promote himself or draw attention to his ministry, but rather comes as a bondservant ***“for Jesus’ sake.”*** A bondservant is one who serves voluntarily as did the bond-slave in the Old Testament, doing His master’s will as a humble servant.

## THE GLORY OF GOD IS SEEN IN JESUS

***“For it is God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”***

**2Cor.4:6.** This verse is referring us back to the first recorded act of God in creation, when He commanded light to shine in the darkness (**Gen.1:2-3**).

In a similar way God shines in our hearts the light of the knowledge of His glory, and this glory is seen in the face of Jesus Christ, *“who is the image of God”* (**2Cor.4:4**).

- When God came into the world, the Bible says, *“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth”* **Jn.1:14**.
- When Jesus turned the water into wine, He *“manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him”* (**Jn.2:11**).
- When Jesus was transfigured on the mountain, *“He received from God the Father honour and glory”* (**2Pet.1:17**).
- Jesus said to the Father, *“And the glory which you gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are One”* **Jn.17:22**.

We are to come to the knowledge of His glory so that His glory will be seen in us.

## **THE TRANSFORMATION IS THE GLORY REVEALED IN US**

### **In earthen vessels**

*“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us”* **2Cor.4:7**. The wonder of God’s redemptive purpose in salvation is that He intends for the fullness of His glory to be revealed in and through the body of Christ. Even as the Father was seen in Jesus, so Jesus is now to be seen in His church. The transformation is taking place through the word working in us by the Spirit.

### **By the renewing of the mind**

*“But be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, acceptable and perfect will of God”* (**Rom.12:2**). The transformation takes place as we receive the pure, unadulterated word of God.

### **Speaking the word**

It has been an amazing experience in recent times to have the privilege to speak to pastors and leaders in many nations, unfolding the Scriptures line by line, precept by precept, and to witness the power of the word transforming the hearers. Then the joy has been to hear the hearers speaking the same word back to us and to others, causing us all to be transformed.

***“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the ETERNAL ONE, as the waters cover the sea”*** **Habakkuk 2:14**

# MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

God told Moses in **Numbers 14:21**, *“But truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.”* This promise of God is repeated in **Habakkuk 2:14**, *“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”* It has always been God’s intention for the earth to be filled with men and women who are reflecting His glory and manifesting His kingdom – in the earth!

## God made man in the image and likeness of Himself

In **Genesis 1:26** God said, *“Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”*

- ❖ **Likeness**: Hebrew #1823 ‘d’muwth’ {dem-ooth} means *resemblance, model, shape*; it signifies the original after which a thing is patterned.

**Isaiah 40:18** *“To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare to Him?”* God is an uncreated Eternal being; there is nothing to compare Him with. God is the original; he is not patterned after anyone or anything.

But in **Genesis 1:26** we see that God created man according to His likeness. Man was made in the likeness of God; patterned after Him.

- ❖ **Image**: Hebrew #6754 ‘Tselem’ {tseh’-lem} this word has the meaning of *something that has an illusion of, or a resemblance to, a representative figure*. It can refer to a statue or a replica, but can also mean an image in the sense of the essential nature.

## The essential nature

In **Genesis 5:3** we read *“And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.”* Seth was not created as Adam was, nor was he a clone of Adam, but because he came from Adam, the essential nature of Adam was in his son Seth. Children have characteristics and similarities to their parents.

## Created to be like God

**Genesis 1:27** *“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”* God created man in His own image and likeness, that is, the man God created was reflecting some of God’s own perfection, His own characteristics – perfect knowledge, righteousness and holiness, and he was given dominion over creatures.

We also note that being created in God’s image meant being created male and female. Being made in the image and likeness of God was something significant, special and unique; setting man apart from any other creature that God had created.

God was very happy with what He had made. *“Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good”* (**Gen.1:31**).

## God’s intention

In **Genesis 1:28** God had told the man and woman He had created, *“Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”* God’s intention was for the

earth to be filled with men and women reflecting His image and likeness, living in victory over the devil and exercising rulership in the earth.

