

FINE TUNING OUR TIMING

“NOW faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Heb.11:1 KJV. Getting the tenses right is always a big thing at school for any student of language; we cannot afford to get it wrong however, in our quest to grasp the revelation of faith. The Jews were so caught up in the future tense that they missed the Messiah in their midst! Two thousand years later they are still waiting for Him! Many sincere Christians today are caught up in the same trap. Either through some personal prophecies that keep them entertained with the future or interpreting the second coming of Jesus as their salvation from the evil of the day as if His first coming was a failure!

In our confined definition of space and time we struggle with scriptures such as this one in Rom.4:17, “God calls things which are not as though they were!” Also in studying prophecy we wonder why the prophets speak in the past tense predicting the sufferings of Christ 700 years in advance. “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and by His stripes we were healed.” Is.53:5. Then Jesus revolutionises the concept of prayer in Mark 11:22,24. “Have the faith of God” He says, “Whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours.” (No more begging, no more pleading!) Having read one of their favourite prophecies, He baffles His local fellowship with the statement, “Today this scripture

is fulfilled in your hearing!” Luke 4:16-21. When the woman of Samaria begins to compare notes on religious traditions, He astounds her by revealing that the hour is coming and now is when neither on this mountain of Samaria, nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father; the true worshippers will worship Him in spirit and in truth. (All worship might be sincere, but not all worship is true!) John 4:21,23. It is clear that if Jesus is indeed the fullness of time, every possible interpretation of our life is challenged in the light of “now that faith has come.” Gal.3:23-26 and 4:1-4.

THE CELEBRATION OF PERFECTION

One day I had the pleasure of taking a very famous photographer out on a scenic boat trip in Walker Bay. I could tell by the size of his camera equipment that he was not your average tourist. He explained to me that he needed to take only two photographs a year to cover his budget! I was thrilled to watch the artist at work. With fluent skill he would exchange lenses and film without missing a moment. On our way back to the harbour we saw a flock of a few hundred Cape Cormorants. The next moment they all took off in flight; the rhythm and unison of their wings were like ballet reflecting on the water. Our photographer was happily clicking away when suddenly he shouted: “I’ve got it, I’ve got it!” It was wonderful to witness the joy in the man’s face. He knew that he had captured a moment that would perhaps be worth more than all his equipment put together. I watched him relax and enter his rest and understood that the Sabbath was a celebration of perfection, rather than a break

from a busy schedule to observe a religious ritual! Gen.1:31. While he was carefully putting his equipment away, I became absorbed by the thought of photography; magic moments of light, shape, colour and movement arrested and stored on film to be reproduced countless times on glossy magazine pages. These galleries would be appreciated in any culture or language, at any time in the future. I imagined how the artist would file these gems in a way that nothing would be lost of the original picture; regardless of what would happen to the prints, whether they be framed, forgotten or destroyed. Almost like words storing images of rare beauty to be repeated at any time in any language or thought.

In one of her classic novels, *Gentian Hill*, Elizabeth Goudge paints the picture of little Stella listening to her stepfather reading from the Bible: "All through the Book, even in the dreadful parts, the language would now and then suddenly affect her like an enchantment. The peculiarities of Father Sprigg's delivery worried her not at all. It was as though his gruff voice tossed the words roughly in the air separate particles of no great value, and immediately they fell again transmuted, like the music of a peal of bells or raindrops shot through with sunshine and vista beyond vista of incomparable beauty opened before the mind. It was a mystery to Stella that mere words could make this happen. She supposed the makers of these phrases had fashioned them to hold their visions as one makes a box to hold one's treasure, and Father Sprigg's voice was the key grating in the lock, so that the box could open and set them

free. That transmutation in the air still remained as unexplainable as the sudden change in herself, when at the moment of the magical fall her dull mind became suddenly sparkling with wonder and her spirit leaped up inside her like a bird...”

For the first time in the age of the universe, the invisible Creator would display His image and likeness in visible form. Genesis 1:26. The mould of brilliance and perfection would be preserved for eternity in the Word that was from the beginning, in spite of Adam’s fall. Solomon saw a glimpse of this in Prov.8:22, “The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His work, the first of His acts of old, ages ago I was set up, at the first before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills were I was brought forth, I was daily His delight, rejoicing before Him always.” Your original value, the way God knew you before He fashioned you in your mother’s womb, is still intact! Through the preaching of the gospel of truth, the magic of that eternal moment is revealed again in the face of Christ as in a mirror, so that the light of life might dawn in us and we may behold Him face to face, and that we may know ourselves even as we have always been known. 2Cor.4:2-7, 1Cor.13:10-12.

WE ARE INDEED HIS OFFSPRING

“Ascribe greatness to our God, the Rock, His work is perfect!” Deut.32:3,4. “We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.” Ep.2:10. “For in Him all

things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, all things were created through Him and for Him. He is before all things and all things share their common origin and identity in Him.” Col.1:15-17. The Gospel cannot reveal a redemption or reconciliation of lesser implication than this: “For He has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of His will, according to His purpose which He has treasured in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Him, things in heaven and on earth.” Ep.1:9,10. “Everything that exists in heaven or earth finds its perfection and fulfilment in Him.” (Phillips translation) “All this is God’s doing; camouflaged in Christ as it were, God personally reconciled the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them.” 2Cor.5:19. The same perfection declared and celebrated in the Sabbath of Genesis 1 and 2 is now revealed in redemption and becomes the urgency of our appeal to humanity, to enter God’s rest, to see what God sees in order to co-know with Him and thus to cease from their own labours! Zeph.3:17. We cannot afford to see less in salvation than what God sees in it! “How shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?” Heb.2:3. How can we exaggerate redemption, if the half could not be told of Solomon’s wisdom and wealth? And Someone greater than Solomon has come! Luke 11:31.

In his famous address in Athens, (Acts 17) Paul reminds the Gentlemen of philosophy that the God they worship in ignorance is the God who made the world and everything in it, “being Lord of heaven and earth, He does not live in fancy

decorated shrines made by man; nor is He served by human hands as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all men life and breath and everything. He made from one blood all nations of men to live across the whole earth. Even within their geographical boundaries of culture time and language, He is not beyond their reach; He is their true resonance! (Greek, *psallo*, to touch a string in order to make music) He is not far from each one of us, (He is not closer to the Jew than what He is to the Gentile!) for in Him we all live and move and have our being, for we are indeed His offspring.” He broke down every wall of division. Ep.2:13-16. Our origin in Him reveals our common identity. Heb.2:11. God is not the product of man’s best guess; He is bigger than religion’s biggest blunder or eloquence in their attempts to define Him. He is beyond extinction or threat and can never be reduced to either our clever or clumsy expression of philosophy or art. Our faith is not the fruit of our own invention or imagination, but the reflection of His initiative revealed in the person of Christ. God interrupted human history when for the first time since Adam, the brilliance of His image and likeness appeared again without flaw or distraction in the form of flesh, the exact expression of His character and Being. Heb.1:3, Col.1:15,16 “It is in Him that God gives a full and complete expression of Himself, in a human body; your own completeness is only realised in Him.” Col.2:9,10. Phillips. “The age of ignorance is now concluded; this calls for a radical change of mind; God appointed a day and a Person through whom He would judge the world in righteousness and of this He has given assurance to all men by raising

Him from the dead!" Acts 17:22-31. Mankind's judgement fell on one man; His resurrection from the dead is the eternal testimony of their acquittal. He is the only one who qualifies to represent both humanity and Deity in one Person before the highest court of justice. "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and He is the expiation for our sins and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. 1John2:1,2. "He was put to death for our trespasses and raised because we were justified." Rom.4:25.

