

FISHERS

OF

MEN

By

Carolyn Priscilla Bynum

All rights reserved.
©Copyright 2004 by Carolyn P. Bynum

All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version of the Bible.

Hebrew and Greek definitions used in this publication are from *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* except where otherwise indicated.

Printed in the United States of America

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



My deepest appreciation to...

My husband, Paul Sr. for the solid support in love, prayer, guidance and patience. You are a true prophet of God, and I am blessed to be your wife.

My sons, Xavier and Paul II (PJ). You both have brought such fulfillment to my life. PJ, thanks for my precious and beautiful granddaughters! The seed of the righteous shall be blessed.

My siblings and their families, Rev./Dr. Grace Moorman, Amazing Grace of God Ministries, Detroit, Michigan, **Elder Frances Smith, Wilma Allen, and Richard (Rich)Allen** for your love, prayers, support and insight. Frances, a special thanks to you for leaving all to co-laborer with us in the local ministry. **Fredryn Allen, (my niece),** for introducing Restoration's praise songs to the Body of Christ.

Pastors Gary and Sandra Garner, Ascension Life Ministries, Danville, Arkansas, for teaching and reflecting our Lord so powerfully.

Deacon and Mrs. Webster H. Bynum, Jr., (my in-laws), Elder Delphine Williams, Elders Kirkpatrick & Bertha Terry, Mother Odell Horne, and many other family members and faithful friends for standing firmly with us in every way in the work of the ministry of Christ Jesus our Lord through Restoration Christian Ministries Center, Sierra Vista, Arizona.

Dedication

This book is dedicated as a sacrifice of praise with love and adoration unto My Beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ, and His Body.

CONTENTS

	Foreword
1	Introduction
3	Chapter One - The Call
12	Chapter Two - The Cost
20	Chapter Three -The Experience
37	Chapter Four The Wait
44	Chapter Five The Catch
73	Chapter Six Personal Testimony

FOREWORD

*By Rev./Dr. Grace A. Moorman
Amazing Grace of God Ministries
Detroit, Michigan*

“And He said to them, Come after Me [as disciples]-letting Me be your Guide, follow Me-and I will make you fishers of men.?” (Matt. 4:19)

The priority and the supreme task of the church both corporate and individual is evangelism. Jesus’ final command in the earth prior to His ascension was, *“Go then and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; Teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you all the days- perpetually, uniformly and on every occasion-to the [very] close and consummation of the age. Amen-so let it be.”* (Matt. 28:19,20 Amplified Translation)

As co-laborers with God our primary task is to be *‘fishers of men.’* The heart of God is the salvation of the lost. Out of His great love He sent His only begotten Son to save the world-to

make it possible for 'whosoever' to enter into relationship with Him.

Divine Intention utilized the metaphor of fishers for two reasons. First, Simon Peter, Andrew, Thomas, Nathaneal, James and John were all fishermen by trade. It would take no great leap in their understanding to know what Jesus meant when He referred to fishing for men. They knew all that was involved in discovering and bringing in a catch. But what would be required to become '*fishers of men*'?

Jesus' invitational command, necessitated his disciples separate themselves from their families, their independence, whatever creature comforts they might have previously enjoyed, from the security of the familiar, from the occupations in which they were trained and to which they were predisposed. They were to separate themselves and enroll in the school of discipleship unto the work that Jesus would show them.

As fishermen, they toiled laboriously using the net as an instrument to haul in the catch of unsuspecting fish. But on the sea of Tiberias one morning after struggling all night and catching nothing, they learned that the resurrected Jesus knew the precise location of the fish. (John 21:1,13). Likewise, He knows the hearts of men and is the only One Who can prepare the heart of those predestined to receive Him and bring them to Himself. As the Head of His Body, He is the only One Who can give appropriate instructions to His co-laborers how to reproduce themselves.

The disciples learn that faithful day on the sea of Tiberias that at the Master's Word the catch would not only come but that the multitudinous number would be so great that they would not only require additional helpers but that the net would be stressed to the limit without breaking. The words that Jesus spoke were spirit and life. There was no sweat or toil when the disciples obeyed Jesus' orders. Jesus did it all. When He said from the Cross, "*It is finished,*" that declaration included the purchase of all that pertains to life and godliness. The disciples would

remain fishers but now they would let down the net of the Gospel and catch lost souls. They learned that their entire occupation would be living by obedience to the word of the Master.

This book is a clarion call to the many in the Body of Christ to follow on to know Him. There are those in the Body who have adopted a posture of indifference to evangelism and to recognizing appropriating their identity in Christ Jesus. There is almost a universal insubordination to Matt.28:19, 20 in the Church. By-in-large the majority of believers in the Church seem not to recognize the claim of Christ on their lives and many have yet to receive Him as their entire source.

God expects every believer to become consecrated followers and '*fishers of men*' and bring in the great end-time harvest. This book could have only been written by one whose heart Christ has set ablaze with revelation of His love and grace, with understanding of what it means for Jesus to be all in all, and one who has a heart for the lost.

Grace A. Moorman

Introduction

Hosea 6:1-3 KJV

“Come, let us return unto the LORD: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.”

The purpose of this book is to encourage its reader to press on to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. The three verses above from **Hosea** describe what Jesus did for us and as us in His Redemptive Work on the Cross. They also give a glimpse of a Life that awaits us and is made known as we follow on to know Him. The Life in Christ must be entered into by faith from a position of rest and complete trust in Him. Any other way results in toiling and spinning and diverts one from The Way that Christ is.

This book has six chapters that I pray will help every reader see Christ, the Lord of the Harvest, as all in all. The first five chapters are based on the call of the Disciples as *fishers of men* and provide a Scriptural basis for the call to discipleship of every believer. Each of these chapters describes an aspect of discipleship. From the initial call, there are several steps that one can ascertain from the lives of

the Disciples. They include the cost of discipleship; the experience of a disciple; the waiting involved; and the unveiling of the “catch”.

Hopefully, this book will convey a walk of faith in Christ that leads to the reward of the fullness found only in Him. Chapter Six contains a personal testimony to the faithfulness and power of God in the midst of adversity. Prayerfully, it will encourage anyone who has experienced or is experiencing disappointing times in the work of the ministry.

May God bless you as you “*follow on to know Him.*”

Chapter I

THE CALL

Matthew 4:18-22 (KJV). “And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.”

These foundational Scriptures contain a powerful picture of the beginning of a faith walk that leads to an eternal spiritual promise in the Lord Jesus Christ. For the believer, a true walk of faith is one that is in the Spirit. The promises of God are far too vast for temporal purposes alone and carry an eternal weight of glory in Christ. As we follow the fruition of Jesus’ promise to these disciples that He would make them *fishers of men*, may we prayerfully embrace that promise on spiritual terms.

Matthew 4:19 contains a charge or call unto to Simon Peter and Andrew. God the Father was actually issuing the call by His Spirit. How do we know? John 8:28 records Jesus declaring, “...*I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father hath*

taught Me, I speak these things.”

From these Words of Jesus, it is clear that God had a Man in Whom He could express His Thought and Will. These disciples would become instruments of God and examples for the benefit of all men because they followed His Son. Colossians 2:9 tells us in the Son “*dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:9).*”

The call of Simon Peter and Andrew was not restricted to that moment and frozen in that particular space in time. Rather, there is an eternal effect. Through their example of following Jesus to the fulfillment of His promise to make them *fishers of men*, every believer now has a proven example of God’s faithfulness.

This is a point we must always keep close at heart as “*kings and priests unto God (Revelation 1:6)*”. We are instruments of God through whom His Spirit can execute His will in the earth. All we accomplish should ultimately bear the image of the heavenly. I Corinthians 15: 47-48 fully explains my point of bearing the image of the heavenly. It reads, “*The first man (Adam) is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*” As we yield and follow Jesus, we begin an ascending process in the Spirit through experience, thereby evolving into powerful priests of resurrection life through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Prayerfully, the word “experience” caught the reader’s attention. The experience is both an outworking and outflow of the Life of Christ. An entire chapter is devoted to the experience of the true follower of Christ and its importance. Lessons learned as a result of the experiences of God are invaluable and unforgettable. They are Spirit-propelled launching pads of further elevation in Christ.

Simon Peter and Andrew left their nets straightway and followed Jesus. James and his brother John left their ship and their father and immediately followed Him. There is a reason for the Holy Spirit inspiring the details of this Scripture. Keep these points in mind as the Holy Spirit develops the true meaning of the call to discipleship. The “*straightway*” and “*immediately*” of our response to the call of the Lord Jesus Christ are crucial to both process and progress in the Spirit. Remember, the Holy Spirit does not need any process or progress, but the inner man or spirit of man does.

When Jesus said to Simon and Andrew, “*follow Me*,” two distinct thoughts interoperate to unveil God’s Thought. By interoperating, these thoughts represent processes that normally stand alone but now combine their powerful functions and complement each other. A study of the word “*follow*” sheds light on this interoperability and magnifies the beauty of the unity of a pure heart and a submitted will.

First, there is the Greek word “*deute*” which means *to come hither*. Although they were carrying out the business of their livelihood, the fishermen left their nets straightway. Their obedience is impressive; however, simply “coming” to Jesus was not enough for the spiritual blessing that was to be realized. Used alone “*deute*” would not convey the meaning of what the Lord was really asking of the brothers. Coupled with the Greek word “*opiso*,” which means *to the back*, the meaning of the term “*follow Me*” intensifies and becomes more clear. We must allow the Holy Spirit to teach us the essence of the word *opiso* or the positioning ourselves to the back of our Lord. God alone is so great that we can be both positioned in Him and to the back of Him at the same time in the Spirit.

Many believe it is sufficient to just “come” to Jesus. When we come to Him, we confess our sins, repent, and receive Him as our Lord and Savior. That miraculous spiritual transaction is the beginning of a higher life in Him. Before that new life is given a

chance, most believers are contemplating how one might please God in their own strength. Observe the instructions most people are given when they come to Jesus. For example, many are told to “go find a church.” Perhaps it would be better if they were instructed to pray for the Holy Spirit to lead them to a Christ-centered fellowship. Such anointed gatherings may not be the typical church.

A fraction of a verse of a favorite hymn declares, “*Oh what needless pain we bear*.” Every reader should now imagine what life would be like if every care, problem, disappointment, or even that which we consider to be pleasure, had to face Jesus before it is integrated into our life process. Of course, it would be a life of resurrection power! This is precisely what Father intended by giving His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life! The power of preaching the Gospel debilitates and ultimately eradicates the power of sin and death in our lives as we follow Christ. To follow Christ requires His ability and that is why the ministry of the Holy Spirit is so powerful and imperative in the life of the believer.

In the following verses from the Gospel of Luke, there is further clarity of what it means to follow Christ. Each verse is ripe with revelation and the open and understanding heart will savor the fruit. Let us see what happens when the pure heart meets the reality of the Spirit.

***Luke 9:57-58 (Amplified Bible): “And it occurred that as they were going along the road, a man said to Him, Lord, I will follow You wherever You go. And Jesus told him, Foxes have lurking holes and the birds of the air have roosts and nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head.*”**

The conditions of following Jesus Christ are slowly beginning to be revealed. First of all, there must be the willing

heart. The unnamed man speaking to Jesus declared the intent of his heart which was to follow Jesus wherever He would go. Jesus was very direct in His response. After comparing the abodes of two distinct creatures with His lack of an abode, the Son of man made His point. *“He that hath ears to hear let him hear.”* By using the example of the fox, a creature of the earth, and the birds, creatures of the observable heavens, Jesus made it known that His dwelling is not of this realm. To *“follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth”* means a complete spiritual transition. Let us continue as the Spirit leads.

In Matthew’s account of this same passage, the man is identified as a scribe. According to *Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible* (pp.850-851), scribes had an insatiable passion for distinction during the time of our Lord. They gloried in their own achievements and drew to themselves nearly all the energy and thought of Judaism. This rendered the priesthood powerless to compete with them. Further, scribes enjoyed great social position. From Smith’s description, we know immediately that things were not in the Divine order established by God. According to Exodus 19:6, God’s thought was to have unto Himself *“a kingdom of priests.”* Jesus’ response to the man above in Luke’s Gospel contained a higher truth. Following Him whithersoever He went meant dying to self and beginning a course of forward movement under the Spirit’s power with every action taking its place in the predestined tapestry of the will of the Father.