### **No other image**

In **Exodus 20** God gave to Moses the Ten Commandments. In **verse 4** God says, ***“You shall not make for yourself a carved image – any likeness of anything that is in the heaven above or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.”***

God did not want any other image or likeness to take His place, or to be worshiped by His people. He went on to tell them that they were not to bow down or serve any foreign gods, ***“For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God” (v.5).***

God warned His people seriously many times not to make other images or to worship them (**Deut.4:15-24**). God wanted His people to worship Him only; but instead, the children of Israel chose to make other images and exalt and worship them. God brought severe judgement on His people because they chose to follow after other gods and worship images of their own making. Only God is to be worshiped. This is how Jesus responded when He was being tempted by the devil in the wilderness: ***“It is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve’ (Matt.4:10).*** But instead, down through the ages men have ***“worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator” (Rom.1:25).***

### **WHOSE IMAGE?**

In **Matthew 22:17-21** we read about the Pharisees trying to trap Jesus by asking Him, ***“Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?” (v.17).*** Jesus responded with a word of wisdom and asked them to show Him a coin. ***“And He said to them, ‘Whose image and inscription is this?’ They said to Him, ‘Caesar’s.’ And He said to them ‘Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s’” (v.20-21).***

Jesus is showing us here that the image that we bear is an indication of whom we belong to. The coin bore the image of Caesar, therefore it belonged to Caesar. But **that which bears God’s image, belongs to God!** Therefore man belongs to God.

In the Greek the word **image** is the word ‘eikon’ {#1504 ‘i-kone’} it comes from a word meaning, *likeness*, and it means *statue, profile, representation or resemblance*. *This word always refers to a prototype that it resembles and from which it is drawn. The word involves two ideas of representation and manifestation, reflecting the relations between God the Father, Christ, and man.*

### **Christ is the image of God**

- **2 Corinthians 4:4** tells us that Christ is ***“the image of God.”*** That means that Christ is essentially and absolutely the perfect expression and representation of God the Father. He reflects the very glory of God.
- **Colossians 1:15** speaking of Jesus says, ***“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.”***
- **Hebrews 1:3** says of Jesus, the Son, that He is ***“the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person.”***
- Christ Jesus is the visible representation and manifestation of God to created beings. Jesus confirmed this in **John 14:9** when He said to Philip, ***“He who has seen Me has seen the Father.”***

## **Man in the image of God**

**1 Corinthians 11:7** says that man is the image and glory of God. Man is a being corresponding to the original. Man as a created being is to be a visible representation of God.

**Notes from Strong's Concordance** [page77 Gr.Dict]: The condition of man as a fallen creature has not entirely effaced the image. Man is still suitable to bear responsibility; he still has God-like qualities such as love of goodness and beauty; such qualities are not found in animals. In the fall man ceased to be a perfect vehicle for the representation of God. But God's grace in Christ will yet accomplish more than what Adam lost.

## **The image of the heavenly man**

*"And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man" 1 Corinthians 15:49.* We have been created in the image of God, and that is what He is calling us back to! God will restore us in Christ: *"For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:10).*

## **The new man**

We are to *"Put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him" Col.3:10.*

God wants us as men and women created in His image and likeness, not just to resemble Him but to represent Him, and to manifest Him in the earth.

## **God manifest in His people**

To be made in the image of God means that not only do we have His essential nature in us, but that we **represent Him and manifest Him** in the earth. This is the apostolic mandate – to fully represent and make known the sender, by manifesting His power and authority.

## **Sons conformed to the Image**

Entering into sonship is part of the restoration that has to happen. We are to be conformed to the image of His Son. *"For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren" Rom.8:29.*

*"For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the manifestation of the sons of God" Rom.8:19.*

## **Restored to the image**

There is a regeneration and then a restoration to take place in us to bring us back into that place where we can fully manifest and represent the One whose image we bear. This can only happen by the Spirit. *"Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord" 2Cor.3:17-18.*

## **The glory of God to be seen**

God's intention for the earth has not changed, He wants the earth to be filled with His glory. And that glory is a reflection of the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus. *"For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

# THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID

## What are the 'sure mercies of David'?

*“And we declare to you glad tidings – that promise which was made to the fathers. God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten you.’*

*And that He raised Him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, He has spoken thus:*

*‘I will give you the sure mercies of David.’” Acts 13:32-34*

## THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID PREACHED BY PAUL

Paul was preaching his first recorded sermon. Paul and Barnabas were in Antioch of Pisidia. He was speaking about Jesus being raised from the dead, no more to return to corruption.