LIFE DAWNED

Sixty years after he last saw Jesus in the flesh, John, now in his nineties, reflects on the mystery that was revealed which transformed his life from an illiterate fisherman to a saint. He spent most of the latter part of his life (about 30 years) living in Asia Minor and more specifically at Ephesus, much of Paul's emphasis in teaching therefore reflects in John's writing. This he did either from Ephesus or from the Isle of Pathmos where he spent a few years in exile. (Compare Col.1:15-17, Jn 1:1-3,16-17, 1Jn 5:20.) He understands that the Word has both an eternal origin and destiny that could never be confined to an isolated island or experience, neither could the Word be trapped in human doctrine or tradition. No inferior translation or interpretation could reduce God's original intent.

The authentic integrity of God's thought would forever be preserved and celebrated in the incarnation; human life would be the uninterrupted future of the Word.

Notice how often John uses the word, *ginomai*, meaning birth or origin: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things came into being (Gr.*ginomai*, from *genos*, to give birth to) through Him; and nothing has any authentic existence outside of their origin (Gr.*ginomai*) in Him. In Him was life and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness could not comprehend it. (Greek: *kata+lambano*, to seize upon, to grasp) The true light that enlightens every man has come into the world. The world was made (Gr.*ginomai*) through Him, yet the world knew Him not; He came to His own, and His own received Him not. (Gr.*para+lambano*, to grasp, associate with) But to everyone who by faith, comprehends Him to be their true origin, (Gr.*lambano*, comprehend, grasp, identify with) in them He confirms the integrity of their son-ship, (Gr.*didomi*, in this case to give something to someone that already belongs to them, thus to return) the fact that they already are His own, born from above, they have their beginning and their being in Him!" (Gr.*eksousia*, integrity, legality, authority, legal grounds.) Jesus has come to reveal man's true sonship; He vindicated our origin and design. 'And the Word became (Gr.*ginomai*) flesh and now tabernacles in us!' John 1:1-14. "We are not preaching a new doctrine, but the word that was from the beginning; yet it is new in that what is true in Him is equally true in us!" 1 John 2:7+8. In Him we discover that we are not here by chance or accident, or by the desire of an earthly parent, neither are we the product of a mere physical conception; we exist by the expression of God's desire to reveal Himself in

the flesh. His eternal, invisible Word, His Spirit-thought, became (Gr.*ginomai*, be born) flesh. James says: 'Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth...if any man hears this word, he sees the face of his birth as in a mirror, he sees himself as he is from God's point of view.' Jm.1:17,18,23.

God never compromised His original thought. The word became flesh and has taken up residence (tabernacled) in us, and we gazed with wonder and amazement upon the mystery of our inclusion in Him; (*theaomai* to gaze upon, to perceive) We saw His glory (Greek, *doxa*, the display of His opinion), the glory as of the original, authentic begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' (The original mind, or opinion of God, preserved and now revealed in Christ. He is both the 'only begotten', *monogenes*, as in the authentic original mould, as well as the first born from the dead. Col.1:18, 1Pet.1:3) We have grasped that He is the revelation of our completeness. 'And of His fullness have we all received, grace against grace.' (Gr.*garin anti garitos*, grace undeserved) 'For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. He who is in the bosom of the Father, the only (original, authentic) begotten of the Father, He is our guide who accurately declares and interprets the invisible God within us.' Jn.1:1-5, 9-14,16-18. "The Word that was from the beginning, what initial reports concerning Him have reached our ears, what we indeed bore witness to with our own eyes to the point that we became irresistibly attracted to Him; what it was that met our gaze and the touch of our

hands, yes, life dawned! (Gr.*psallo*, to touch the string of a musical instrument, thus resonance) The same life that was with the Father from the beginning, now dawned on us! The infinite life of the Father became visible before our eyes in a human person! This life now finds expression in a fellowship union with the Father and the son that is without limit or interruption. In all these years since the ascension of Jesus, John continues to enjoy unhindered friendship with God and desires to extend this same fellowship through his writing to every believer, "so that joy may be yours in full measure." 1 John 1:1,2,4.

Has the rain a Father?

Who begot the drops of dew?

Who birthed the morning?

Caused the dawn to know its place?

Have you comprehended the expanses of the earth?

Have you comprehended their origin?

He knows you by name

His design is His claim

He boldly declares, "Measure Me"

Have you measured your heart?

Have you measured the volume of your being?

He has chosen you to accommodate the fullness of His dream

Have you comprehended? He is at home within your heart,

A dwelling built within you without walls.

Take My love to its conclusion.

Take My love to every man,

Count the stars, count the sand

Measure the nations in My Hand,

*Come on now, measure Me
I fulfil your eternity.* (Author unknown-reference
from Job 38)

THE SON OF MAN IS THE SON OF GOD

God's eternal Word is wrapped up in the revelation of our sonship. Jesus is now the full expression in one Person of all the fragments of God's thought concerning man's true identity and redemption, as communicated in the law and the prophets. "In many and various ways He spoke in glimpses to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken His heart to us in a son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the ages. He is the brilliant reflection of the glory (the original opinion) of God; He is the exact engraved signet-character of the essence of God's Person. He is the force of the universe and sustains everything that is, by His utterance! Everything that exists finds its significance in Him! His mission was to restore mankind to innocence by blotting out their sin. Having accomplished this Himself, He now occupies the throne room of God's majesty! His very Being represents our innocence! Once and for all He freed us from a sin-consciousness! Heb.1:1-3, Heb.9:6-14, Heb.10:1-3,10,14. "In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Col.2:3,9,10. (His incarnation unlocks the secret code that unveils the mystery of man's inclusion in Christ. His death proclaims the fact that "we have died and our lives are now hid with Christ in God." Col.3:3) He is the theme of scripture! God associated us in Christ before the foundation of the world! Ep.1:4. 'It is from Him that we take our origin' 1Cor.1:30 Knox.

It is such a glorious thing to discover that the true context of scripture is not its historic or even traditional setting, but a reality of far greater relevance, our sonship! Heb.1:1,2. All of scripture finds its relevance only in its relation to the revelation of Christ as truly representing mankind; He is our true identity! "You search and ponder the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me." Jn.5:39. Scripture points to Christ and Christ reveals us! " And we all, with new understanding, see ourselves in Him as in a mirror; thus we are changed from an inferior mindset to the revealed opinion of our true Origin. 2Cor.3:18. When we read Scripture in the light of redemption, the Bible becomes a new Book. "The letter kills, but the spirit gives life, My words are spirit and life." Jn.6:63. The Bible confused and divided more people than any other book yet its spirit-message remains eternally intact in one man, the Word that became flesh, He reveals every man! "If you continue in My Word (The Word that was from the beginning, the Word that is God, the Word that became flesh and dwells in us) you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free, whom the son makes free is free indeed." John 8:31,32,36. Mankind's freedom is in discovering their true sonship! This is the truth as it is in Christ. Ep.4:21. "As He is so are we in this world." 1Jn.4:17. To know the truth about ourselves as it is revealed in Christ is what frees us to be who we are. He is not an example for us but of us! The only faith that is worth pursuing is the faith of God; what God believes concerning us concerns us, and deserves our undivided attention.