We follow the Lamb into the everlasting life that He is! It is a life of resurrection power as Jesus lives *through* the overcomer. The result of *“following the Lamb whithersoever He goeth”* can be seen in Chapter 14 of The Revelation. Those who stood with the Lamb having His Father’s name written in their foreheads and were not defiled with women, or the false religious system, followed the Lamb.

Revelation 14:4-5 reads, *“...These were redeemed from*

among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.”

As Paul prayed for the church of Ephesus, *“May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints...”*

Anyone can be a great teacher of the Bible and have walls decked with degrees, but unless a man is born from above, he cannot see or experience the kingdom of heaven. A desire to follow Jesus is not enough. We must be born from above with His power equipping us to *“follow Him whithersoever He goeth.”* My desire is for every believer to get the lesson Jesus taught the scribe.

“Learner” is another word that describes a disciple or follower. What does Jesus want His followers to learn? As He said in Matthew 11:29, *“Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me.”* In its basic definitive form a yoke means *to join*. Before we can take His yoke and learn of Him, Jesus said, *“Come unto Me.”* The Holy Spirit will take of that which belongs to Jesus and will show it unto us leading and guiding us into all truth. Truth is both a description and name of our Lord. It is His essence. As we follow on to know Him and allow Him to live through us, His yoke is truly easy and His burden is light. First Corinthians 6:17 reads, *“He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit.”* We must by faith agree with the Apostle Paul that it is no longer us living but Christ living in us. Prayerfully you are starting to lay aside every weight at this point.

Luke 9:59 (Amplified) “And He said to another, Become

My disciple, side with My party, and accompany Me!”

In this verse, we see other aspects of following Jesus. They include two courses of action to “*side with His party*” and “*accompany*” Him. We are not alone as followers of Christ. The Amplified Bible reveals His standard and a great truth by capturing the thought of “*siding with His party.*” To side with a party means to be in agreement with it and to fully accept it. It points to the unity of the brethren which God considers beautiful in Psalm 133. It is the answer to Jesus’ prayer in John 17 that we may be one as He and Father are One. With far too much frequency, the Church today appears a fragmented, confused, and a disoriented group attempting to follow Jesus by her own standards. However, the true Church is seated with Christ in *heavenly places* (Ephesians 2:6). She is as He is or altogether lovely. Stated another way, there is *The Church* and others are merely *having church*.

Further, following Jesus means *to accompany* Him. When we accompany someone we go along with or join in company with them. Jesus is the leader and decides the destinations and all that is done along the way. He is the Way! Imagine inviting someone to accompany you on a journey wherein strict adherence to your instruction leads to one’s ultimate survival. In spite of your assurance and guarantee of success in the planned course, your guests decided to alter the plans and do whatever they want or only that which seems right to them. Such behavior is despicable and divinely unacceptable yet routine in the lives of many believers. Just follow Jesus, and as Isaiah the prophet proclaimed in Isaiah 35, even a “*fool cannot make a mistake in the Way.*” Christ is both the highway and the Way. That is synonymous with saying He is both the vehicle and the road. Oh that we would see ourselves seated in Him!

Luke 9:60 (Amplified) “But he replied, Lord, permit me

first to go and bury (await the death of) my father. But Jesus said to him, Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and publish abroad throughout all regions the kingdom of God.”

This man makes an excuse of putting an event ahead of the call to discipleship. Learn from his grave mistake. By awaiting the death of his father, he was remains loyal to an ill-fated situation, which is tantamount to remaining faithful to a doomed system. This depicts one who is not aware of his identity in Christ or his relationship to God the Father. When Jesus taught the disciples to pray, He said, “*Our Father which art in heaven.*” Our true Father is God. We learn His nature as Father by accompanying His Son and seeing ourselves positioned in Him. If we are led by His Spirit, according to His Word, we are His sons! For it is written in Romans 8: 14, “*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*” Man’s spiritual condition apart from Christ is revealed through Jesus’ words, “*Allow the dead to bury their own dead.*” Nevertheless the command to go and publish the kingdom of God remained! Despite the excuse, the call was not nullified. Jesus’ final words remained a direct call to him “*...go and preach the kingdom of God.*”

Luke 9: 61-62 (Amplified) “Another also said, I will follow You, Lord, and become Your disciple and side with Your party; but let me first say good-bye to those at my home. Jesus said to him, No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back [to the things behind] is fit for the kingdom of God.”

It is vital for us to yield to the Holy Spirit as we follow Christ. The way of the Spirit will be discussed later. One cannot move forward by looking to things behind. All that is behind us is desolation. The prophet Joel describes a sobering point. In Joel Chapter 2:3 he saw by the Spirit and wrote, “*A fire devours*

before them...” People forget *“our God is a consuming fire,”* according to Hebrews 12:29. To look back reveals a view of destruction. Joel continues, *“...and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea and nothing shall escape them.”*

Jesus has restored us and is leading us back to our original position we shared with Father before the Fall. Eden is before us. Do not look back! Our constant view must be that of our risen Lord. The Apostle Paul got the lesson when he wrote in part to the church at Phillipi saying, *“...forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”* There is power in the press!

Some believers make the grave error getting ahead of God’s plan while still expecting His blessing. The artificial turf of self-effort can never replace the green pastures that only the Great Shepherd can provide. This is why our earlier study of the word *“opiso”* is so important. We can never get ahead of Jesus. Remain to the back of Him, accompany Him, side with His party, learn, and be transformed into His image as the law of the spirit of life in Him liberates us from the law of sin and death. The call is to follow Christ. Although a “call” is often associated with one who has a visible ministry, God’s Word clearly communicates His intent is for every believer to follow His Son, our true Shepherd.

Chapter 2

THE COST

The cost of discipleship initially seems enormous. Although there is everything to gain, the carnal mind sees it as a great cost. Despite faith’s assurance, the seeming enormity of the cost often eclipses the promise. In the following verses, Peter reminds the Lord of the cost they had paid to follow Him. Jesus’ answer ensured the reward in which nothing is lost providing one’s motive is pure. In fact, the reward far exceeds that which was perceived as cost.

Mark 10:28-31 KJV

“Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the Gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first.”

The response of Peter in Mark 10:28 came after Jesus had just finished teaching on the difficulties of riches. There was a rich young ruler who prided himself in the fact that he had kept the commandments of God, but the problem was with the object

of his trust. His trust was in his wealth. Jesus taught the disciples a powerful truth concerning misplaced trust. There is nothing wrong with wealth, but the trust in it rather than God. It is at this point that Peter reminds Jesus how they had left all to follow Him. We shall revisit this point in a moment.

First, it is interesting to note the vast amount of teaching available in the church today on personal wealth compared to teachings on the redemptive work of Christ and the power of trusting in God with all our hearts. If we are to get the powerful truth that is being unfolded in these Spirit-inspired points, the object of our trust must be Christ. Have you ever wondered why the spoils (riches) offered by the king of Sodom were rejected by Abraham in Chapter 14 of Genesis? From much of what is preached today, Abraham would seem like a foolish man. How dare he walk away from such a bounty “from God!” After all, “*the wealth of the wicked is laid up for the just*”, etc.

The answer is simple yet all life and power are enmeshed in it. It was because He had met Melchizedek, the Priest of the Most High God, *first* and had been served bread and wine. Bread and wine point to the redemptive work of Christ. Once we feed on Christ, riches will never be a hindrance in our walk of faith. On the other hand, a constant diet of how to obtain wealth will never fill the void in us that only Christ can.

Going back to our earlier thought, let us examine Jesus’ answer to Peter in Mark 10:29-30 above. What wealth of both natural and spiritual reward is contained therein! Immediately, Jesus addressed the concern of having left all or the cost. Enlaced in His answer are several critical points for every believer. If there is to be any spiritual progression, each thought must be carefully weighed in our hearts and any necessary adjustments must be immediate.

First of all, there is a requirement to assess motive since the reward is based upon having left all *for His sake and the Gospel’s*. Ask yourself, “What stimulated me to follow Jesus?”

Was it an emotional response to a man’s appeal? Was it to meet a physiological need alone? Why are we following Jesus, the Son of the Living God? Is it really for His sake and the Gospel’s?

To help us examine our motive more closely, let us review an instance in Jesus’ earthly ministry. In Chapter Six of John’s Gospel, there are scenarios that reveal the motives of the crowd. Upon discovering that Jesus was not with His disciples, some people got in boats to look for Him and eventually found Him. Jesus was direct in saying to them “*...Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled.*”

Every miracle Jesus performed revealed an aspect of His nature as the Son of God. Stated another way, in seeing the miracles one was shown the Father in Him. Unable or unwilling to apprehend Him spiritually, they chose to satisfy the flesh. Does this sound familiar?

Another instance in the same chapter of John occurred when Jesus said, “*...Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.*” This is Spirit to spirit or deep calling unto deep. The Scriptures declare that from this time, many of His followers went back and walked no more with Him. By feeding on the redemptive work of the Cross, the old nature is done away with. As believers, we are not a rejuvenated carnal man, but are new creatures in Christ who are born from above. The new creation position cannot be experienced if the motive is anything other than for His sake and the Gospel’s.

The second point revealed in Jesus’ answer to Peter’s reminder of the cost is the natural reward which has a stipulation. Let us repeat what Jesus said in Mark Chapter Ten, Verse 30. “*But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.*”

The phrase ***“in this time”*** refers to a season. It is written, to everything there is a season or an appointed occasion. Remember, God is in control of the seasons. Many believers actually think there are certain actions one can take and manipulate the sovereign Hand of God. It will never happen. God’s grace in His season is intended to reach the eternal realm. Manipulation only results in things that are restricted to the temporal realm. This lands the believer far short of the intended prize in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Always remember God gave His only begotten Son so that we might have eternal life. Everything about us is from that Divine perspective. We are spiritually engineered to operate on and out of the supernatural power of His Life. For this reason it is essential for us to see ourselves positioned in Christ far above the beggarly elements of this world. The epitome of anything produced in the earth realm is impoverished when compared to spiritual reward in Him.

The next phrase in Verse 30 above that bears magnification is ***“with persecutions.”*** When the word persecution is heard, it invokes a sigh for many whether silent or audible. Let us give God, Who is Love, some credit for His Divine wisdom and nature. ***“Persecution”*** can also be a very good thing to the believer. While it does mean suffering in some cases, it also means other things. Among them, it means ***“to follow after!”*** Is it not the heart of the thought being shared in this book to follow Jesus? We are following our Great Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ and this too is a form of the word ***“persecution.”***

First Timothy 6: 11 reads, ***“But thou, O man of God, flee these things (temporal things); and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.”*** Also, II Timothy 2:22 reads ***“Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”*** Further, Hebrews 12:14 reads: ***“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see (or experience) the Lord.”*** ***“Follow”*** as used in these verses is the

same Greek word for ***“persecution.”*** When our souls follow hard after the Lord as we seek Him early, we are experiencing the essence of this form of ***persecution.***

Another meaning of ***“persecution”*** as used in verse 30 is ***“to press forward.”*** Glory to God! How omniscient God is to pack so much into a single word! The Apostle Paul employed this form of the word ***persecution*** when He wrote this verse to the church at Phillipi, ***“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”*** Yes, persecution can be a wonderful thing! Carnal interpretations weaken believers in so many ways. That is why everyone needs the Holy Spirit as Teacher, Helper, Comforter, and Guide.

Before we go on to the final point in Jesus’ answer to Peter, let us review this same account given in Mark above from the Gospel of Matthew. There is a word used in Matthew’s account that is acutely important and should help every believer in a tremendous way if seen through the eyes of the Spirit.

Matthew 19:27-30 KJV

“Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.”