God spoke through prophet Isaiah, **“I will give you the sure mercies of David” (Isa.55:3)**. Why would Paul put this quotation in his sermon? Paul assumed those to whom he was speaking, would understand.

Picking up the context from **Acts 13:26**, Paul was addressing his Jewish brethren and also **“those among you who fear God”**, that is, God-fearing Greeks in the synagogue. The word of this salvation was sent to them.

Paul then shows that the condemnation and death of Jesus, followed by His resurrection, was the fulfilment of Scriptures from **Psalms**, and the quotation from Isaiah concerning the ‘sure mercies of David’ is referring to Jesus’ death and resurrection. All was done to fulfil what was written concerning the Christ.

**“But God”**: the God factor is the most important factor –

- ❖ God raised Him from the dead
- ❖ God interfered in this chain of events
- ❖ God allowed all these things to happen to fulfil what is written

Jesus was seen much around Jerusalem and in Galilee after the resurrection. His witnesses were there and they saw Him alive from the dead. This is the good news: the promise God made to the fathers has been fulfilled!

## God has fulfilled the promise

He did this through the manifestation of the Messiah, that He is **the Son of God**. God raised Jesus from the dead, no more to see corruption. Then Paul declared that this is **“the sure mercies of David”** being given to all who believe in Jesus the Messiah – in His death and resurrection.

- The sure mercies of David is all about the **resurrection**
- The sure mercies is all about the **forgiveness of sins**.
- The sure mercies of David is all about being **justified** because Jesus took our sins to the cross and rose from the dead.

The sure mercies of David is referring to the death and resurrection of Christ and therefore the forgiveness of our sins and justification.

## THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID, PROPHISED BY ISAIAH (55:1-3)

Paul was quoting from **Isaiah 55:3**. Let us look at the context:

**v.1 “Ho! Everyone who thirsts”** God wants our attention!

**“come to the waters”** this is speaking of the waters of life; it is a reference to the river of God

coming from the Throne, the very life of God (**Rev.22:1-2 & Ez.47**).

**“come buy and eat”**

**“come buy wine and milk”**: **wine** can refer to the joy of Spirit; it can refer to the blood of Christ. **Milk** refers to the word; understanding salvation (**1 Pet.2:2**); it is very easy to get away from the pure milk of the word (the foundations). Peter is talking to the mature as well as to baby believers.

Do not turn God’s word into something else. We need to return to the pure word. For example, Jesus did not say He would build some denominational churches. He said, **“I will build My church”** (**Matt.16:18**). We are to continue in the Word.

**“without money, without price”**: this makes it clear that we should not be coerced into giving money to preachers who claim their ministry is ‘good soil’. The word of God is to be proclaimed freely and then God will support His true ministers.

**v.2 “Why do you spend money for what is not bread?”** Why do you spend your money on church buildings, when there are pastors in Africa, and other nations, who do not have a Bible in their own language?

**“And your wages for what does not satisfy?”**

**“Listen carefully to Me and eat what is good”**

**“let your soul delight itself in abundance”**

Jesus died on the cross for **our souls!** Not so we could spend heaps of money on ourselves. It does not matter where we meet, but we should not be wasting money on elaborate buildings. Scribes came to Jesus and asked, **“why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of our elders?”** They were not washing their hands properly before eating. Jesus said, **“Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?”** The Scribes were teaching their disciples to dishonour father and mother, because they did not look after their parents; they were giving their gift to God; they were being hypocrites and disobedient in their **“giving to God”**. (**Matt.15:1-7**)

**v.3 “Incline your ear and come to Me”**. This is the fourth time God has said **“Come”**.

**“Hear and your soul shall live”**

**“And I will make an everlasting covenant with you.”** What is this everlasting covenant? God says, it is **‘the sure mercies of David’**. The **‘sure mercies of David’** is an everlasting covenant that God wants to make with us.