God's faith is on display in the Person, the life, death and resurrection of Christ. God believes in our inclusion in Him! 'Faith comes by hearing; the kind of hearing that imparts the revelation of Christ.' Rom. 10:17. (See RSV)

To give prominence to any scripture outside of its true context, the revelation of Christ in you, is to wander into distraction and error. "See to it that no one makes prey of you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to worldly principles (popular and accepted rules and regulations) and not according to Christ, for in Him there is all of God in a human body. **He alone defines our completeness!!**" Col.2:8-10. See also v 16-23, all the types and shadows of the Old covenant are now superseded by the greater reality, the new creation in Christ! "The law is but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities." Heb.10:1. "We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus. He created in Himself **one new man!**" Eph.2:10,15, Also 2 Cor.5:14,16,17.

JESUS - TO BE CONTINUED

His death, resurrection and ascension did not conclude His ministry, but ignited and multiplied it in us! We are not only included in His death and resurrection, but also in His ascension, 'He raised us up with Him and made us sit with Him in heavenly places!' Ep.2:6. The grain of wheat that would feed the nations did not abide alone, but fell into the earth and died and brought forth much fruit! John 12:24. The dawning of this truth in the understanding of the believer will revolutionise the church! The ecclesia of God is His voice and expression in the earth! His building, His

workmanship, His tabernacle, His abode, His image, His presence known and read by all men! His original blueprint-word made flesh. Ordinary lives communicating an extra ordinary impact! John G Lake wrote, "The struggle of the centuries has been to free the soul from narrow interpretations. The world is still waiting to see Him as He is, Jesus the magnificent, Jesus the giant, Jesus the compassionate, Jesus the dynamic, the wonder of the ages. Take the shackles off, let Him have a chance to bless mankind through you without limitations!" Be renewed in the spirit of your mind! Ep.4:23. Paul makes this statement in 2Cor.6:12, "You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections!" And in 1 Cor.4:8 he says, "Already you are filled! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings (It is not Paul's teaching that made us who and what we are, it was Christ's obedience) Would that you did reign!" What an awesome privilege to discover and indulge in a truth that has always been. "It is not a new doctrine, it is the Word that has been from the beginning, yet it is new, for that which is true in Him is true in us!" 1Jn 2:7,8.

NEWS FLASH! "Two uneducated fishermen heals a man who was a cripple for more than 40 years! Such was the immediate impact that 5000 men believed!" Acts 4:13. In the time of the early church no written Bible existed for decades and the majority of the people were illiterate, yet the Word increased and the number of disciples

multiplied greatly. Acts 6:7. Paul sees with conviction the future of the Word documented not on tablets of stone written and interpreted by human opinion, neither preserved in millions of copies of Bibles and libraries of literature in every translation and language, not even in Christian broadcast and television, but the image and likeness of God engraved by the Spirit of God on tablets of human hearts; lives reflecting the same distinct quality of spirit character that was displayed in the life of Christ; “known and read by **all men!**” Wow! What an audience, what an impact! I like that, not confusing the masses, but including them! The true light that enlightens **every man** has come. 2Cor.3:2,3,18, John 1:9. “With the open statement of the truth, we appeal to **every man’s** conscience!” 2Cor.4:2. All of our Christian effort through the media and through organised church regardless of how many people we involve, only carry as much impact as the next person we present mature in the full stature of Christ!

The eternal Word, the Word that was from the beginning is now also the final Word, all the imagination of God’s sacred thought, culminating in one man, Jesus, now multiplied beyond count to reveal every man as fully included in God’s love dream. Heb.1:1,2. The prophet Habakkuk saw that the revelation of righteousness by faith would be so clearly communicated, that the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. “Write the vision, make it plain upon tablets, so that he may run who reads it.” Hab.2:2,4,14. Nothing will mobilise the individual more, than realising the truth of their

spirit identity, their innocence and union with God. Righteousness by faith is not a new, compromised set of rules, but the mirror reflection of God's image and likeness redeemed and revealed in man. Gen.1:26. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, what it was that met our gaze and the touch of our hands. Yes, life dawned! Beloved I am not writing to you a new doctrine, this is the Word that was from the beginning, yet it is new, in that which is true in Him is also exactly true in you! He has given us understanding to know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true!" 1Jn.1:1,2, ch.2:7,8, ch.5:20.

GREAT CHANGE IN THE CHURCH

Rick Joyner, a prophetic teacher from Charlotte, USA, says: *"I see such a sweeping return to Biblical Christianity coming, that the very understanding of Christianity, by both the world and the church, will be changed."*

Great change is indeed coming to church-life, as we know it. Multitudes of believers find a fresh expression in a smaller home environment rather than the clumsy impersonal big building context (Often spelt, contest!). What needs reformation though, is not in the first place the size or structure of church expression, but the content of its message! Unless the fundamental ingredient of our understanding of the finished work of Christ is grasped by engraved spirit revelation, the smaller compact package of the home church will soon become the same baggage that neutralised and paralysed believers for ages. 'A little leaven

leavens the whole lump' says Paul in Gal.5:6-10. He clearly refers to religious tradition, in this case, circumcision that represents personal contribution and performance in order to distinguish and qualify the individual. Even the slightest emphasis on personal effort and contribution, nullifies the faith that grace reveals, and makes gratitude phoney. Any presence in our belief, even insignificantly small, of something we still have to do in order to obtain favour from God nullifies the power of the cross and puts us back under the law of performance. 'While we compete and compare with one another we are without understanding! 2Cor.10:12.

Most Christians do not have a problem with the fact that Christ is revealed and received by faith, the problem comes with the practical walk which so easily becomes cluttered by all the performance-related emotions that the law triggers, such as boasting, competition, guilt, fear, suspicion, sin-consciousness etc. Any form of doing not inspired by the revelation of grace results in dead works! It is the faith-inspired and faith-sustained walk that triumph in life! Gal.3:2,3.

Faith is fuelled by revealed value; (Gal.5:6) love sees that something has happened to mankind in Christ that is of far greater authority and consequence than what happened to humanity in Adam's fall. Rom.5:14-21, 2Cor.5:14-21. It is also as much superior to the prophetic shadow sustained by tradition, as the child that is born is superior to the placenta that held and sustained

the seed and foetus of promise. Col.2:8,17, Gal.4:1-10. Faith understands that the conclusion of grace is mankind's inclusion in Christ.

A FRESH FAITH-FOCUS

Faith is never a forced, foreign influence, but a familiar voice finding the amen-echo in man. "Now faith is *the substance* of things hoped for, *the evidence* of things not seen." Heb.11:1. If faith is the substance and the evidence then what are we waiting for? How can any manifestation of any proportion (or lack thereof) add or subtract value to what faith already sees, knows and enjoys?! Paul learns what it means to be content in ill repute and good repute, in abundance and lack! This suggests that abundance is not always a sign of God's goodness neither is lack a sign of God's absence! Phil.4:11,12, Hab.3:17-19. Faith understands fullness; His fullness is continued in us!