Verse 28 sheds new light on the reward but more importantly it reveals the position from which the reward is ministered. It is easy to see that following Jesus means more than a few days on and off of trusting Him, but rather going on unto the ***“regeneration.”*** ***“Regeneration”*** means ***“spiritual***

rebirth.” The regeneration is also the place of rulership with Christ. How does one get to the regeneration or become born again after the spirit? The answer is through Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection.

The Apostle Paul followed Him into the regeneration and discovered that God was pleased to reveal His Son in him (The Apostle Paul). Through the revelation of Jesus Christ from within, Paul proclaimed the good news every man is yearning to know. We were “***crucified with Christ***” (Galatians 2:20); we “***died with Christ***” (Colossians 3:3 and Romans 6:8); and we were “***buried with Christ***” (Romans 6:4). That took care of the old man or the old nature. See how powerful the Cross was, and we have not covered the ***regeneration*** yet! Now, for the power! Paul’s revelation also testifies that we “***were quickened or made alive with Christ***” (Colossians 2:13); we were “***raised with Christ***” (Colossians 3:1); and we “***are seated with Christ***” (Ephesians 2:6). This will be reiterated again.

Cost? To Whom? The real “cost” was borne by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on the Cross, and He is also our exceeding Great Reward. Jesus paid it all and as the prophet Isaiah declared, “Who hath believed our report?”

Our final point for examination in Jesus’ answer to Peter in Mark 10:29-30 is “***eternal life in the world to come.***” Eternal life is not *something* we inherit. Instead this life of our inheritance is a Person, our Lord Jesus Christ. First John, Chapter Five, contains the glorious truth of Jesus as Eternal Life, both Source and Substance. It is included below for your edification. Please read it at least twice and meditate on it before proceeding to the remainder of this book.

I John Chapter 5 KJV

“ Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his

commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him. If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death. We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath give us an understanding, that we

may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

My prayer for every reader is the same as the Apostle Paul's to the church at Ephesus: Heavenly Father, in the Name of Jesus, may *"the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is His Body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."*

Chapter 3 THE EXPERIENCE

After reflecting on the call and the cost of discipleship, let us examine the active participation of the disciples. Indoctrinated in the traditions of men, they had now become allied with the Son of man. Each step taken with Jesus automatically puts them in opposition to the rulers of the Jews because Eternal Spirit is now able to move unhindered in the face of tradition through the Lord Jesus. In other words, the war between carnality and spirituality was waged wherever Jesus went. The experience of actively participating with Jesus is about to open a *new and living way* for these ordinary fishermen. This experience is really about Christ living through us!

The most difficult part of the experience then and now is total dependence upon the Lord. Every situation was meant to be dealt with in God's power alone. Despite witnessing miracle after miracle, the difficulty of total dependence on Jesus remained. Every provision was supernaturally taken care of yet total dependence on Him was difficult for them. The emphasis is for our learning. Nothing has changed. If we are to truly experience God, we must trust Him fully as a child out of a pure heart.

Following the call of his first Disciples, Matthew's Gospel states Jesus went about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues, *"preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and disease among the people."* He became very

famous and multitudes followed Him. Never had any man seen one do the things Jesus was able to do. A powerful truth to be gleaned is found in Matthew Chapters Five-Seven. Notice the Spirit-inspired detail of Matthew 5:1-2 which reads, ***“When Jesus saw the multitudes, He went up into a mountain, and when he was set, his disciples came to him and he opened his mouth, and taught them.”*** What an awesome teacher He is!

“He opened His mouth and taught them.” The experience itself is full of Spirit-guided lessons. First, notice that it was the Disciples who followed Him up into the mountain. There is no mention in this passage of the multitude attempting to get close to Jesus in the mountain, but the disciples positioned themselves in His presence as He is seated in a mountain. A mountain speaks to me of a high place.

Could it have been the case as we often see it today? Too many people are content with external rewards such as the excitement of a healing, a miracle or to just get “a word.” The true call is to the inward man, and it takes a whole-hearted disciple to go to Jesus where He is seated in a high or spiritual place. Only the inner man can enter the realm of God which is the highest place and worship in spirit and in truth.

Every true follower of Christ must be constantly positioned in His presence as He is seated on high. If we grasp every meaningful detail, we will gain much insight to our position in Christ now. As the Apostle Paul declared to the church at Ephesus, ***“...we are seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”*** This position is far above principalities and powers. From the described position, Jesus taught them of life in the kingdom of heaven, unfolded the hidden meanings, and expressed Father’s complete thought for mankind. Then and now, many remain astonished at His doctrine for He teaches with all authority and power in both heaven and earth.

As long as the Disciples were with Jesus, every need was met in and through Him alone. The same is true today and forever shall be. Even when He sent “the seventy,” their report

reverberated with the fact that even demons were subject to them through His Name. Presently, our concern is with the *experience* of following Christ.

In the first twelve verses of Chapter 5 of Matthew, the ultimate experience of every believer is condensed in all-powerful encryption of the Word of God which must be spiritually discerned. Jesus opened His mouth and began to teach on position, power, prosperity and abundance. It is so interesting that these same principles are presented by many in such a carnal manner today. The carnal reader would be unable to see these same most sought after rewards for following Christ in their spiritual power.

First, let us review the conditions and results of the first four blessings of Jesus in Matthew Chapter 5. ***“Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of God.”*** To be ***“poor”*** means the same as ***“a pauper or one who is helpless and depends totally on alms for a living.”*** The meaning of ***“alms”*** traces its root to ***“righteousness, compassion and mercy.”*** There is only One worthy of attribution of the natural and spiritual meanings of the word ***“alms,”*** and He is Jesus Christ the Righteous.

The point here is there is no room for self in the experience. To be ***“poor in spirit”*** thus indicates one who is totally dependent upon Christ for their living and as such takes up a position in the kingdom of heaven. This sounds so simple yet it is most complex for many. I have discovered the self never depends totally on Christ and finds it very difficult to trust outside of its own means. Self has to see, hear, feel, touch, and taste using natural ability. I have further observed that to the self, ***“proof”*** must be quick and meet every vain imagination, or the results of its effort are often labeled as ***“not of God.”*** A question for every responsible believer in every situation could be, ***“Am I acting on the Word of God or in self-effort? It is easy to cross the line of simply making a request known unto God and instead attempting to make demands on the Potter.”***

Immediately following the lesson on doing away with self

and taking up our heavenly position, Jesus pronounced another blessing. ***“Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.”*** To ***“mourn”*** means to ***“grieve or sorrow.”*** One of the most profound ways to grasp the meaning of this verse is to refer to Isaiah Chapter Six. When the prophet Isaiah saw the Lord seated on His throne, and His train filled the temple, he replied, ***“I am a man of unclean lips.”*** The sorrow comes in a wonderful way only when we see ourselves apart from His great glory. This is the Lord’s doing. The natural man will never be able to exact such a powerful transition. Once we grasp the fact that without Him we are nothing, yet in Him we are as He is, only then are we comforted by His Spirit. As Jesus promised, the Holy Spirit will take of His and show it or unveil it unto us. That is the power of God unto salvation which is promised as the effect of the preaching of the Cross.

Jesus went through this same experience that he teaches and prevailed in every area. For example, when tempted of the devil in the wilderness, He came out in the power of the Spirit. As He is, so are we in Him! Allow Jesus to take the struggle out of our experience by surrendering our lives completely to Him.

Bear with me as I reinforce the above thoughts. The self is married to the fallen man and is blinded to the necessity of anything belonging to Christ. Compare the harlot system of mystery Babylon in Chapter 18 of The Revelation. This system merchandizes and ***“the souls of men”*** are among the commodities of her trade. She says, ***“I sit a queen and am no widow and shall see no sorrow...”*** That is because she is not the chaste virgin who is betrothed to the Living Christ and is already married to the fallen man. Her destruction is imminent for there is no comfort for her. Only Christ’s unveiling is able to reveal the utter poverty of self. Are you ready for believers everywhere to truly see Jesus, the Christ of God, take His rightful place in the temples that we are? Amen!

By the Spirit, may we see our vessels empty of self; we are seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus in the Spirit; we

recognize our spiritual void and death apart from Him; and we are filled with His Spirit. Now, Jesus is ready to take us even higher into Himself. Continuing in Chapter Five of Matthew, He said, ***“Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.”*** To be ***“meek”*** means to ***“be patient or endure with submission what might be evaded.”*** So far, our humble King is majoring on the power of humility. He knows that only the base things will be exalted; therefore, His message carries its eternal weight.

Let us examine the power of humility from Scripture. In Chapter Four of Luke’s Gospel, our Lord was rejected at Nazareth. He reminded them of the many widows in Elijah’s day, yet Elijah was sent to none save the one of Zaraphath. He also told them of the many lepers at the time of Elisha, none was cleansed save Naaman the Syrian. Let us pause and reflect on this reminder. First of all, Elijah is a type of Christ and we, the Body of Christ, are represented in Elisha who took up the mantle of Elijah. Jesus used facts from both their prophetic ministries to illustrate a powerful truth to those who rejected Him. The common thread between the widow of Zaraphath and Naaman the Syrian is the fact they submitted or humbled themselves at the command of the prophets. Such humility took them from states of certain death to supernatural or resurrection life. Somebody must see it by now that Jesus Christ is our life! The Master Plan does not require us to eke out a life on our own until we reach the “sweet by and by.” The Life of God’s own Son is available to us right now. However, because of Its resurrection quality, that Life can only work where a death has taken place. Humility is the hallmark of death to self.

The inheritance of the meek is the earth. The earth belongs to Jesus. He is the rightful Owner, and we share in His rightful possession and right to rule it. He made Himself of no reputation, or emptied himself, and in the power of the Spirit, took back what was rightfully His. Another word for earth is ***“land.”*** Our inheritance is realized as we walk in the Spirit, and He (our Inheritance) is a Person. Jesus is our Promised Land.

He “*floweth with milk*” (the Word of God) *and “honey”* (revelation knowledge). Isaiah 7:15 declares of Immanuel, “*Butter (from milk) and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good.*” Oh, the reward in our Lord! His Word and a revelation or unveiling of Him in us fully equips us. As Paul the Apostle said, “*It pleased God to reveal His Son in me.*” Many are waiting for the Son of God to be revealed *to* them instead of “*in*” them. He is the Head, and we are His Body.

Now that we recognize our position and power in the Lord Jesus Christ, He reveals a powerful truth that is necessary to maintain His life in us as we continue in Chapter Five of Matthew. “*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*” By today’s standards, what many people call hunger is greed. “*To hunger after righteousness*” means to *crave or to be famished*. If we are not truly hungry, we will seek after a “word” just for the sake of knowing something new. There will be no intent of being transformed into the image of our Lord. However, if we are famished and crave the Lord Jesus Who is our righteousness, and thirst after Him, we shall be filled with His Presence.

At this point, I must emphasize what it means to hunger and thirst. The word “hunger” too traces its root to *poor*. This point is important because we must see the power of humility if we are going on to perfection in Christ. The Holy Spirit impressed upon me to search the Scriptures and note the times when Jesus hungered and thirsted. A particular Scripture stands out in Matthew 21: 18-22, “*Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, ‘Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever.’ And presently the fig tree withered away. And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, ‘How soon is the fig tree withered away!’ Jesus answered and said unto them, ‘Verily I*

say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be cast into the sea, it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.’”

Jesus was not accepted at Jerusalem but was on His way back there. He had just left Bethany where he was accepted, but in the temple at Jerusalem, which was supposed to represent Him, He was rejected most miserably. Bethany was a small place that was greatly enlarged by its acceptance of Jesus. This is a bonus to ministries that may seem small to man. If you are a place where the Spirit of Christ is welcomed, and Jesus Christ is the Center of your ministry, you are a great house in the eyes of God!

The “*fig tree*” in Matthew 21 above represented the religious system in which there was no fruit. It had the appearance and used the right language. It even used the Scriptures to enforce its actions; however, the Son of God was given no place in it. Jesus was hungry and should have been able to find fruit. After all, the law and the prophets come together in Him. Let us not stand aghast at the horror of Jesus’ rejection by that system. Instead, let each reader search his or her own heart and ensure Jesus has His rightful place therein. Is your life bearing the fruit of His Spirit?