How can we understand the ‘sure mercies of David’? Paul says it is to do with the death and resurrection of Jesus, that is, the reality of the new covenant that Jesus sealed in His own blood.

In **Isaiah**, God says that David had been given **“a witness to the people, a leader and commander for the people”** (**Isa.55:4**). David was dead when Isaiah wrote this; it is a prophecy of Messiah. Nations will come to the Messiah. A **holy nation** will be raised up (**1 Pet.2:9**). This is fruit of the sure mercies of David. The holy nation is made up of a remnant of all nations: members from every tribe, nation, kindred and tongue.

## THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID ARE FULFILLED IN THE NEW COVENANT BY MESSIAH JESUS

### Psalm 89

*“My mercy I will keep for Him forever, and My covenant shall stand firm with Him” v.28.*

God said, *“I have found My servant David; with My holy oil I have anointed him”* v.20. Where did God find David? **2 Samuel 7** says *“I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep”* (v.8).

God spoke powerful things about His servant David in **verses 21-25**:

- God’s hand will establish Him **v.21**
- his enemies will not outwit Him **v.22**
- his foes will be beaten down and plagued **v.23**
- God’s faithfulness and mercy will be with Him **v.24**
- God will give Messiah dominion **v.25**

The references in **Psalm 89** to David are actually referring to Messiah as well. The Scriptures are fulfilled in Messiah, Jesus.

In the New Testament, the Messiah [Christ] is a many-membered body (**1Cor.12:12**). This is the remnant church that Jesus is raising; it is the royal priesthood; it is the holy nation (**1Pet.2:9**). We have received the sure mercies of David.

**v.26** – *“He [Messiah] shall cry to Me, ‘You my Father, My God and the Rock of my salvation’”*

Through Messiah, we come to know God as our Father. Jesus brought to us the revelation of God our Father. It is only when we have received the spirit of adoption as sons (**Eph.1:5**), and are fully walking in the inheritance, that we come to know the sure mercies of David in fullness.

- ❖ we will know God as **our Father**
- ❖ the sure mercies of David is talking about the sons of God arising in the earth, having the victory, and having been given the dominion. These promises are made to those who are **“in Christ”**

**v.27** – He will be made God’s firstborn (**Col.1:15**) – the one who receives the **double inheritance** (**Psa.2:7-8**).

- ❖ Jesus is the highest of the kings of the earth (**Rev.1:5, Rev.19:16**).
- ❖ the sure mercies of David guarantee that the sons of God will receive the right of the **“firstborn”** (**Rom.8:29**).

**v.28** – God’s mercy towards His people is **forever**

- ❖ His sure mercies are forever
- ❖ We are in an everlasting covenant with God; we are the people of God through Jesus Christ.

**v.29** – Messiah’s seed will endure forever

- ❖ if we are Christ’s then we are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise (**Gal.3:29**)
- ❖ His throne will be as the days of heaven (**Rev11:15**).



## THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID IS DEMONSTRATED BY DAVID GOING FROM THE SHEEPFOLD TO THE THRONE

The Scripture speaks of the **sure mercies of David**:

- **Sure** = certain, guaranteed
- **Mercy** = forgiveness, tenderness, loving kindness, blessing we do not deserve

### David a type of Messiah

**Who is David?** Interpretively the reference to David is speaking of Messiah, but to understand Messiah and the way that God works in bringing us into Messiah, we need to understand who David is and how God brought him into the experience of the sure mercies of God. Then we will understand more fully how God has brought us to receive the sure mercies of David by receiving Messiah, Jesus, who died and rose again.

### The anointing of David to be king – 1 Samuel 16:1-13

The prophet Samuel was told by God to go to Bethlehem and anoint the son of Jesse to be king (v.1). The new king was to be a son of Jesse in Bethlehem. It was very dangerous to anoint another king while Saul was still alive. Saul was not happy with Samuel because he had spoken God's judgement on Saul's kingdom. Samuel had told Saul that the kingdom would be taken from him. Samuel had to find a way to do it without losing his life.