Spirit-faith is so much more than 'the in-between-thing!' It is not the psychological bridge between what you don't have and what you need! That is called positive thinking, or goal setting, which we are all familiar with as a natural law as much as sowing and reaping is also a natural law. There is nothing wrong with that; it is how any business or individual succeeds in the natural realm of the senses. Spirit-faith operates in a dimension of far greater significance. Its reference is rooted in what God knows: God sees mankind included in Christ. "God calls things which are not (visible) as though they were." Rom.4:17. "We have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, "I believe and so I speak", we too believe and so we speak while we

look not at the things that are seen but at things that are unseen.” 2Cor.4:13,18. Note that this kind of faith is not a blind-fold, leap-in-the-dark kind of faith; it is a seeing, and therefore speaking a greater reality. “We impart this in words not taught by human wisdom (reduced to human experience) but taught by the Spirit, combining and intertwining spirit with spirit.” 1Cor.2:13. “Deep calls unto deep!” Ps.42:7. Paul is so confident about the fact that man is spirit compatible, that he refuses to tamper with the word in order to squeeze it into an inferior mould of familiar human experience or popular traditional opinion. But by the open (unveiled) statement of the truth, the opinion of God revealed in the face of Christ **as in a mirror**, he appeals to every man’s conscience. 2Cor.3:18, 4:2. “When you read this, you will perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ,” he says. Eph.3:4. Man is designed to live life in the largest sense of the word, ignited and sustained by the expression of God’s opinion. (‘Every word that proceeds from His mouth’) The substance of this faith is found in the revelation of man’s true spirit identity. “He brought us forth by the Word of truth.” To continue in this Word is to discover the liberating law of sonship! James 1:18,25, John 8:31,32,36. In these last days God spoke to us in a son! Heb.1:2 This faith comes from God; it is the faith of God. He is the Originator and Author as well as the final conclusion of our faith, it is “from faith to faith.” Rom.1:17, Heb.12:2. How can the father of lies compete with the Everlasting Father, the Father of truth?

The substance of Simon’s faith was his spirit identity, his true sonship: “Simon, son of Jona, I

call you Peter and on this Rock will I build my church.” Abraham’s faith did not find its substance in Isaac in the first place, but in friendship with God, based on his spirit identity! (His identity is revealed in his faith-name, father of many nations!) Herein is the secret of his faith: “I am your exceeding great reward, says the Lord!” Gen.15:1,6. Faith is a ‘friendship with God-thing’ before anything else! What makes friendship with God not only possible but also irresistible is the revelation of man’s origin (his true spirit identity) and restored innocence. Anything, even Isaac must go to the altar rather than substitute the real thing! Abraham’s faith was reckoned to him as righteousness twenty-five years before Isaac! Rom.4. This faith is a gift embraced not an achievement won through religious discipline: i.e. diligent study, meditation, fasting, giving, prayer and parrot-type confessions, etc. (Not that there is anything wrong with these disciplines, as long as it is because of, and not in order to!) Eph.2:8.

The living eternal Word revealed in the life death and resurrection of Jesus as mankind’s life, death and resurrection ignites faith-revelation in the consciousness of man. Rom.10:17. This is the mystery that was hidden for ages. “None of the rulers of this age understood this, if they had, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory.” 1Cor.2:7,8. The faith of God reveals His eternal purpose and opinion, which is to unite all things in Himself, things in heaven and things on earth! Eph.1:9,10, Eph.3:11. God did enough in Christ to reconcile, (unite) the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them! 2Cor.5:19. “All of

creation eagerly anticipates the revelation of the sons of God! Rom.8:19.

MANKIND'S TRUE IDENTITY AND INNOCENCE REVEALED

The gospel reveals that God rescued the human race through His Son's obedience. Where does this leave the world, guilty as charged through the Law, or innocent as revealed in the Gospel? "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, surely He took our sorrows, and by His stripes we were healed." Is.53:4,5. "If one died for all it can only mean that they all have likewise died." (His death was their death) 2Cor.5:14. The gospel is not about God's love for good and well-behaved people, but about God's initiative to reconcile hostile humanity to Himself. "While we were yet sinners He died for us." Rom.5:8. "One act of perfect righteousness presents all men freely acquitted in the sight of God." Rom.5:18 JB Phillips. The success of redemption is not measured by man's ability to change himself but by God's single act of grace in Christ realised. The gospel declares that something has happened to mankind in Christ of far greater consequence than what has happened to them in Adam. Rom.5:14-21. *In this writing it is clear that Paul sees all of mankind, without exception, as deriving greater benefit from the mission of Christ than they suffered injury from the fall of Adam. The same mass of humanity that were made sinners by the disobedience of the one, are made righteous by the obedience of the other.* (Improved Version Andre Rabe's book, Adventures in Christ.)

Man became a new creation in Christ. (2 Cor.5:17 the 'if' being a conclusion, not a condition! See v.14-21; also as in Rom.8:31 "If God be for us , who can be against us!" The gospel reveals the fact that God is for us!) "Of God are you in Christ, whom God made to be our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption!" 1Cor.1:30. "This means that our knowledge and judgement of men can no longer be based upon their outward lives." 2Cor.5:16. Mankind's association in Christ from before the foundation of the earth is the basis of God's dealing with man. Ep.1:4. "God has shown me," says Peter, "to call no man common or unclean." Acts10:15,28. Paul instructs Titus to, "speak evil of no man, avoid quarrelling, be gentle and show perfect courtesy towards all men. For we ourselves were once blinded by our ignorance, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by men and hating one another." Titus 3:2-4. In the light of our true origin and identity revealed in the word of truth, James says in chapter 3:9 that we can no longer magnify God, and with the same voice insult and condemn a man who is made in His image. The parables Jesus told of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the prodigal son clearly reveal, that in the eyes of the original owner the sinner has never lost his value. Luke15. "He solved the sin problem for good, not only ours, but the whole world's! 1John2:2. The Message.

This is the nucleus of the truth which knowledge makes man free to be free indeed. Has the world

indeed heard the good news of their acquittal or is mankind still held hostage through a wrong gospel that leaves the masses either indifferent or condemned? John the Baptist points out the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world but then he continues his old style of preaching and condemns Herod. Instead of becoming the first disciple of Jesus, who did not come to condemn the world, he holds on to his personal pulpit and trains disciples that turn out to be having more in common with the Pharisees than with Jesus. "We fast and pray while you guys eat and drink, you are wine-bibbers and gluttons, friends of thieves and prostitutes!" Luke 5:33, Math.9:14,16,17. In prison John becomes offended and questions redemption, "Are You the Lamb of God or must we wait for another wave or movement?" Math.11:3,6. There are many stubborn preachers today who take offence of this gospel and refuse to submit to the righteousness that comes from God and prefer their old ways of seeking to establish a counterfeit righteousness through rigorous rules and regulations, preaching condemnation inspired and distracted by the contradiction rather than the solution. There is such a difference between a zeal for God and the zeal of the Lord. Righteousness by faith is what ignites the zeal of the Lord in the heart. Rom.10:1-4. The sinners were attracted to Jesus not because he introduced a compromise to the law, something like, "it's all right to sin just don't get caught or try and do it less!" but because revealed in His person they saw the mirror-reflection of their true origin, identity and innocence! They knew that the lies they embraced as their identity had no power against the

resonance of their own conscience. Jesus didn't say to the prostitute, "Go and sin less," He said to her "Go and sin no more!"