As we examine Matthew 4:1-11, the Holy Spirit will further enlighten us on hunger and what satisfies yet keeps us in Father’s will. “*Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.*” Dear reader, be ever mindful that this is totally spiritual in nature and flesh has no place in this realm. To respond in the flesh would accomplish absolutely nothing at this point but to empower the adversary. It is here that one must cast down every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of Christ. Flesh or carnality is what the adversary feeds on, and remember, he is cursed to eat dust from

which flesh was formed. Are you the temple of the Holy Spirit or a dust bowl? When we lean to our own understanding or approach spiritual things from a carnal perspective, we will not gain any ground spiritually.

Matthew Four continues, *“And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God command that these stones be made bread. But He answered and said, ‘It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’”*

At this point in the experience, one can better understand why we must be emptied of self because if not, the lust of the flesh will overpower us. (Remember, the emptying is not something we do, but rather something we allow God’s Spirit to do in us). True humility at this point has invoked the Name of the Lord and is totally dependent upon Him for help. This is why Jesus’ response was taken from what God had already spoken. Once God has spoken, it is settled forever. True humility also opens the way of experientially seeing who we are in Christ. Therefore, when the tempter challenges our position in Him, there is no need to defend it because no circumstance can change who we are in Christ. The hungering spirit of the sincere believer is fully satisfied on the Word of God or the Person of our Lord Jesus. I believe with all my heart that once Christ has satisfied our spiritual hunger, the temptations of lust of the eyes and the pride of life will not pack so powerful a punch. All things then become weighed against Him and nothing can abide the day of His coming or a revelation of Him. We worship Him alone.

In John 19:28-30 it reads, *“After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be*

fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put in upon hyssop, and put it to His mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.” **“Vinegar”** is a state of wine that has been leavened. Leaven speaks of sin. Study First Corinthians, Chapter Five entirely for you will find therein, *“A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”* Take note of the context in which this Scripture is used. Also, study the same passage in Chapter Five of Galatians.

Jesus knew no sin but became sin for us. He drank a cup that should have been ours to drink, but God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. Hallelujah! Messiah’s mission was to fulfill all righteousness, and He succeeded. He depended totally on the Father’s will to satisfy His **“hunger and thirst.”** He has been made unto us righteousness according to First Corinthians 1:30, and He is the Lord our Righteousness! The prophet Jeremiah said our name is the same as His! Jeremiah 33:16 reads, *“She shall be called The Lord our Righteousness.”* We are the Bride of Christ or the New Jerusalem! Glory to God!

As the experience continues, let us return now to Jesus teaching His disciples. He went on to say, **“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.”** At this point the Anointing that Jesus is begins to exude from the believer. When one is merciful they are actively compassionate. It is impossible to remain actively compassionate at all times as Father intends without the ability of His Son operating in us. Many times people are well intentioned but become burned out by trying live this principle in and of their own strength. People need Jesus to respond through us instead of us responding in our own strength.

The Apostle Paul informed the church at Corinth in the Second Epistle that Christ is the theme of ministry. *“Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not... For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the*

Lord and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Mercy is received from God and not manufactured out of ministries. Mercy sustains us and keeps us from fainting. The more of Jesus we release the greater measure of Him we shall obtain.

Psalms 103:17(KJV) reads, ***"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him..."*** This scripture is echoed again in the New Testament during the visit of Mary, the mother of Jesus, to Elisabeth, the mother of John the Baptist. This time, the Means of God's mercy is laid out in the prophetic utterances between the two women. Much light is shed on the inwrought work of God in the experience of a believer through the intricate details spelled out by the Holy Spirit. Spiritual eyes and ears will be saturated and nurtured as we examine the verses and allow the Holy Spirit to unveil Christ from within us.

Luke 1:39-45 (KJV) reads, ***"And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord."***

The ministry of the Helper or the Holy Spirit is magnified in these verses. As stated earlier, we shall take a deeper look at the ministry of the Holy Spirit later. The Holy Spirit in Mary took of the Son of God in her womb and filled Elisabeth with Himself

and revealed the Son to her. What power awaits the church when we allow God's Spirit to speak through us instead of preparing messages out of our intellect, will, and emotions! The Holy Spirit testifies of Jesus and that is precisely what He did through Elisabeth. Immediately, He revealed the fruit of Mary's womb as blessed. Further, without seeing Him she knew by the power of God that the Babe in Mary's womb was her Lord. Verse 45 holds the key to the whole experience being addressed. He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit of God is saying through these pages! Verse 45 says, ***"And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord."*** All we have to do is to believe. God by His Spirit will take care of all the details through the Life of His Son in us. The work is finished and is waiting to be unveiled from within us. Receive Christ in His fullness even now.

Luke 1: 46-55 (KJV) continues, ***"And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior."*** Here is a beautiful picture of a believer who has an understanding of the finished work of Christ. Through the Spirit, Mary was able to see God's view of all things in His Son. While she was yet carrying the Incarnate One, her soul was praising Him because her spirit was joined to His Spirit. Notice that her soul was praising the Lord because her spirit had already experienced God as Savior.

"For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." Notice what was regarded by God. Her low estate or humility was regarded! This is consistent with what Jesus taught His disciples in Matthew Five and what He continues to teach us, His followers, today. The power of humility before God cannot be overemphasized. As it is written, ***"no flesh shall glory in His presence."***

Spirit to spirit let us continue. ***"For he that is mighty hath***

done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.” With blessed assurance under the Spirit’s power, Mary continued to prophesy what was true of her by virtue of position rather than working through natural ability. Notice the reiteration of a complete work. This work was finished before the foundation of the world, and the Holy Spirit is unveiling this mightily to us through the Word of God. Again, *“...He hath done to me great things...”* It is time for the Church to awake to this complete Work in Christ and proclaim and manifest that Work by the Spirit. God’s mercy is on them that fear Him. Let us reverence Him with all our hearts today and always.

“He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed forever.” All these things hath God done through the Redemptive Work of His Son. If we would only live in the Spirit, we would experience the active compassion of our Heavenly Father. Prayerfully, all eyes locked onto these words will see what is already true of us as believers. Again, the experience is about Christ living through us.

The reader is encouraged to read the Gospels and see how Jesus responded when the cry went out saying, *“Have mercy!”* Repeatedly, *“mercy”* responds to faith as Jesus acknowledged their faith or stated, *“according to thy faith.”* We are blessed because *“mercy”* dwells in us in the Person of Christ. Again, release Him and get more of Him!

At this point, the experience is one of ascension life in Christ. He is increasing in us as we decrease. Going back to Jesus’ teachings in the first part of Matthew Five (KJV), He also said, *“Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.”*

Early on, let us clarify two important things. First, the heart is made pure through faith by receiving and believing what Christ has already done for us and as us. There is not one natural thing anyone can do to purify the heart yet the “do and don’t messages” keep pouring out of well-meaning ministries. In Christ, what exists is a new creature with His nature. A believing heart is a pure heart. A heart of works of the flesh is not a pure heart.

Second, we must understand what Jesus means when He says “see” God. He gives us a deeper meaning in Matthew 13:13, 16 (KJV) which states, *“Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. But blessed are your eyes for they see: and your ears, for they hear.”*

Hebrews 11:27 KJV reads of Moses, *“...for he endured, as seeing Him Who is invisible.”* This *“seeing”* is discerned rather than learned in the natural. Just as with Moses, the Lord was working with the Disciples and therein is the key. Without Jesus, the Disciples would not have been able to see and hear, or discern spiritual things either. Jesus taught them, and demonstrated the power of God. God’s power is not harnessed on man’s terms but rather experienced through a life of faith.

Up to this point in the experience of the believer, everything is totally dependent upon our Lord and shall remain so throughout. What a powerful posture for believers whether individually or corporately! Of the **many** Scriptures we may employ at this point, The Holy Spirit would have us refer to Acts 15: 5-11 which helps to fine-tune the power of God’s Christ in the believer’s experience. The KJV reads, *“But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them (Gentiles) and to command them to keep the laws of Moses. And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them,*

Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bear them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.” May every reader grasp what has been freely given and receive. Praise God for the simplicity in Christ.

There are two other major teaching points from the Master to the disciples that are crucial to the experience. Jesus said, *“Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God.”* (Matt 5: 9 KJV). This statement represents the continuing release of His Person from within us. When Christ is released as *peace*, the result is safety which further means *“completeness or that which is finished or that which has been restored.”* May it be easier now to see why the self-life could not enter into the realm of the Spirit. To put this teaching point in a nutshell, we could say, peacemakers bring Jesus Christ our Lord into every situation.

The prophets spoke of *peace* as part of His nature. His nature is that by which His Body is nurtured. According to the prophet Isaiah, *“Prince of Peace”* is a part of His Name. Isaiah further prophesied that *“the chastisement of our peace was upon Him”* (Isaiah 9:6; 53:5 KJV). Micah prophesied, *“And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land...”* (Micah 5:5- KJV). Micah’s prophecy contains a powerful truth for the believer today given the meaning of the name *“Assyrian.”* It means a *“step in connection with success.”* Success according to the world system has been a huge hindrance to the spiritual success of the church. When the saints are worn out from the futile battle of becoming “successful” in

the natural rather than blessed with the blessings of heavenly places in Christ Jesus, all shall see Him as *“the peace”* of Micah’s prophecy.

Further, Zechariah prophesied of Jesus that, *“He shall speak peace unto the heathen...”* (Zechariah 9:10, KJV). In his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul the Apostle reveals the fulfillment of Zechariah’s prophecy so profoundly it must be read at this point. *“Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.”* (Ephesians 2: 11-17, KJV).

When the angels announced Jesus’ birth to the shepherds, they heralded: *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”* (Luke 2:14, KJV). Here is an aspect concerning the ministry of our Lord that is so powerful until the very angels of heaven stand in agreement with the prophets concerning His peace! When releasing the seventy on their mission, Jesus instructed their words to be *“Peace be to this house”* to whatsoever house they entered. (Luke 10:5). His parting words to the woman with the issue of blood, who was a picture of the Church, were to *“Go in peace.”* (Luke 8:48).

Peace is an identifying quality of kingdom life. Man can

sign peace treaties and make attempts at peace from every known angle, but it is evident from the Word of God that peace is not possible apart from the Living Christ. To enjoy a life of peace, we must walk in the Spirit. According to Romans 8:6 “...*to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*” We must put on the mind of Christ if we are to become fishers of men.

The last teaching point from our exalted Teacher is “*Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*” (Matthew 5:10, KJV). As covered in the preceding chapter, persecution is not necessarily a bad thing in the life of the believer. Those who are persecuted for righteousness sake receive the same promise given to the poor in spirit. Remember, the poor in spirit are helpless and have no means of making a living except by what is received through alms. This is another picture of a life emptied of self and totally dependent upon Christ, our heavenly Alms.

In Chapter 13 of Matthew’s Gospel there is a parable concerning the kingdom of heaven, which is the reward of those persecuted for righteousness sake. Verses 47-50, KJV read: “*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.*”

The word “net” in this verse is very interesting. It means the same as the fishing net used by ordinary fishermen. However, the origins of the two words are different. The disciples would have been familiar with their net as a means of casting forth, but Eternal Spirit is imparting a higher truth in this parable. The origin of the word “**net**” used here is to “*equip*.” Another word for “**net**” is “*furniture*.” The meaning “furniture” reminds me of the Feast of Tabernacles. During the Feast of Tabernacles, the children of Israel moved out of their houses and lived in

temporary shelters made from the boughs of certain trees (Leviticus 23). Once completely out of the house or self is out of the temples that we are, Jesus can then “equip” and “furnish” us with Himself. “*The ‘good’ will be gathered into vessels.*” Only God is *good!*

Remember, the persecution is for righteousness sake, and Jesus has been made unto us righteousness! We will understand and appreciate these facts better the more Christ is unveiled from within us. Our Lord is King of His kingdom. Only the wicked or Adam, the fallen man, is done away in Christ. The “*bad is cast away!*” “*The bad*” is useless! There is no place for wickedness and the carnal man in the kingdom of heaven! “*The wicked will be severed from the just!*” All that remains is going to be Christ, the *Just One*.