### David was not at the sacrifice

He planned a sacrifice to be made in Bethlehem and said that Jesse and his sons should be invited to the sacrifice. This was God's instruction to Samuel. God wanted Jesse with his sons to come to the sacrifice to meet Samuel. All of Samuel's sons were expected to come. Why was David not at the sacrifice? (v.2-4)

### God looks at the heart

Samuel consecrated Jesse and his sons, not realising that one of the sons was missing. Jesse came to the sacrifice with seven sons, but he had eight sons (v.5).

The firstborn of Jesse was presented and he looked good, but God taught Samuel an important lesson, ***"Man looks at the outward appearance, but YAHWEH looks at the heart"*** v.7. God does not look at appearance or stature of a man, but **God looks at the heart!**

All of Jesse's seven sons were rejected by God (v.8-10).

### David the forgotten son

Samuel was perplexed and said, ***"Are all the young men here?"*** Then Jesse admitted that there was another son, ***"the youngest and he is keeping the sheep"*** (v.11). Why had Jesse not included David, his eighth son? Samuel had made it clear that Jesse would bring all his sons to the sacrifice, and yet Jesse now said he had another son.

What was the matter with Jesse? Why was David not included? What issue did Jesse and his family have with David? The most important event in the life of Jesse's family was taking place and David not invited or included!

### Where was David?

He was serving as a shepherd out in the fields somewhere, probably some distance from home; probably sleeping away from home and serving as a shepherd for the sheep. This was a lowly job and one wonders why a servant was not doing that job. If David had known of the feast, surely he would have been there. Why is David, the youngest, keeping the sheep?

They sent for David and brought him in and Samuel was told by God to anoint him as the one to be king in the midst of his brothers (**v.12-13**). From that day David was anointed by God to be king.

God found David in a **place of rejection**. It was a place of serious rejection – not having his father’s approval to be part of the most important feast that the family had ever been invited to. His brothers had been exalted above him by his father. He was not considered worthy to be among the family before Samuel.

### **Where did God find YOU?**

God found many of us in hidden away places. Many of us had been rejected; had been failures, but God found us. Each one of us is a sure candidate for the **sure mercies of David**. David was considered by his family to be not worthy to sit at his family’s table.

God made an everlasting covenant with David, and He makes an everlasting covenant with us. God can take you from the most difficult circumstances; God will find us wherever we are and He is able to take us from a place of obscurity and put a royal anointing upon our lives. When we come to Christ and are baptised into Him, He anoints us with His Holy Spirit. We receive the first fruits of the Spirit, which is the guarantee that we will walk in the inheritance (**Eph.1:12-14**).

### **From the sheepfold to the throne**

The story of how God took David from the sheepfold, from being a rejected son, to being the king over all Israel, is the primary expression of the sure mercies of David. God said to David, ***“I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel”*** **2 Sam.7:8**.

God found David doing a menial job as a shepherd. The role of shepherds has never been an exalted position. The angel announced the birth of Jesus to shepherds (**Luke 2:8-13**).

Maybe God found you lost in sin, lost in religion, broken, into drugs, caught in immorality. God takes us from where we are, to be in Christ, ruling with Him.

Jesus found most of His disciples in Galilee, where they had a recognizably different accent; they were uneducated fishermen. Jesus found them and called them, ***“Come follow Me, I will make you fishers of men”*** (**Matt.4:19**).

### **This is the sure mercies of David!**

**This is a great story of God calling us out of darkness into the light of the kingdom of the Son of His love (Col.1:13) and who has qualified us “to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light” (Col.1:12).**

**This is the expression of the everlasting covenant that God has made with His people through Messiah Jesus.**

# THE LAST DAYS ANOINTING

*This word was given live at SHILOH by Simo Kahri, an apostolic minister who had been with us for two and a half years in Australia. It was his last message before he left for Finland, on 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2013.*

*He came for training and stayed for two years on a religious worker visa to be further trained and then to work with us as a missionary. He is a true son in the Lord and in the faith of Jesus. He has now returned to Finland to exercise an apostolic ministry in Finland and Russia where doors are already open for him.*

*We receive this word and are experiencing in our midst a fresh hunger and desire for the last days revival. Janet transcribed the word from notes she took. Paul.*

## The time of maturity

The time we are living in is the time of maturity. The wheat and the tares are coming to maturity in the earth. This is the time Jesus spoke of in **Matthew 13:36-43**. Through it all the work of discipleship continues.