THE ESSENCE OF CHURCH

Any expression of church that we might be familiar with that does not reveal the liberating truth of mankind's original sonship, spirit identity and innocence, will leave the individual ineffective and unfruitful and will fail to impact the world. "Upon this rock I will build my church." Ecclesia, translated church, is in the first place the echo voice of the incarnation, revealing man's original identity and announcing man's innocence. (Gr. *ecclesia*, *ek+kaleo*, *ek*, a preposition denoting origin, *kaleo*, to call by name) Jesus introduces the word in the context of the unveiling of who the son of man really is, the son of man is the Son of God. He is the Christ, the anointed Saviour of the world! Here is the big question that the church answers: "Who do men say that the son of man is?" Flesh and blood reduces man's opinion of himself to the flesh, "Simon, son of Jona, flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my father!" The Father of Jesus is the true father of man. Math.16:13-19. Satan is only the father of lies. John 8:44. Man's unbelief empowers the enemy to blind their minds in ignorance. 2Cor.4:4. The ecclesia carries the keys of the kingdom and the gates of hades shall not prevail against the voice of the church. (Gr. *hades* from *ha+ideis*, not to see.)

"You were unmindful of the Rock that begot you and you forgot the God who gave you birth." Deut.32:18. God is the Everlasting Father! Nothing

in time will cancel His original Fatherhood! Is.9:6,7. "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord." Ps.22:27,30,31. He is the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. (Identified) Eph.3:15. Because we share the same origin, Jesus is not ashamed to call us His brothers. Heb.2:11. Our true genesis is preserved and revealed in Him! "Hear me, you who pursue righteousness, who seek God, Look to the Rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug." Is.51:1.

THE PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY

Deity has found display and definition in humanity! Gen.1:26, Col.2:9,10. Being persuaded about your true identity inspires expression of the highest integrity; this takes doing beyond duty.

To act right simply because it is ones duty is proper; but a good action which is the result of no law of obligation shines more than any. Thomas Hardy.

In the New Testament, James, the younger brother of Jesus, writes about a dynamic concept, which he calls 'the perfect law of liberty'. Js.1:17,18,23-25. This law dramatically challenges the way we think and feel about others and ourselves. James speaks about the word of truth that reflects the face of man's birth (genesis) as in a mirror. He calls this word, which proclaims God as our true origin, the perfect law of liberty. The law of perfect liberty in the Greek, *nomon teleion eleutherias*, means the following: *nomon*, law, order, *teleios*, complete or perfect, *eleutherias*, unrestrained,

exempt from obligation or liability. 'He ain't heavy, he's my brother' takes doing beyond mere obligation.

What does it mean to be a doer of the word? There is a big difference between doing in order to, and doing because of. James says that anyone may hear the Word of truth (the true testimony of his spirit identity) but if what he hears does not impact his doing and spontaneous lifestyle beyond the next contradiction, he deceives himself. If James were merely promoting a moral obligation towards good conduct, his contribution would be out of context. Then we might as well continue with our efforts to succeed under the law of Moses. But James makes it very clear what not doing the word means: the one who goes away from what he heard (the word of truth, 1:17,18) is the one who immediately forgets what manner of man he is. (:22-24) To go away means to slip back into an old routine-pattern of thinking and speaking about yourself and others, to be lured away from the impact of the Word of truth. When the temptation and contradiction comes the vessel is without rudder and is swept away by the storm to be tossed about and shipwrecked by double mindedness. The doer of the Word is the one who sees with such focus and insight the truth about his origin in God as the basis of his true identity that any contradiction is nullified. The doing of the Word is the action and conversation inspired by the truth of man's spirit identity revealed and realised. Js.1:19,25, Js.3:2. Jesus says the same thing, that unless one hears and digs deep in order to lay the foundation upon the Rock, the structure of the

house one builds will be swept away by the storms of life. Luke 6:47-49.

THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH VS THE OBEDIENCE OF THE LAW

Are your actions and reactions law-inspired or faith-inspired? Many sincere Christians as well as their leaders do not know the difference. They would teach commitment, discipline and obedience with great enthusiasm and miss the point! Legalism only results in suspicion, disappointment, guilt, condemnation, distance and death! Paul defines his ministry and mission in Rom.1:5, "We have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of His Name in all the nations including yourselves." He sees every nation included in the revelation of grace. In Eph.3:9 he puts it this way, "to make all men see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly realm. This was according to the eternal purpose, which He realised in Christ Jesus our Lord." What God was able to communicate in Christ, is now made visible in man to be communicated in spirit realm. The mystery is "Christ in you" Col.1:25-27. Law-inspired behaviour reduces the impact of your life to the natural realm, while faith realities has an immediate impact in spirit realm.

The Greek word for obedience, *upo+akoo*, literally means to be under the influence of hearing. Paul understands that hearing inspires faith.

Rom.10:17. In Acts 14:1 Luke says, "Paul preached in such a way that many believed." Any action inspired by guilt, inferiority or vanity, results in more of the same, guilt, inferiority and vanity.

Digging beyond the surface in order to build your foundation upon the Rock, or as James puts it, "looking deeply into the perfect law of liberty," is summed up in 2Cor.13:5,8, "Examine yourselves to see whether you are holding to your faith, test yourselves, do you not realise that Jesus Christ is in you? For we cannot do anything against the truth, only for the truth!" Note that the appeal is not to examine conduct but faith! The New Testament does not reveal a new, revised set of rules in order to compromise the Ten Commandments; it is the revelation of mankind's redeemed identity!

The gospel is first a 'seeing' before it is a 'doing', not even your dying is a doing it is seeing that you have died in His death; He actually died your death! Rom.6:11, 1Cor.1:30. So much of religious energy is wasted on useless attempts to do things that are already done; to become something you already are! Because of ignorance, Christianity has become much like Buddhism; people have become totally engaged in a fruitless but constant effort to die to self.

The law of grace equals the law of faith; it is the law of association or the law of identification. Paul also calls it the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Rom.8:1-4. Faith links man to a greater reality than what is his due reward or punishment. 'Now to one who works, his wages are not

reckoned as a gift but as his due.’ Rom.4:4. The law of identification reveals that what happened to Jesus at the same time happened to mankind. “One died for all, therefore all have died.” We were associated in Him before the foundation of the world! Ep.1:4. We were co-crucified and co-raised, He was wounded for our transgressions, the chastisement that brought us peace was upon Him and by His stripes we were healed.

This explains how we could win without competing in the race; how we could conquer without entering the battle; how we can gain a harvest that we did not labour for and how to cease from our own labours! 1Cor.9:24-27, Ex.14:13,14, Ps.44:3. You say there are yet four months then comes the harvest; yet that harvest will only produce more bread, more of that which does not satisfy. Jesus has a harvest in mind for us that we did not labour for! The harvest of our own effort and labour will always disappoint, for man is not designed to live by bread alone. Man’s ultimate quest is for so much more than that which appeals only to the senses while it leaves his spirit starving.

EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS FROM THE MOUTH OF GOD.

We are designed to live by the original expression of God’s opinion of us. The Word that comes out of God’s mouth is the eye of the fountain, the first-hand original thought, in sharp contrast to the second-hand kind, diluted by tradition and popular interpretation, or translation. The Word that was from the beginning, is the original fountain fresh thought of God. Paul says, “we use no hocus-

pocus, no clever tricks, no dishonest manipulation of the word of God. We have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways, we refuse to tamper with the Word. It is by making the truth publicly known for what it really is that we recommend ourselves to the honest judgement and conscience of mankind." 2Cor.4:2.

A renewed mind is the fruit of spirit revelation and not diligent study. You cannot renew your mind but you can be renewed in the spirit of your mind. "Beholding Him as in a mirror, we are being changed into His likeness." To behold Him in any other way brings no change, only more guilt, inferiority and condemnation. Nothing impacts our thought processes and mindsets more than what truth does. Truth appeals to every man's conscience.