Chaper 4 THE WAIT

John 21:1-3(KJV) “After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.”

“*I go a fishing.*” Imagine what may have been going through Peter’s mind? What did Jesus promise? Jesus declared He would make Simon and Andrew *fishers of men*. Jesus has been crucified and resurrected, and they must have wondered about the promise made by the Master. Not only was the promise yet to be realized, they caught nothing by simply fishing as usual. Oh the time it often seems to take for the manifestation of a sure word of prophecy! Sometimes the waiting makes us want to go back to familiar comfort zones. That is the easiest and deadliest approach. Let us follow on to see what the Spirit of God would show us.

The Holy Spirit is revealing something almighty in this scene. First of all, let us assess what is missing from the way things were when the Master was with them. As long as Jesus was present, they had no worries. All basic life needs were met,

and the only requirements were to learn from Him and believe on the One Who sent Him. Simon Peter was attempting to go back to his place of familiarity. He was even voluntarily accompanied by some of his fellow disciples. However, there are two seriously essential elements missing from this fishing trip. Let us look separately at each.

Immediately, it is easy to see that Jesus was not with them in the manner they were accustomed to. They could no longer laugh and talk with Him, touch Him, see Him daily, or bask in that supernatural comfort of His companionship. They are about to return to business as usual apart from the Lord. This is written for our instruction. From this point on the walk is totally spiritual, and He must be called upon. It may seem as if He has abandoned us, but if we call upon Him, He will answer, and He will be with us. He is very near.

Christ’s redemptive work on the Cross ushered in such phenomenal power. As a child, I learned a hymn called “*Higher Ground.*” The power of the Cross lands us on higher ground indeed! The stage is set for the incoming of a redeeming force that is overwhelming to man’s ability to comprehend. These disciples are about to give us a glimpse that will facilitate our entering the field of this force.

Secondly, if we go back to verses at the start of this chapter, we are able to tell from the Word how many are in the boat. “*There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.*” This is a total of seven. Of the original, five are missing. According to Appendix 10 of the Companion Bible, five is spiritually significant for “*grace.*” Grace means “*unmerited favor.*” God’s favor was also missing! God has great purpose in everything He does. Despite Judas Iscariot’s behavior, Jesus appointed twelve disciples and knew precisely what He was doing. A great lesson

is here for us.

Grace is always present when Christ is present. No Jesus Christ, no grace! Got Jesus Christ, great grace! *Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* In Christ we have come into a position of rest. It is impossible to comprehend rest apart from grace. Grace sees to it that self is utterly exposed. It is not of works but of grace. A season of waiting gives grace a perfect opportunity. Grace is a transforming power in and of itself. God declared that He would have unto Himself a kingdom of priests. Grace is the modality that sees to its appearing. Grace has a constant view of Christ and masterfully whittles every shape into His Image and likeness. Grace sees us in Christ and is fully pleased with what it sees.

Before we proceed, let us go back and see grace in operation at Jesus' dedication. Luke 2: 36 -38, KJV), "***And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband of seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about four-score and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.***"

Anna's name means *grace*. Her father, Phanuel's name means *face of God*. Phanuel is the Greek name for Peniel which is the name of the place Jacob or Israel said that he had seen God face to face and his life was preserved. Please go back to Chapter 32 of Genesis and review the account of Jacob's experience. Here you see when he passed over that place (Peniel), the sun arose upon him and he halted upon his thigh. In other words, his walk was forever changed as a result of meeting the Word and walking in His Light! Also, Anna's father was from the tribe of *Aser* or Asher whose name means *happy, or blessed!* At Anna's or *grace's* entry came the face of God,

grace, happiness, and blessing. What a witness came in that instant at Simeon's dedication of our Lord! Grace profoundly speaks of Him to all who look for redemption. Hallelujah!

The wait prepares us by revealing our helplessness apart from Christ. What a powerful place! A season that may be lonely, frustrating, embarrassing, and most of all humiliating, yet it is teaching us total dependence upon our Beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ. The power resident in the wait permits a sobering look at the futility of all self-effort apart from Christ. Once sober, we are ready to proceed in Him. Here experienced fishermen cannot catch even a single fish. When it is time for God's purpose to be unveiled in us, our natural ability becomes weightless and incapable of finding ground in the realm of His Spirit.

God keeps His promises, yet in our sensual minds, we often forget what is called an eternal weight of glory. So, from the experience of these disciples we learn a valuable lesson in our season of waiting. God is not in the business of quick fixes. "***Wait on the Lord and be of good courage!***" Our lives are meant to be more than tick marks in vital records of birth and death. It is in the wait that we learn patience and purpose. The wait comes just before the power of Life explodes on, in and through us! Jesus came that we might have life and that life is in Him. Although the wait can almost become unbearable, keep in mind the heat is on the carnal man and not the inner man who is in union with Christ. A perfect work will be manifested in us if we wait on the Lord.

Observe the time of the disciples' fishing trip. When Jesus was with them, He said, "***We must work while it is day for the night was coming when no man can work.***" It is amazing at the "work" that is going on in the night season despite the fact that Jesus said it could not be done and worse yet, He is not in the boat. Is this where your church is, Pastor? Is this where you are in your walk, Believer? If so, the result is going to be absolutely nothing! "***And that night they caught nothing.***"

Any work apart from Christ is at night, and in the Day of the Lord all there is to do is simply believe! Still, this is probably a familiar place for many of us. There will never be room left for boasting as it is not of works.

What is God doing when a season of waiting is upon us? Remember, our wait is upon the Lord. These disciples were trying to go back to what they were familiar with and nothing happened. The only thing behind us is desolation as the prophet Joel reminds us in Chapter Two. Even if it is familiar and has worked at some point in the past, it is still desolation. Once we have gained ground in Christ, the only power that can help is the interruption of a higher law. The *law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus* can now move uninhibited because in the wait we find there is no answer but Christ! The waiting also allows God to do things in His time. When this happens, we get the maximum effect of His blessings! Just as with Israel of old, their entire inheritance had to be occupied “*by little and little.*” So it is today.

Isaiah 40:31 (AMP) reads, “*But those who wait for the Lord [who expect, look for, and hope in Him] shall change and renew their strength and power; they shall lift their wings and mount up [close to God] as eagles mount up to the sun; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint or become tired.*”

While the waiting may be a long night season, Christ Jesus is our “*song in the night.*” Waiting is a time to meditate on Him. The word wait as used here means *to bind together by twisting*. Waiting is a time to become thoroughly enwrapped in the will of God as we expect, look for, and hope in Him until our strength becomes lost in His strength. It is here that we, in full agreement with the Apostle Paul, count all past experience with worldly accolades and approval but dung. For dung it is in comparison with the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.

May you be further edified by Paul who proclaimed in Phillipians 3:9-11(AMP), “*And that I may [actually] be found and known as in Him, not having any [self-achieved] righteousness that can be called my own, based on my obedience to the Law’s demands (ritualistic uprightness and supposed right standing with God thus acquired), but [possessing that [genuine righteousness] which comes through faith in Christ (the Anointed One), the [truly] right standing with God, which comes from God by [saving] faith. [For my determined purpose is] that I may know Him [that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly], and that I may in that same way come to know the power outflowing from His resurrection [which it exerts over believers], and that I may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed [in spirit into His likeness even] to His death, [in the hope] that if possible I may attain to the [spiritual and moral] resurrection [that lifts me] out from among the dead [even while in the body].*”

Jeremiah said, “*The LORD is good to them that wait for Him...*” This is most profound. We are not waiting for “stuff.” We are waiting for Him! He is the promise! Our inheritance is in the Lord. He is our portion!

Let us pause a few moments and begin to praise God. We have a loving Father who teaches us by His ways. What sons we are before Him! The spirit of adoption says through us, “Abba Father” (Romans 8:15). This was the cry of both Elisha (II Kings 2:12) and Jesus (Mark 14:36) as they began to move out in their ministries of the Spirit’s Power. Now, you can get ready! His ways are not our ways. His thoughts are not ours for they are so much higher than we can even ask or think. We are actually moving in the Spirit as we are waiting on the Lord! Never forget that awesome point. The wait does not last always. As a

witness to His goodness, the wait is worth it all.

Chapter 5 The Catch

John 21: 4-6 (KJV) “But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.”

The morning is coming! The wait does not last always. Do not expect to see the same thing you saw in the natural when the morning comes. Although it was Jesus, at first they did not know it. How could they walk with Him for nearly three and a half years of earthly ministry, follow Him everywhere, miss His company so terribly, and now they are unable to recognize Him? They did not even recognize His Voice! There is something glorious in the resurrection. That Life that is imparted to us is bigger and better than we can ever imagine. Our natural perception does not measure up in this realm of the morning or the spirit. *“Eyes have not seen, hears have not heard...”* The catch is the fullness of Christ Himself!

May God grant to each reader the wisdom of His Word in verse six above. *“Cast”* means not only *to throw*, but it also means *to arise*. God’s heart for us is resurrection life of the Life

of His Son. We will apply the meaning ‘to arise’ at this point and join it to the location directed by the Master. **“Cast the net on the right side of the ship and ye shall find.”** The word “side” conveys the same meaning as the word “particular.” First Corinthians 12:27 reads, **“Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular.”** The Greek word used in the text to confer the meaning of the words “side” and “particular” share the same meaning with other words such as “portion,” “course,” and “share.” The word “formed” as used in Paul’s words of travail when he said, **“...until Christ be ‘formed’ in you”** shares the same base derivative. **Formed** means to *fashion or shape through the idea of adjusting parts*. The Body of Christ will one day manifest His glory through unity by His Spirit. This catch is indeed more than enough for everyone! That is why Jesus said **“...ye shall find”** without giving the specific of what would be found. The catch is so much more than a meal to satisfy the natural man.

John 21:7. *“Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher’s coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.”*

Upon following the instructions of Jesus, the disciple **“whom He loved”** recognized Him. Adherence to the Lord’s instructions always produces a supernatural blessing. When Jesus tells you to do something, the effect is supernatural. This is how we know Jesus is on our side and working with us. There is no mistaking Him then. Like Nicodemus said when Jesus walked the earth, **“No man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.”** (John 3:2, KJV). Jesus’ Words of instruction and His blessings are His signature! They distinguish Him from any other. The same applies in our spiritual walk. No one can do what He can do. There is absolutely no mistaking Jesus. Our problem often lies in the

tendency to tie His blessings to the natural realm alone. His blessings are recognized in heaven and earth!

John 21: 8-9. *“And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes. As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.”*

Let us follow each event carefully. The fish that was laid on the coals speaks of a *small fish*. Additionally, there was a loaf of bread. They possibly remembered when Jesus fed a multitude with only five loaves and two fishes. He certainly could feed seven men with a fish and a loaf. The point is Jesus has already prepared what many are toiling and working all night to get. There is a part in our spiritual walk that only Jesus can do. All we need to do is walk in obedience to His instructions. Let us continue as the catch is further revealed.

John 21:10-11. *“Jesus saith unto them, ‘Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.’ Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.”*

Jesus did not need the fish to prepare a meal. He wanted to show the disciples an example of the blessings of heavenly places that are available only in Him. As a result of following Christ’s instructions in minute detail, a supernatural catch that contained the original promise in its entirety was about to unfold. Every detail must be followed especially to the location Jesus says. Are we in our divine location or where we are most comfortable? For this **“catch,”** the net had to be placed on the right side of the boat. Peter was able to draw the net to land full of great fishes! Seven fishermen are present yet only Peter is

mentioned as drawing the catch to land in this verse.

The term “*great fishes*” is used to contrast the difference with what was prepared. What a Promise Keeper He is! God is teaching by His ways. True ministry everywhere is being prepared for a world harvest. God is preparing a people by His Spirit. Multiplied millions shall come to the Lord. Not with the manifold points of a soul-powered seminar, but in power and demonstration of the Spirit of the Living Christ. Let us now lock back on to the spiritual lesson.