## A GREATER ANOINTING

However there is a current move of God that is releasing a greater anointing in these days. It is happening world-wide and many will step into it; but God is looking for those who will be as forerunners.

There are three aspects to this anointing:

1. It will be visible – it will be seen world-wide
2. It will be tangible – able to be experienced
3. It will be noisy – the voice of God will be heard, being heralded forth

## How do we enter in?

The key to entering in is given in **Luke 11:9-13**. Here Jesus is speaking about asking, seeking and knocking, and it is in the context of receiving the Holy Spirit. ***“How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him” (v.13).***

We are to:

- ask,
- seek
- knock!

This is more than just a simple prayer. It is a fervent, passionate, persistent asking, where we are truly seeking His face and knocking on the eternal doors of glory. If we do this God has promised to release His anointing to all who come to Him in sincerity and truth.

## A prayer for boldness

In **Acts 4** we read of Peter and John being arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin, following the miraculous healing of the lame man at the gate of the Temple. They were questioned, threatened and commanded ***“not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus” (v.18)***. After their release, they returned to their brethren and reported all that had happened; then together, ***“they raised their voice to God with one accord” (v.24)***.

### **There is another infilling**

These apostles had already been filled with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, but they were now asking for a greater boldness to preach the word of God. *“Now Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus” v.29-30.* The result of praying this prayer was, *“The place where they were assembled together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness” v.31.*

### **An anointing to preach the word**

In the midst of persecution they were asking for a greater anointing. It was an anointing to preach the word, but it was accompanied with signs and wonders. They were *“filled with the Holy Spirit”* and went on with the work of preaching the gospel. They did not camp at the place of manifestation, and focus on the amazing sign of a building being shaken. They had been empowered to do the work of preaching the word of God with all boldness, even though opposition was raised against them.

### **ASK FOR THE RAIN**

In **Zechariah 10:1** the prophet says, *“Ask the LORD [YAHWEH] for rain, in the time of the latter rain. YAHWEH will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, grass in the field for everyone.”* We are to ask YAHWEH for the rain. This rain is the rain of the pure word of God being released. **Verse 2** goes on to show that where there is no rain of the word, delusions, lies and confusion enter in and the people *“are in trouble because there is no shepherd” (v.2)*, who is speaking that pure word. [see **Jeremiah 3:15**]

It is time to intercede and ask God to release again *“the Spirit of grace and supplication” (Zach.12-10)*, that will cause us to mourn at our spiritual state, and come to deep repentance; understanding more fully and entering into the sufferings of Jesus for His body (**Col.1:24**), so that the *“fountain will be opened up”* once again (**Zech.12:1**).

### **Press in**

Jesus says in **Matthew 11:12** *“And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force”*. Through Jesus, anyone who presses in can receive the anointing. We are to press in! Will you be one who responds to the Holy Spirit and takes hold of what is available to us through Jesus?

Remember the exhortation from **Hebrews 11:6**, *“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”* We ask, seek and knock in confidence because that is what God wants us to do, and He wants to give us the Holy Spirit.

### **A witnessing church**

**Chapter 11 of Revelation** speaks of the two witnesses and the two olive trees, which speak of the witnessing church in the last days. God gives to this witnessing church great power in the earth to do His will, even to release His judgements, accompanied by signs and manifestations. Those who stand against this church will themselves be judged. But those ones who are part of the witnessing church will also face persecution and need to be willing to lay down their lives.

## THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT

### Go where the Father says

**Ezekiel 1** describes an amazing vision of the Spirit of God, which illustrates the total oneness of the work of the Spirit. *“And each one went straight forward; they went wherever the spirit wanted to and they did not turn when they went”* (v.12). We need to have this clarity to only do what the Father says to do, and only go where the Father says to go.