Isaiah says that the weary that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, (not just so that they can continue doing what they've always been doing, but that they may enter a new dimension of life) they shall mount up with wings as eagles! There awaits a new horizon for those who intertwine with the thoughts of God! The Hebrew word, *kawva*, translated, to wait upon, literally means to be intertwined with or platted together; just like when two strings are twisted together in order to multiply its strength! This is not a luxury option; it is our life and our daily walk! Religion reduces God to a mere convenience: "When in trouble dust God off and call upon Him!" O, to truly discover that in Him we live and move and have our being! To enter into His rest is to walk in the light as He is in the light,

to see what God sees, is to say what He says! His eternal thought becomes our meditation and our spontaneous conversation!

The first word was "Let there be light" - and there was light. So the word was "Let there be!" That was no word of striving effort to obtain something. "The same God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness!' has kindled a light in our hearts, whose shining is to make known His glory (opinion) as He has revealed it in the features of Jesus Christ." 2Cor.4:6. Knox.

God preserved an inheritance for us which is imperishable, undefiled and unfading and beyond all dispute.

"Already you are filled! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! Our desire for you is to realise the reality of your dominion!" 1Cor.4:8.

The eyes of our understanding is enlightened to know the immeasurable greatness of His power in us who believe, according to the working of His great might which He accomplished in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and made Him sit at His right hand in the heavenly places *far above* all rule and authority, and power and dominion, and above every name that is named (its power influence goes off the scales) No authority of any definition can equal or challenge His position. Eph.1:17-21. Now for the good news: when we were still grovelling in sin, dead in our trespasses, He made us alive together with Christ (this is what

grace means: something happened to mankind when He was made alive!!!) and He raised us up with Him and made us sit with Him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might display the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness **towards us** in Christ Jesus! Eph.2.

To embrace the gift is to reign in life Rm. 5:17. The awakening of your spirit is registered in spirit dimension. Truth realised ignites spirit-dominion. Since you are co-raised with Christ, occupy your minds with throne room realities Cl.3:1-16.

TEMPTATION

Temptation is only temptation when your faith (spirit identity) is challenged, to again accept an inferior identity. Jesus fasted for forty days; when He became hungry, (aware of His natural needs) the enemy immediately challenged His spirit identity, "if you are the Son of God!" He sat at the well weary, hungry and thirsty, but was not thereby reduced to forget what manner of man He was. "If you knew who I am!" Jn 4. God does not tempt; He is not in the teasing business, neither is He experimenting with our design! Jm.1:13. God cannot be both the source of light and darkness. Every temptation is an attempt of darkness to intercept light. Every good and perfect gift comes from above, (If it is good it cannot be bad at the same time, if it is perfect, it cannot be improved upon, if it is a gift it cannot be earned!) The Father of lights is the source of this gift of perfection; with Him there is no degree of variableness and no interception of light that would cause a shadow

due to change or compromise. God cannot be inconsistent with His character; He cannot deny Himself. The life Jesus lived was never a compromise or distraction from the Father of light. He is the true light that enlightens every man. The perfect law of liberty corresponds with the word of truth, the face of man's origin, mirror-reflected in Christ. Jm.1:17.

Counting contradiction pure bliss only makes any sense in the light of the truth that nothing can reduce completeness to lack! "Knowing that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness, and let steadfastness have its full effect so that you may be perfect and complete and lacking in nothing." Jam.1:2-4. Joy is not something we do; it is the fruit of something we know! "Of His fullness have we all received" (John 1:16) and "we are complete in Him!" It is in Him that we realise our completeness. Col.2:10. These are statements that cannot be underestimated. Knowing the integrity of your identity is the key to overcoming temptation. Temptation wants to convince you of shortcoming, lack and imperfection. The wisdom that comes from above persuades you of fullness and completeness. Steadfastness is so much more than an endurance marathon; it is the triumphant environment that sustains the conviction of faith with joy. "In a severe test of affliction under circumstances of extreme poverty, their abundance of joy overflowed in a wealth of liberality." 2Cor.8:2. Their giving was an expression of seeing, doing and going beyond the law of prescription and tithing. Instead of anger, frustration and shame, contradiction now triggers exuberant joy! Peter

speaks of joy that gushes out of you like an artesian well. 1Pet.1:6. James employs the word *hegeomai* in Jm.1:2, which literally means to appoint joy in an official place of authority! Joy is a dominant force that dispels fear, frustration, regret and anger! Righteousness by faith rejoices when things seem to go wrong! Hab.2:4, and 3:17-19. Hinds' feet turn slippery places into a highway of adventure! Living beyond disappointment is Paul's testimony in Rom.5:3-5. "Joyfully accepting the plundering of your goods" seems to be in total contrast to reason, until one discovers a place of completeness that cannot be interfered with! "For you have died and your life is hid with Christ in God." Heb.10:34, Phil.4:12, Col.3:3.

Whenever temptation registers in our minds, its mission is to win our voice in order to win our vote. Its aim is to entice us to agree that its appeal is irresistible. Its desire is to blind our minds to spirit reality, so that what is ours in Christ and who we are in Him seem vague and irrelevant! (Gr.*exelko*, to lure as in hunting or fishing, and *deleatzo* from the word *dolos*, to deceive by bait.) Jm1:14. When passion conceives, it becomes the parent of sin. "Be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger!" Jm.1:19. Intertwining with the temptation, agreeing or acknowledging it, ignites its poison whether it be sickness, sin, disappointment or frustration! One of the biggest lies any contradiction could sell you is the idea that you are going through something quite unique and that there is no way out. "No temptation is so unique to man that you cannot resist it. God has given us a way of escape, not to flee as in running from, but to confront and

overcome by being fully persuaded and identified with the victory of Christ on our behalf. 1Cor.10:13. The voice of joyful faith is the strongest confrontation to contradiction. We operate in the opposite spirit to what the situation dictates or demands. "We do not have a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and a saved mind." 2Tim.1:7. "Submit yourself to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you!" James 4:7. Notice who is doing the fleeing and from whom! "He will flee from YOU!" We are not called to run and hide, but to arise and shine! Submitting to God is the secret of overcoming temptation. (Gr. *upotasso*, to submit, to appoint by mutual agreement) Intertwine with God in your conversation because in your innermost conviction you are fully persuaded in truth. The reality of your conviction will inspire your conversation; your words are strategy and power for war. Is.36:5. Light always confronts and dispels darkness. If there were no enemy, there would be no need for defence; yet we are not called to a life of constant confrontation and warfare. Embrace the truth of your spirit identity revealed in Christ; this is the cleft of the Rock that shelters you from the storm and tempest, it is also your armour and weaponry. The revelation of the obedience of Christ is the sharp edge of the spear-point with which we arrest every thought and thus demolish every stronghold. 2Cor.10:4-5. KJV or New KJV. To know the truth is to overcome a defeated foe. The anti-virus protection on your PC is a good example of the filter-effect of the word of truth. There exists no sin or evil that can escape the scrutiny of the consequence of His obedience in my confession and conscience. Heb.10:1-3,19-25.

“The one who endures temptation receives the crown of life.” Jm.1:12. The Greek word for crown is the word *stephanos*, which means a mark of royal rank, or a wreath or garland, which was given as a prize to victors in public games. Yet life as God sees it is a gift, not a reward. Jm.1:17. Thus even our reward is a gift, because our enduring and steadfastness is not something we engage in with our diligence and willpower, but the energy ignited within us by the revelation of the Word of truth. We are the fruit and trophy of the travail of His soul. “Work out your own salvation because God is at work within you both to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Phil.2:12,13.