Of all the numbers our Infinite God could have used, why did He inspire the Holy Ghost to record the exact catch of “*an hundred and fifty and three?*” I believe the full promise of Christ is encrypted in the number of this supernatural catch at the obedience of the Lord’s instructions. *An hundred and fifty and three!* Incorporated in this catch is what I believe to be a three-fold revelation of all Jesus did for us and as us. Allow the Spirit of God to enlighten us to the meaning beginning with the number three, then fifty and finally one hundred. Throughout Scripture, God continuously showed His people the end from the beginning.

According to *Appendix 10 of the Companion Bible*, *three* denotes *completeness and is significant in Divine perfection*. It also includes *resurrection*. Keep in mind that The Resurrection and The Life Himself is giving the instruction to the disciples. *Salvation* may also be seen in the number three. From the omniscient thought enlaced in the meaning of the number three, we can further conclude from the previous chapter that “*the wait*” is actually a step toward the promise that is kept in “*the catch.*”

The prophet Jeremiah lamented, “*It is good that man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.*” (*Lamentations 3:25-26*). We are complete in Christ. The following Scriptures capture the heart of the Gospel and are

provided so the reader can see that every step Jesus took in His work of redemption included you! He has never left us! Meditate on each Scripture and allow the Holy Spirit to help you reckon or comprehend what is already true of you in Christ. In the redemptive steps of Christ lies the fullness of the expression of the number *three*. This is first-fruits of the whole catch! Hallelujah!

WE ARE WITH CHRIST:

Crucified

“I am with Christ crucified: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20) KJV

“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” (Galatians 6:14) KJV

Died

“For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”(Colossians 3:3) KJV

“Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.” (Romans 6:8) KJV

Buried

“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6:4)KJV

Quickened (Made Alive with Resurrection Life)

“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;” (Colossians 2:13)KJV

Raised

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.” (Colossians 3:1)KJV

Seated

“And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:” (Ephesians 2:6) KJV

Our old nature was obliterated in Christ. Adam was completely destroyed. He is dead! We often see him in the temple that we are as though he is God, but he is an imposter and a liar. He simply steals the life of those he has deceived. The fallen man Adam is dead! Are you necromancing or romancing? We are now new creatures, the Bride of the Living Christ! **“Old things are passed away and all things are become new.”** The old man will not and cannot respond to the Spirit of Christ. Why do you think there are so many churches that are in such a mess? The old man is an enemy to Christ. When this truth saturates the Body of Christ, the religious system with its pomp and props will be exposed for the death trap it really is.

Below are the lyrics to a song I was inspired to write as God began to reveal His Son in me entitled, “Two Men in the Earth:”

Chorus

*Two men in the earth
You're in Adam
Or you're in Christ.*

You've got to choose between death and Life!

Verses:

*The first man's dead, but he steals the life
Of those who are deceived.
The last Man is Eternal Life
To those who have believed!*

*The Cross took Adam out of the way
But He doesn't want you to know.
'Cause once Christ is unveiled in you
Everybody's going to see His glow!*

*Come on in out of the dark and cold
Bask in the warmth of His love.
Father's waiting to receive you
In His Throne Room above.*

*God has a plan through the life of a man
The first one fell with his wife at his side.
The Last Man came and reversed that Curse
The true Church is His new bride!*

The next part of the catch or the promise is revealed in the number **fifty**. Fifty speaks of *the Holy Spirit or Pentecost*. (Refer to Leviticus 23:15-22 which outlines God's instructions for the Feast of Pentecost. Also study Acts 2:1; 20:16 and I Corinthians 16:8 for further mention of Pentecost). Jesus said in **John 14:16** that He would pray the Father and **“He shall send you another Comforter that He may abide with you forever.”** He also said the Holy Spirit would guide us into all truth (**John 16:13**). It is staggering to note the number of believers who carry on their lives apart from the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit. He is our Helper! He testifies of Jesus. Entire denominations have excluded His ministry.

A powerful example of the guiding and abiding ministry of the Holy Spirit is seen in the wilderness wanderings of the children of Israel. After their deliverance from bondage in Israel, they were set on a journey that would carry them to the land of promise. For them it was a natural territory. For us, it is the totality of the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. While in the wilderness, they murmured and God sent serpents that bit them and many died. The God-given remedy was for Moses to make a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole. When they were bitten, they were to look upon the serpent on the pole and live. That serpent

on the pole is an awesome picture of the Cross of Christ. The redemptive process outlined above is what we look upon and live! Jesus knew no sin but became sin for us. The Holy Spirit is here to unveil the power of His redemption from within us.

Garner the awesome way of the Spirit as we review the Lord's leading natural Israel after the lifting of the brazen serpent. Immediately following the lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness, God allowed the journey of the children of Israel to take a course that would reveal the Holy Spirit's power in what I believe mirrors the spiritual journey of every believer. This truth must be seen through the eyes of the Spirit. No matter where a believer is on one's spiritual path, these truths concerning our Lord Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Ghost will lighten the way. May the reader be strengthened with might in the inner man and the eyes of your understanding enlightened by the Spirit of Christ.

Numbers 21:1-4 KJV "And when king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies; then he fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners. And Israel vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities. And the LORD hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities: and he called the name of the place Hormah. And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way."

Following a powerful "mountaintop" experience of victory wherein their enemy was utterly destroyed, ***"the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way."*** The "way" is the Lord Jesus Christ who said, ***"I am the way, the truth and the life."*** As we see a picture of our spiritual journey

in the above verses, it is important to note that it is the *soul* of the people that becomes discouraged. The soul is comprised of the mind, the will and the emotions. The flesh is motivated by this part of our being. It is wise to note how the Holy Spirit inspired *the soul* to be the focus at this point. Discouragement can only be magnified in the soul. This is why we must walk in the Spirit so as not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

We will liken this stage to having heard the Gospel and learned of the victory of the Cross but not making a full commitment to Christ. Many of us thought our lives would change overnight, but the soul is vying for the superior position within man. For many, concentration is on the things that make us feel good in the sensual and temporal realm. Many experience life-saving victories yet still refuse to yield totally to Christ and serve Him. Keep in mind that the "attention span" of the soul is very, very short when it comes to spiritual things. The soul is being saved so remain encouraged in the journey. When one accepts Jesus Christ as Lord, our spirits are instantly renewed and our souls become subject to our spirits. The soul does not like being subject to the inner man who is now one with Christ and becomes easily discouraged and weary. As we go the way of the Spirit, we decrease as Christ increases within us.

See how quickly natural Israel forgot their recent victory in Numbers 21:1-4. Although they journeyed ***"by the way of the Red Sea"*** (which should have been a constant reminder of God's delivering power), they could not meditate on God's goodness because of the overwhelming power of the unsaved soul.

Numbers 21:5 KJV "And the people spake against God, and against Moses, 'Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread.'"

God's provision never fails. His provision for natural Israel was a picture of the Provision of His Son. One must look well

beyond the natural. Everything God does carries an eternal effect because He is eternal Spirit. By providing a constant diet of manna during their natural wilderness walk, God was showing in type that Jesus Christ is enough to sustain us in our spiritual walk. Their *soul* actually **“loathed”** God’s provision. Before we gasp in awe, think of what place our blessed Lord has in our lives even now. To **loathe** something means they were sick of it and disgusted with it. They even called it **“light bread”** which means it was not fully satisfying. That is precisely what the unsaved soul thinks of Jesus Christ. The carnal man finds Him disgusting and unsatisfying.

Jesus taught the multitude concerning this very **bread** that natural Israel loathed in the wilderness. John 6:31-35 KJV reads, **“Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.’ Then said they unto him, ‘Lord, evermore give us this bread’. And Jesus said unto them, ‘I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.’”**

Numbers 21:6-9 KJV “And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.” And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the

serpent of brass, he lived.”

When the soul is in control of man, one sins by murmuring against God and rebelling against His ways. **“The wages of sin is death.”** Consequently, God sent fiery serpents that bit the people and caused them to die. Notice upon their true repentance, God put a provision for life in their midst. Is this not what happened to us as believers when we repented of our sins and meant it in our hearts? They had nothing of themselves to do but believe God’s Word and do as He commanded. Read **John 3:14-17 KJV** below and see what God was orchestrating through His people way back in the wilderness for our learning.

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.”

It is very important for the reader to understand the context of **John 3:14-17**. Midway Jesus’ response to Nicodemus concerning the new birth is part of a direct answer to Nicodemus’ question of **“How can these things be?”** The new birth is a completely spiritual transaction. That is why Jesus said to Nicodemus, **“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”** The natural man will never be able to understand such things without the help of the Comforter. Remember Nicodemus’ response of reentering his mother’s womb, and he was a *teacher* in Israel. Many teachers and preachers today also fail to understand the spiritual transaction of the new birth. The new birth is spiritually discerned, and many are not Spirit-filled.

As we continue with the way of the Spirit, I must reiterate some points. Jesus Christ was the fulfillment of the Brazen Serpent in the wilderness. Notice that God told Moses to make a “*fiery serpent*” just like the ones that were biting the people. Jesus completely identified with our sin nature on the Cross. Drawing the force of sin into Himself, Jesus carried our sins away. It may help to review the redemptive steps outlined earlier in this chapter. Because He took on our sin nature and was sacrificed for us and as us, Jesus had to go to hell. Praise God we do not have to go to hell because we have already been there and done that in the Lord Jesus. Are you starting to see why **the catch** had a specific number of “*an hundred fifty and three*” as the way of the Spirit starts to unfold? Each segment of the whole is dependent upon the other.

Let us go back to Chapter 21 of Numbers. Note that immediately following the lifting up of the brazen serpent, the people took a course that speaks of our walk of faith by the power of the Holy Spirit. Deep is calling unto deep, and the Holy Spirit is present to reveal His Word unto us.

Numbers 21:10 “And the children of Israel set forward, and pitched in Oboth.”

The first stop after repentance and looking on the Brazen Serpent, the children of Israel came to a place called *Oboth* which means *water skins*. A water skin is a vessel used for holding water, much like a wine skin. For the believer, after repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus as Savior, we are now ready to hold *water*. Just what does that mean? Perhaps we can get powerful insight from the words of our Lord in *John 7:37-39*. “*In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, ‘If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.’ (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for*

the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified).” Do you see the amazing parallel? After the new birth, the very next stop is the infilling of the Holy Spirit. We must be filled with the Spirit, otherwise we will not be able to grow spiritually. We will not be able to understand spiritual things. Jesus said He would send the Comforter or the Holy Ghost and He would lead and guide us into all truth. Friends, Truth is a Person and His Name is Jesus!

Numbers 21: 11 “And they journeyed from Oboth, and pitched at Ijeabarim, in the wilderness which is before Moab, toward the sunrising.”

From the point of our being filled with the Spirit or *Oboth*, the next place is *Ijeabarim*. It means the *ruins of Abarim*. If you are familiar with your Bible, you may remember that Abarim was the mount the Lord called Moses to in order to view the land of promised possession of the children of Israel. This place, *Ijeabarim*, or *ruins of Abarim* tell us a great deal if we have ears to hear. Ruins of the place of viewing the Promised Land speaks to the place where the believer must come to the end of all self-effort during the spiritual walk. A natural look or view will not work from this point. Our carnal views on spiritual matters must be brought to ruin as we fully embrace’s God’s view and adhere fully to it.

Everything now depends totally upon God. According to the Scriptures we are sons if we are led of the Spirit of God. We cannot be led of the Spirit and do whatever we want at the same time. God is so wonderful to put this place of spiritual growth directly after the infilling of His Spirit. The Lord is our strength. We cannot complete our spiritual journey alone, but through Christ we can do anything. Did you catch the spiritual fact that coming to the end of self is at the same time spiritual growth? In fact, it is quite a quantum leap in the Spirit for the believer. The old man or old nature was crucified with Christ, but he still tries

to run things because he trained the flesh. However, as new creatures in Christ, we have a new trainer called the inner man and he takes all of his instructions from his union with the Holy Ghost.