### A consuming fire

**Verse 13** speaks of *“burning coals of fire”*. The fire is a fire that will consume, burn up, everything of the flesh. God wants His character to be formed in each one of us. We are to become like Him; fully manifesting His character and nature in the earth.

### Hearing and obeying

*“And the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning”* v.14. This is a picture of how the last days’ church is to function: saints hearing what the Father says to do, going out, coming back, speaking a word here, releasing God’s presence into a particular situation there. It will be happening suddenly, even as the lightning flashes from one end of the sky to the other.

### Now is the time to come out of the cave

In **1 Kings 18** we read of the prophet Elijah’s awesome victory over the prophets of Baal and Jezebel. But in **chapter 19** Elijah became fearful and fled into the wilderness where he eventually hid in a cave. God knew where Elijah was hiding and God asked him, *“What are you doing here, Elijah?”* (v.9). Elijah was believing a lie; he said, *“I alone am left; and they seek to take my life”* (**1Kin.19:10b**). Then God called Elijah out of the cave.

A number of manifestations occurred, but the manifestations passed away. God did not speak in the manifestations. Finally God spoke to Elijah in *“a still small voice”* (v.12b). God recommissioned Elijah and told him what he was to do.

### Listen to His still small voice

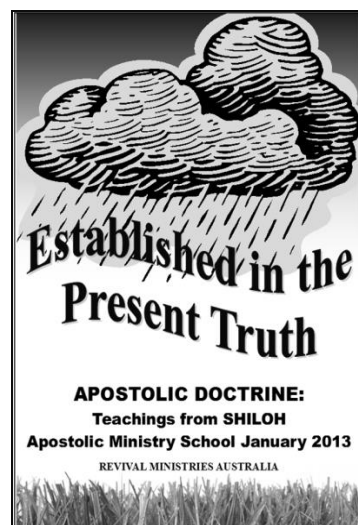
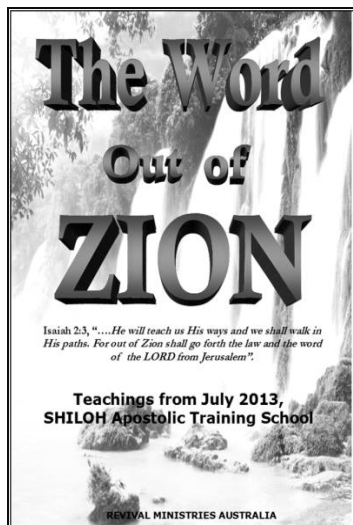
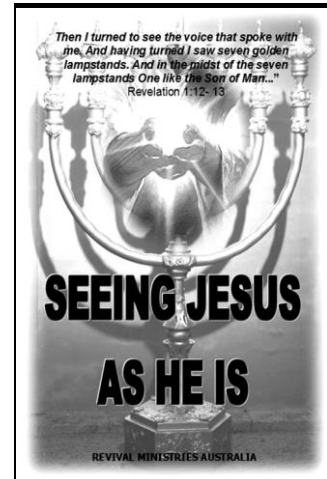
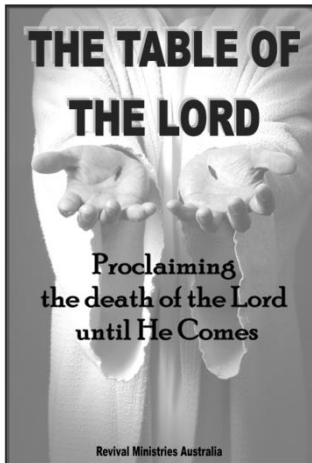
In these days there are many who, like Elijah, have become fearful, disillusioned and discouraged, even after doing mighty things for God. Many are hiding away in whatever ‘cave’ they have found. But God is again calling His people to come out of the cave; to not be waylaid or stumbled by manifestations, and want to camp there; but to listen to His still small voice and to obey His instructions.

### This is a time to be recommissioned

This is the time to receive of the last days’ anointing that will empower us to be the witnessing church that Jesus is raising up.

**These are serious days, and this is a serious word.**

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