We are not called to argue, debate and defend a doctrine, we are anointed to enjoy and manifest God!

CHOOSING A CHURCH

Considering the 30 to 40 different churches in your local community, to which one's authority do you submit yourself to? Who do you compete with, tolerate, distance yourself from, or associate with? The truth is there is only ONE church! That makes choice irrelevant!

Unity in His body can never be forced through compromise or negotiations. Unity is received just like healing or any other aspect of redemption; it is the realising of something that has already happened when God reconciled the world to

Himself in Christ. This happened while we were still hostile and full of sin. God brought an end to hostility, distance, division, sin and disease. The truth and power of the Gospel always reveals something that has already happened in the spirit. This Gospel is announced with conviction and bold confidence. "We are not ashamed of the Gospel, it is the power of God unto salvation, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed, from faith to faith". Rom.1:16,17. "Having this ministry by the mercy of God we do not lose heart, we refuse to compromise the content of the Gospel because of what we see in the natural. We look not at what is seen but we see the unseen! We have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, "I believe and so I speak," we too believe and so we speak!" 2Cor.4:1,2,13,18. Faith is to agree with God, it is to walk in the light as He is in the light. Faith is the grace to see redemption and all its implication exclusively from God's point of view! Faith sees the harvest as ripe and ready! The seed in the fruit already matches the seed that was sown! "God calls things which are not as though they were!" In His light do we see the light, now we can be of one mind and speak the same language! His light sets the pace! The love of Christ constrains us, we are persuaded about mankind, we see everyone included, sanctified and restored to fullness of life through the obedience and achievement of Christ! God's light unites! Man's opinion, doctrine and tradition divides. Any group or organisation that isolate or separate themselves from the truth of the Gospel of mankind's inclusion in Christ deceive themselves and neutralise their impact.

The ecclesia He builds and reveals never feels threatened by misrepresentation or different opinions and viewpoints. Through the attraction of the revelation of His character in us He appeals through us to every man's conscience! We are a living Epistle, a document of proof; the incarnation and eternal purpose of God is declared through our lives, to be known and read by all men! 2Cor.3:2,3,18. The gates of Hades cannot prevail and succeed to imprison or blind men to the brightness of our rising! Kings and leaders will magnetically and irresistibly be drawn to the revelation of His image, presence and purpose in the flesh. Is.60:1-3. Your life is God's strategy and message of hope to a desperate world. "You give them something to eat! How shall we feed such a multitude? What do you have?" Mark 6:35-44.

"But I urge and entreat you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in perfect harmony and full agreement in what you say, and that there be no dissensions or factions or divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in your common understanding and in your opinions and judgments." 1Cor. 1:10 Amplified. If God says the same thing He spoke in Christ to the world, in us, we can afford to say the same thing to and about mankind to one another. There is only one truth, one light, one fountain, one faith, one foundation, one Spirit, one Head, one body, one Temple, one Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all! Eph.4:3-6. He desires no other sanctuary for His habitation, but the human body. Your person to Him is not a prison but a palace! No palace of gold becomes or reveals Him

more! You are Tailor-made! You fit God like a glove! Our love and respect for our fellow man equals our love, worship and respect for our Maker. Js.3:9, 1Jn.4:19,20, Gal.5:14.

Ignorance, fear and hostility have separated and robbed us for centuries from one another. Now we are called to discover one another. Every wall of division is broken down! Eph.2:14,15, Philemon :6, Tit. 3:2, Gal.3:28, Col.3:11. No brand name or label can distinguish you more or give your life more definition or attraction than the Father from whom every family in heaven and earth is named. Our life celebrates the fact that God reconciled the world to Himself. He brought hostility to an end. We are entrusted with a commission to bring about world peace! War has ended! The challenge, “to love your enemies and to do good to those who hate and abuse you” is no longer a far-fetched sentiment; it is the reality of our lives! We understand that “we wrestle NOT against flesh and blood” which means that a fellow man can never again be our target! God is man’s friend and not his foe. The symptoms of imperfection, sin or sickness in a person do not make of the person the enemy.

Our conversation confirms our persuasion. God lavished His grace upon us, and His love is shed abroad in our hearts; we have no excuse ever to feel differently about man again. Man is God’s love-dream.

We also need never again replace the Law of Liberty with a set of rules! Intimacy is not influenced by willpower!

THE SIMPLICITY OF THE GOSPEL

Paul responds in horror to the Galatian believers, exhorting them not to dilute the power of the Gospel with man-made formulas and religious prescriptions that again require the contribution of the flesh, as if what happened to mankind in Christ was insufficient. Any accent on something man still has to do in order to qualify him to be approved, loved or receive anything from God is a blatant insult to the cross. Not that God is offended, but it leaves man neutralised and confused.

A little 'reward-consciousness' nullifies the Gift! Its effect is like leaven that leavens the whole lump of dough! Even the gifts of the Spirit are like any other gift; it cannot be earned. It is not a reward for spiritual diligence or achievement; it can only exclusively be received by faith and with gratitude! Anything you can earn you might as well buy! How can you buy something with perishable currency that has already been bought with the Blood-life of the Lamb of God? It is like attempting to buy priceless treasure with 'Monopoly' money.

Every aspect of true Christianity, including all levels of spiritual growth and experience, is communicated in God's final word to mankind, and is received by faith. Jesus in His person is the exact expression and accurate image of the invisible God revealed in a human body. He is the mirror reflection of every man. He declares man's

true sonship; the son of man is in truth the son of God. How can the father of lies contend or compete with that! No wonder the sinners were irresistibly attracted to Jesus! This revelation-reality is the only truth that sets man free; the Word of grace is the fountain of faith. "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the revelation of Christ" Rom.10:17. RSV.

The Latin translation of the Greek text introduced a lie about repentance that kept multitudes of believers in darkness and bondage for centuries. The word, *metanoia*, which means a radical change of mind, has been wrongly translated to mean penance! Religion cultivated and then exploited and milked man's sin consciousness for years! The gospel reveals the ground for man's innocence. To proclaim the Gospel means to proclaim man's innocence! The light of the eternal Word of truth, revealed to mankind in Christ as in a mirror, gives final definition and conclusion to man's salvation, healing and restored relationship.

"God calls things which are not as though they were!" This is the mystery: eternity is past tense! "He was wounded for mankind's transgressions, bruised for humanity's iniquities. By His stripes the human race was healed!" We read in the book of Hebrews that in Christ man's original design was vindicated, Jesus is not ashamed to call us His brethren. He sanctified us in order to reveal our common origin! Man is restored to a place of dominance; everything is subject to him. Not to see everything immediately subject to man does not make God a liar; we clearly see Jesus as the triumphant One. Rom.3:3,4, Heb.2:8,9. He

represents mankind as in a mirror! For this reason we proclaim the Gospel with urgency and persuasion; we appeal to every man's conscience, we plead with humanity to believe the truth of the Good News about themselves. There exists no other ground for faith or permanent change! "While we behold and gaze upon Him without distraction, AS IN A MIRROR, we are being changed into His likeness. "And we all, with new understanding, see ourselves in Him as in a mirror; thus we are changed from an inferior mindset to the revealed opinion of our true Origin." 2Cor.3:18. It is in discovering the truth about ourselves as it is revealed in Christ that faith is ignited. Eph.4:21-24. No other point of view can effect true change, least of all considering the size and history of the problem. A problem- and sin-consciousness only breeds guilt and defeat. Light begets light! "Paul preached IN SUCH A WAY that many believed!" Acts 14:1,9.