Numbers 21:12 KJV “From thence they removed, and pitched in the valley of Zared.”

Next we come to a place called **Zared**. It means *exuberant in growth*. Notice spiritual growth spiraled after the coming to the end of self! Bear in mind that it takes much water or Holy Spirit to grow at this rate in the ways of the Lord. Paul said to the church at Ephesus that Christ loves His church so much He gave Himself for us that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word. Exuberant growth in the Body of Christ means we are becoming glorious to Him as He desires.

Numbers 21: 13 KJV “From thence they removed, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, which is in the wilderness that cometh out of the coasts of the Amorites: for Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.”

The next stop is **Arnon**, and it means *a brawling stream*. We have determined by the Holy Spirit that water speaks to Himself. It is amazing at the number of places that mean water or some form of it during these moves. Notice how the Holy Spirit inspired every detail to be captured with each location. Here is a place where the believer must be cautious because despite the power of the Spirit, there is temptation lurking close by. **Arnon** borders **Moab**. **Moab** means *ease*. **Woe to them that are at ease in Zion!** It is also a place of famine. Remember Ruth who was a Moabitess? She left her people to follow her mother-in-law back to the Bethlehem-Judah, or the *house of bread and praise*. There, Ruth met her kinsman redeemer, Boaz,

who is another profound type of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Arnon is between *ease* and the *Amorites* who were *mountain dwellers*. Mountain dwellers should cause the believer's spiritual antennae to go up at once. A mountain is a high place and can possibly relate to the mind. During our spiritual walk, the battle is always in the mind. Think about it. The enemy's number one game plan is to talk us out of who we are in Christ or better yet, keep us from learning our true identity in Him. It is the same old game as in the Garden. Do not forget the mind is in the realm of the soul! In II Corinthians Chapter 11, Paul cautions that church of his fear that as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so their *minds* should be corrupted from the simplicity in Christ. Stay focused and centered on Christ when you come to the place **Arnon** speaks of.

Numbers 21:14-15 KJV “Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the LORD, What he did in the Red sea, and in the brooks of Arnon, And at the stream of the brooks that goeth down to the dwelling of Ar, and lieth upon the border of Moab.”

Here is the reinforcing reminder of the Holy Ghost and His power. Notice how His power takes us to the *dwelling of Ar*. **Ar** means *city*. The Psalmist (Psalm 46:4) reminds us that **“there is a river the streams whereof make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.”** Ponder a moment where the Most High God dwells. A tabernacle is a dwelling place or house for God. Scripture declares that **“Christ is a Son over His own house, whose house are we”** (Hebrews 3:6)! God is also in the midst of the city the Psalmist saw in the spirit. We shall not be moved because God will help us and that right early. His Word declares it! Alleluia! Of course, we will not move on without reminding ourselves again that **Ar** borders also **Moab** or *ease*. The elect of God would be fooled only if it were possible.

Numbers 21:16 “And from thence they went to Beer: that is the well whereof the LORD spake unto Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water.”

Beer means *a well*. Yet another place of drawing out water or even more of the Holy Spirit! Notice here the LORD commanded Moses to gather the people. This brings to mind the Feast of Tabernacles or the Feast of Ingathering (read Leviticus 23:34-44). What a harvest of souls is being realized in the earth today! Many are waiting on a move of God yet He is moving moment by moment in the power of His Spirit. Let us stop gazing up and go up in the power of the Spirit! We are no longer living but Christ lives through us!

Numbers 21:17 KJV “Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it:” One of the features of the Feast of Tabernacles is that it is a feast of joy! In *I Peter Chapter 1*, the following verses reveal the reason for such joy. ***“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.”***

Glory to God for salvation of the soul! The soul that once loathed Jesus becomes fully submitted unto Him through the power of the Holy Ghost. Soul is feminine in Scripture. David said, “My soul shall make *her* boast in the Lord.” The soul or the woman becomes submitted to her husband, the inner man or the spirit man. “She,” the soul that is, becomes the Proverbs 31 woman. She no longer has to be told to keep silent in the church. She knows her husband and he rules his house well. She is now a help meet for her husband, the inner man, who was completely saved the moment the believer said yes to Jesus!

Numbers 21:18 KJV “The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the lawgiver, with their staves. And from the wilderness they went to Mattanah:”

Mattanah means *gift or reward*. Jesus said in The Revelation, ***“And behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”*** When Jesus walked the earth in public ministry, the disciples asked Him what they must do to work the works of God. Jesus said in John 6: 29, ***“This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”*** Lord help our unbelief!

Numbers 21:19 KJV “And from Mattanah to Nahaliel: and from Nahaliel to Bamoth:”

From our reward we go to *Nahaliel* which means *valley of God*. The root meaning is *a mighty stream*. Once the Holy Ghost is received, He carries us throughout the journey. God is Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. As He spoke by the prophet Zechariah, ***“not by might nor by power but by His Spirit!”*** Jesus’ earthly ministry was so powerful because He moved in the fullness of the Spirit! We are

in this world but not of it. Ours is a life in the Spirit fueled by the resurrection power of Jesus Christ.

Bamoth means *heights*. It is a present truth that **“we are seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus”** (Ephesians 2:6), and that **“He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings of heavenly places”** (Ephesians 1:3). As sons of God, we are awakening to our inheritance which is not a natural Mid-east territory, but in the Person and Finished Work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is all in all in heaven and He shall be all in all in earth.

Numbers 21:20 KJV **“And from Bamoth in the valley, that is in the country of Moab, to the top of Pisgah, which looketh toward Jeshimon.”**

Pisgah means *a cleft*, which is a place of protection, that looked toward *Jeshimon* which means *the wilderness*. When we reflect on where it is that God has brought us from, we see the supernatural power with which we came over. Only the perfect Sacrifice could have delivered us from such an experience! Only God can get the glory as praise Him and see how the enemy was confounded and utterly destroyed on our behalf. Experience after experience teaches us His ways. He knows the make-up of the soul and what it takes to save it. His ways are not our ways. His thoughts are not our thoughts.

Continue the story if you like and see that what follows is great victory over the mountain dwellers or Amorites. **“The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.”** Again, the warfare is in the mind. That is why every thought must be brought captive unto the Lord Jesus Christ. If our thoughts do not line up with our victory, we have not put on the mind of Christ. He knows precisely what is true of us in Him and that is the way Father sees us. Yes, from Father’s view we are complete in His Son. Do you believe it?

Another important aspect of the ministry of the Holy Spirit is that He appears in and brings about unity. There is far too much division in the church today for His ministry to be in full control. The Holy Spirit desires to unveil the power of Christ’s resurrection without any restriction whatsoever.

The next aspect of the catch is *an hundred*. There is a Scripture from Hebrews that I am inspired to employ in our examination of the catch using **“an hundred”**. Hebrews 4:16 states, **“Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace in the time of need.”** I believe the fullness meant by **“an hundred”** is God’s election of grace or the fullness of the promise of the children. Grace is both prerequisite and mainstay for a time of spiritual blessing. *John 1:17* declares **“grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”** This is **the catch** in a nutshell! The fullness of Christ! Grace embodies God’s favor. God is love and His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord readmitted us back into Father’s Presence and favor through His obedience unto death, even the death of the Cross.

I believe a *hundred* points to the election of grace for these reasons. First, let us examine how the term *hundred-fold* is used in the Scriptures. It shows up first in *Genesis Chapter 26*. The first five verses set the scene as follows: **“There was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, ‘Go not down to Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and I will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; Because Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws.** Notice five things God identified as being obeyed by Abraham. Again, five denotes

grace. Continuing to a *hundredfold*, verses 12-13 read, “*The Isaac sowed in that land (Gerar) and received that same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great.*”

I took the liberty to remind you the land was *Gerar*. According to Strong’s Concordance #1641, one of the root meanings of the name *Gerar* is “*catch.*” Hallelujah! Another reminder from *John 21:11* which was quoted above is the net was full of “*great fishes*” and in *Genesis 26:13* we just saw “*the man waxed great.*” Observe “*the man*” is used instead of the name *Isaac*. This is about the many-membered Christ of God! *He that hath an ear let him hear!*

The term *hundred-fold* is seen again in the Gospels during the Parable of the Sower. That is very interesting given fact that the term *hundred-fold* shows up first when Isaac *sowed* in the land of *Gerar*. Read the entire Parable of the Sower in *Matthew 13, Mark 10 and Luke 8*.

Matthew 13:1-9 reads, “The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered together unto Him, so that He went into a ship and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And He spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold and some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

This passage from Romans 11:1-6 (KJV) magnifies the awesome *grace* of God. “*I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not the scripture saith of Elias? How he maketh intercession to God against Israel saying, ‘Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine alters; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.’ But what saith the answer of God unto him? ‘I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.’ Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.*”

The term *hundredfold* sheds great light on the term *election of grace* as used in Romans Chapter Eleven. The word used for “*election*” in Strong’s Concordance traces its root to two words (#3004 and 1537 in Greek). Used alone, *election* means *Divine selection*. The root meanings merge in the words “*origin*” or “*point when motion or action proceeds*” and “*to lay forth*” or “*relate in words usually of systematic or set discourse.*” When Jesus explained the meaning of the above parable of the Sower to His disciples in *Luke 8:11*, He defined the seed as the “*word of God.*” In my innermost being I know this is why the Word of God declares “*Lo, I come, (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do thy will O God.*” (Psalm 47:7 and Hebrews 10:7). Jesus is the Seed, the Word of God and *the catch* or the fullness brought forth as a result of His death burial and resurrection.

Hebrews Chapter Ten goes on to declare, “*He taketh away the first that He may establish the second.*” It is clear to me that throughout the Bible God had predestined or selected people

through whom He could declare and express His Thought. There were people who had absolutely no ability or credentials of their own that God used throughout the ages to confound the wise of this world. To name a few instances, the dead womb of Sarah, the inadequacy of Moses, the womb of a virgin, and yes, the resurrection of His Son, our Lord and our God! ***“Not of works!”*** This is why it is a matter of life and death to fully obey the Voice of our God and to do what He tells us in His Word! ***“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God!”*** God’s Thought for us is a hundredfold!

In the Chapter Two in our examination of the cost of discipleship, we looked at Mark 10: 28-30 which reads, ***“Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo we left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.”*** The hundred-fold blessing of our Lord is seen herein. ***Eternal life*** is in the Son!

Let us take yet another glimpse into the meaning of hundredfold. ***Mark 9:31-32*** reads, ***“For He taught His disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him; and afterthat He is killed, He shall rise the third day. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask Him.”*** The Companion Bible notes that the word ***“saying”*** is the Greek word *rhema*. Jesus Christ is the Expression of God’s full Thought. ***“The Word became flesh.”*** The Hebrew meaning of hundredfold is captured in two thoughts meaning ***“hundred”*** plus ***“to mould, shape, form or fabricate.”*** The Greek meaning of hundredfold is also captured in the two thoughts of ***“hundred”*** plus ***“measure (as a section).”*** ***“Measure”*** is from a word that means ***to split or open as a door.***

In the ***Revelation 3:7-8*** Jesus said, ***“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; ‘These things saith He That is Holy, He That is True, He That hath the key of David, He That openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth. I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name.’”***

To the church at Philadelphia, another expression of grace is seen as our Lord introduces Himself through the five named attributes. He is (1)***holy***, (2)***true***, (3)***has the key of David***, (4)***opens the door***, and (5)***shuts the door***. These are five all-encompassing points of the power of His resurrection. We shall bear the image of the heavenly in form and expression in keeping His Word and upholding His holy Name by the power of His Holy Spirit.

As we continue examining the events of ***the catch***, consider what made those particular disciples want to go fishing with Peter at once. Can you see the sovereign Hand of God moving for our learning? While Peter may have felt alone and many do at times, God is faithful to send people to encourage the work. In brief review from our last chapter, there are seven disciples altogether. We noted five were missing. In other words, grace or God’s unmerited favor was missing. This favor is available now only because Jesus went to the Cross for us and as us. Again, grace came by Jesus Christ. It is so exciting when we begin to discern what we have in our Beloved!