No other recipe or attempt to change conduct, character, symptoms of disease or depression, thought patterns, circumstances or relationships can compare or compete with salvation as it is revealed in the Gospel. It is the power of God at work in man! To first have to wait until the symptoms disappear before faith is communicated and confessed is foolish. That would make faith, salvation and healing not only unnecessary but also irrelevant.

Outside of this Gospel humanity's case seems hopeless! But the Good News reveals that SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED TO MANKIND

WHEN JESUS DIED, WENT TO HELL AND WAS RAISED AND ASCENDED TO THE THRONE ROOM! If one died for all it can only mean that all indeed died! From now on therefore it is impossible to view any individual in a different light! 2Cor.5:14-21. The way we knew ourselves and the rest of mankind before is exceeded by a greater reality. "If we have received the testimony of man, the testimony of God is greater!" 1Jn.5:9. God shows Peter in a most radical way that in the light of what Jesus accomplished on humanity's behalf, **no man** can be called common or unclean! Acts 10:15,28. God announced mankind clean, delivered, healed and restored! Paul encourages Titus to speak evil of **no man**, but to show perfect courtesy towards **all men**! Titus 3:2-4. It was not just the believers that Jesus died for; He took the sorrow, sickness and sinfulness of the whole human race upon Himself. This is the very essence and ingredient of the Gospel of Grace and what gives faith its substance! Understanding this is what gives man faith. Man cannot be truly known in any other way any more! It is not a luxury optional viewpoint; it is not man's philosophy, doctrine, or cleverly devised myth! This is the Gospel as God sees it and reveals it in Christ and scripture!

The merit of the truth of the Gospel is established in the obedience of Christ and has nothing to do with the history of the symptom or the degree of the darkness. To scrutinize and diligently study the problem is to be distracted from the cross. "I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified!" What happened to mankind there is what matters now!

The Holy Spirit convicts the world of only one sin, to ignore Christ. Every other sin has been dealt with in His death. He also convicts the world of righteousness, because Jesus went to be with His Father. Jn.16:7-11. He did not leave the world to rob us of His presence and abandon us like orphans, this happened for our benefit and to our advantage! Righteousness reveals that God redeemed man's true identity and succeeded to restore man's innocence. The image and likeness of God is again revealed in the human body. Man's body and person is now God's dwelling and sanctuary. The grain of wheat did not abide alone, it fell into the earth and died, and is resurrected in a harvest of multitudes of people whose lives and bodies and presence multiplies the presence and purpose of God in the world. The incarnation did not stop with Jesus; that same Word that is God, is now multiplied in us! We have come to fullness of life in Him. John 1:14,16, Col.2:9,10. "As He is, so are we in this world." 1Jn.4:17. "That which is true in Him is true in us" 1Jn.2:8. That is why righteousness that is of faith says, "Do not say in your heart, who will ascend into heaven, that is to persuade God to send Christ back to earth, neither does it say, who will go down into the depths, that is to raise Christ from the dead. But what does it say? Righteousness that is the fruit of faith says, the Word is near you, it is in your mouth and in your heart!" Righteousness reveals and understands that we are co-raised with Him and co-seated with Him in heavenly places! We are His presence on earth! Distance has been cancelled! His word is not nearer in heaven or of greater

authority there than what it is in our mouths and in our hearts here and now on planet earth! Rom.10:2-8.

The third thing the Holy Spirit convicts the world of is judgement, "Because the ruler of this world has been judged!" When Jesus hung on the cross, the human body hung there as a document of guilt. The just requirement of the law was thus fulfilled. All grounds of accusation were dealt with in His death. The Gospel declares that man's accuser was stripped of his weapons. The Greek word, *satanos* means accuser. His weapon was humanity's guilt. Col.2:14,15. It is clear then, that to still see man as unclean and an unredeemed sinner is to ignore the cross and to continue to empower an already defeated foe.

"Let us know, let us press on to know Him in the light of mankind's inclusion in His death and resurrection" Hos.4:6, Hos.6:2,3.

NEW AGE?

Truth as it is in Christ is never threatened by any lie of any shape or size. Eph.4:20,21, 2Cor 13:5,8. You are designed to know the truth. Truth in itself cannot set you free, but "you will KNOW the truth and the truth will set you free!" The Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth, and He bears witness in our hearts with our spirits, that we are children of God. He cries within us, Abba Father! "We know that the Son of God has come, and He has given us understanding to know Him who is true and WE ARE IN HIM who is true!" 1Jn.5:20. This is not a new doctrine but the Word that was from the

beginning. Yet it is new in that we now understand that what is true in Him is equally true in us!
1Jn2:7,8

New Age is a philosophy-label that Christians often attach to anything that sounds foreign to traditional teaching that supports condemnation and the sinful state of mankind! Most Christians say the amen to the fact that man is corrupt and sinful, but frown upon the Good News of the consequence of man's inclusion in Christ. They struggle to believe something they cannot yet see! Man still looks sinful and sick, so how dare we declare him innocent and healed? As if what happened to mankind in Adam carries more weight, authority and influence over man than what happened to us in Christ! Rom.5:14-21. They agree that the thief comes only to steal kill and destroy, but fail to read or believe that the second part of that verse in John 10:10, is what the New Testament is all about! It says, BUT I have come, that YOU might have life and have it more abundantly!! The Good News is the most positive announcement about man that can ever be declared.

New Age and Buddhism are very positive sounding philosophies, but they fail to see and understand the significance of Jesus. Jesus is not just another Philosopher; He is the very Creator-God in the camouflage of frail flesh! He is the eternal Word made flesh. He has made the invisible God visible! He is also the blueprint of our original design, when God said, "let us make man in our image and in our likeness!" He is the only Being that qualifies

to represent Deity and humanity in one Person! Col.2:9,10. The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus and mankind's inclusion in Him is not taught in the New Age doctrine. But the sad thing is that even where the historic record of the death and resurrection of Jesus is taught in traditional Christian circles, it is just as powerless as any Eastern Philosophy until the revelation of man's inclusion in Christ is seen and declared. Faith and true deliverance only comes through the revelation of Christ! Rom.10:17. RSV. 1Cor.2:6-8.

The Word is near unto you, even in your mouth and in your heart. That Word is the rudder of your life. Truth is not measured by the presence or lack of emotional feelings, neither is truth challenged by contradictions or the sense of distance. God is not sometimes near and sometimes far, He cannot be Emmanuel on specific days, but some days not. He is the eternal Emmanuel! God is with us and for us and in us! In Him we live and move and have our being! You are not breathing on occasion, or just when you are really aware of it! You breathe all the time, even in your sleep. "He gives life to all men and breath and everything, He is not far from each one of us!" Acts 17:24-28.

Now, "let the communication of your faith promote the knowledge of every good thing that is in us in Christ! Philemon:6. This focus alone is true fellowship! We are safe there! Beyond the reach of gossip or ill repute! We can afford ourselves the luxury to think and speak His thoughts concerning us exclusively!

www.mirrorreflection.net

fdt@mailbox.co.za

PO Box 1428 *Hermanus South Africa 7200*