I wonder if Matthias’ purpose is seen herein. He was chosen to take Judas Iscariot’s place. The account is recorded in Chapter 1 of Acts. The lot fell upon Matthias. His name means ***gift of Yahweh***. Also, Mattanah, which was discussed above in the way of the Spirit also means ***gift or reward***. In revealing the mystery of Christ to the church at Ephesus that the Gentiles were

fellow-heirs of the Body and partakers in Christ by the Gospel, Paul acknowledged that he was a minister according to the *gift of the grace of God*. What a gift! This very gift of grace empowered Paul to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles.

The blessing of the gift of grace is meant to be shared. We shall do greater works because His grace is sufficient! There is something bigger than being ordinary fishermen unveiled here. The true ministry of grace from God's Perspective is **"the catch"** and the Holy Spirit of Christ is the Captain of the ship.

Continuing with the base Scripture for this bountiful catch, we read from *John 21: 12-15 KJV*. ***"Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead. So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.***

All we have to do is come and dine. The Bread of Heaven and Meat of the Word are One, Jesus Christ our Lord. We eat of Him and feed His lambs. Feed means to *provide pasture* for the lambs. Notice Jesus said "lambs" in this verse but says sheep in the following verses. **"Lamb"** means *a male lamb*. Provide pasture for My lambs. We are not ready to feed anybody until we understand the pasture is the Lamb. Jesus was the Lamb without blemish. He is called the Lamb of God, the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. Until that pasture has been provided that they were crucified with Christ; died with Christ; buried with Christ so that which now exists is a new creation, we have nothing to feed the lambs. If we love Him, we will then

feed His lambs. The term self-help ministry is an oxymoron. Any form of true ministry feeds on the Lamb and must be powered by the Holy Spirit. Men have to know we have been slain with Him, and it is Christ Who now lives in us.

John 21:16 KJV "He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep."

"Feed" in this verse now means *to shepherd*. An under-shepherd cannot shepherd the sheep of God unless he or she is in and following the great Shepherd. Once we have allowed Christ to teach God's people through us what He has done for us and as us, then we are ready to shepherd, lead, and nurture them through Him.

John 21: 17 KJV "He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep."

What is so impressive about this passage is that the word **"feed"** is the same as spoken to the lambs about. People are not going to be changed unless a picture of Christ is kept before them. The power of the Cross must be ministered. Feeding on the death is what produces His Life. Remember natural Israel? How did they "Pass over" from Egypt? They ate the Passover lamb (Exodus 12)! Feed on the dead Lamb. Again, Life comes out of this death (the death of Jesus). People want to go beyond the Cross. Adam, the fallen man, has to know that every attempt to "raise up" in any aspect of our lives that he has already been annihilated on the Cross.

The first man Adam likes to run things. It is so ridiculous for a dead man to rule in the lives of men. Yet his presence is often given away in “I,” “me,” and “my” statements, and expressions such as “because of me the ministry has thus and so.” Adam manifests illusions that can never produce life. The Cross did away with our old selfish nature. Again, it is no longer us living, but Christ living through us. Amen.

John 21: 18-21. “ Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?”

Here we find Peter concerned about what another will do. Do not worry about another’s ministry. We are all integral parts of the Body of Christ. You are meant to express Christ in this earth! What part of your body are you willing to cut off and cast away? You are probably thinking how silly and absurd that question is, but it helps us see in a different light. The point is to insure every reader is able to see your importance to the Body of Christ. Your ministry may not be “visible,” but it is needed to benefit the whole Body. God wants you! Allow Christ to be all and in all. It is in the coming together in Christ that His glory is revealed in great power.

Finally, let us briefly yet succinctly review an important fact. Only the Holy Spirit can minister unmerited favor or grace. He is the Promise of the Father. What a faithful Teacher! He is inviting you now to consider the many salutations and blessings

that include the word “grace” in the New Testament. Jesus Christ made a way into the holiest of all through His flesh for us. A new High Priest after the order of Melchizedek has gone before us. We are His Body. We are a priestly ministry that mirrors the heaven in the earth. The Holy Spirit wants to help us go on to perfection in Christ. ***One hundred fifty and three*** is the totality of perfection in Christ both Head and Body! Great mysteries are ready to be revealed unto us through the ministry of our Great High Priest. Let us follow on to know Him.

Chapter 6

Testimony

In 1998, a true servant of God once spoke into my life by the Holy Spirit. He said, *“God is strategically planting houses all over this nation that seem like they are in the day of small things, but I hear the Lord saying, Do not despise the day of small things and don’t let men despise your youth and when I say that I’m talking about the age of not so much as you physically but the ministry that’s there. And I hear the Lord saying that He’s planting and preparing because He’s got to get barns before He can bring a harvest in. Hallelujah! And I hear the Lord saying that you’ve been in a season and a time of preparation and even though you there is like a handful, Amen, I hear the Lord saying, Amen, that He’s going to cause there to be people, Amen, that you are going to get their attention and they’re going to come. As you just establish that house after the Pattern that I show you, you watch and see if I won’t do the work of bringing into you those that are not just going to be the weird and outcast and the ones that are just fly-by-night, here today and gone tomorrow, but a stable people. Hallelujah! A quality people, Hallelujah, and a people that are going to give a platform for the Word of the Lord to spread all over even over, I hear the Lord saying, the Southwest and all over that region. Amen that there is just going to be a multiplication as the Lord begins to bring multiplication in your house Hallelujah! I see God releasing something in that region, Hallelujah, like a new*

sun arising. Isn’t there something in Phoenix about the sun? I hear the Lord saying there’s a new Sun about to arise. Hallelujah! A new Sun is about to arise, Hallelujah, and a new light is going to break forth. Darkness is going to be rebuked Hallelujah! Amen! Hallelujah!” Hallelujah!” Hallelujah!” Hallelujah!” And changes are coming in that region. In the Name of Jesus we just release that. Thank You Lord, God.”

At the time, the ministry was in its infancy (only four years old) and vibrant with “the work of a night season.” Immediately mental pictures formed of building a larger building with even more people doing what was already being done. After all, we were preaching the Gospel. I knew that the message was from God, and He cannot lie. The problem was that I tailored God’s promise to my limited concept. Despite the powerful teaching anointing God had entrusted to me, I foolishly tried to frame the infinite Thought of God within my own little setting.

People were very helpful as long as they were “busy.” Auxiliaries in the ministry began to take on their own personalities. As the Word continued to come in power, I noticed some in leadership positions had difficulty focusing. Some began to rush out of service to take part in other “activities” or personal fellowships, although the Spirit was still moving. The Spirit opened my eyes to many subtle tactics of the enemy. Some leaders began to use the children’s ministry as a means to escape from the power of the Word. I focused on preaching the Gospel. No matter how people acted, I preached Christ and Him crucified. Open rebellion among leadership ensued.

Praise God for the prophetic anointing upon my husband, Paul. We had a banquet with the theme, “Walking in the Spirit.” While attending the banquet, my husband heard God say to him, “Woe to the man who does not receive this woman.” By the Spirit, both my husband and I began to see God was calling *this*

ministry unto Himself. We are not just “another ministry” but an integral part of His Bride. About a year after that banquet we were growing by the power of the Spirit Who was ministering Christ on levels we had never dreamed. My husband had the deacons remove the banquet banner that read “Walking in the Spirit” from storage and place it on constant display before the people. God began to magnify His presence in our midst and demonstrate His power as we turned to Him with all our hearts. As I came to see all things Christ-centered and self-efforts were futile, He began to minister with such power through me that it became necessary to listen to every tape to hear what was said. Rebellious hearts became increasingly more restless and distracting.

God revealed the enemy working through some of the most gifted and talented people in the ministry to my husband and me in dreams and visions. Once we were vacationing and had nearly identical dreams concerning an individual who later turned against the ministry. I was stunned as I saw the spirit of jealousy upon ones who pretended to be closest. A couple of “ministers” would cry continually as the Word came forth, but by the Holy Spirit, I could see these were not tears of joy and praise. We witnessed a scream from a realm so dark a horror movie director would have been awed by it. I knew the power of Christ was with us in full force. Demons were no longer terrorizing but were being terrorized. Many who turned against us were the very ones who seemed never able to do enough for us. We asked those leaving the ministry what had we done to offend them? Not one person could give us a specific reason for leaving. It is of a truth, God’s people will never be taken by surprise when we walk in the power of His Spirit. Witches (yes, plural), planted by satan, began to cry out especially during praise and worship and the preaching of the Cross of Christ. On two separate occasions, women, who were used of the devil to come against the ministry, actually ran from the sanctuary screaming. Surprisingly, even some “seasoned warriors” thought they were caught up in the

“spirit.” *“He that hath an ear let him hear.”*

The work of the enemy manifested through leaders as constant strife and division. One person worked tirelessly to try to isolate me and my family from every person in the ministry. People actually underestimated the Consuming Fire that God is. The power of God is in the preaching of the Gospel! The fallen man cannot stand the heat and will definitely “get out of the kitchen.” *“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. (1 John 2:19)”*

We are either in Christ or in the first man, Adam. Many believe the Anti-Christ is a natural person being raised up in the earth, but let me assure every reader, the spirit of anti-Christ is not what many have been led to believe. Anyone or anything that opposes our Beloved Christ is anti-Christ. When the fallen man continually rebels against Christ, people are blinded to the choke-hold with which wickedness has them bound. Surely, the kingdom of darkness is rebuked at the Light of Christ. The tactic was to destroy the Seed, but the wicked were purged. We are still standing in the power of God’s might.

Many other things happened; however, it is not my intention to sensationalize the reader’s attention and draw it away from God’s powerful dealings with us. One must stay in the Spirit. We became the “poison” and outcasts of the community for many. Many pastors shunned us. Others who have known us for years, refused to reach out to us. We stayed focused on the Pattern, Jesus Christ. Although I simply preached the Finished Work of Christ, I was labeled a charlatan and heretic. A concerted effort to prevent others from attending was undertaken by some who left. People judged us without even knowing us. We had tirelessly sown into lives of many who walked away without a second thought. There were precisely five (*or a handful*) of us left. Great grace!

When we felt like giving up, the Lord encouraged us to stand. One day my husband was in our back yard, and the Lord spoke to him. He came inside and told me, "I just heard God say, 'Just stand!'" Those words were confirmed a few months later through our beloved Pastor, Gary Garner, Ascension Life Ministries, Danville, Arkansas. While imparting through the laying on of hands and praying for us, Pastor Garner said by the Spirit, "*No matter how many people leave your church, you just stand!*"

We are still standing because Christ is standing in us. What a *season of preparation!* The season is for our benefit. My grandmother used to say, "God is too wise to make a mistake." The peace that kept us through it all was the powerful Presence of God. His Presence intensified more and more as the purging continued. His ways are past finding out! His presence is enough, and His grace is sufficient indeed. His strength is made perfect in weakness. Praise God for His amazing grace!

We thank our Heavenly Father for the personal lessons learned, and we continue learning daily. Most importantly, we learned to wait on the Lord and to depend wholly upon Him. We are learning the power of walking in the Spirit. There is a place where Christ becomes our very life. God has opened heaven to us and has shown us great and mighty things in His Son. We learned through this Divine season of preparation that the *letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life*. Those in tradition live by the letter, but the Bride lives by the Spirit. What a life we have in the Son! We watched God as He proceeded to do precisely what He said He would do once "self" was removed. People wanted to see His glory. His glory appeared and revealed the hearts of men. Many faded and fainted. His true followers remained.

The message of the Christ of this ministry was never meant to be contained in a local assembly. This ministry is truly a "*platform for the Word of God to spread.*" We are reaching not only our local region but this country and many parts of the world as well. It is written that God hideth His power. Effective

ministry is not necessarily televised. It is likely that many of you are more effective in the kingdom of God right now in your waiting season than many with daily television programs. In fact, ministries that have had the most profound impact upon my life and ministry were not televangelists. God strategically placed the most truly spiritual ministries in my path. By stealth God is moving in His true church, and we (His True Church) all know it.

Before closing, I must share one final point that may help the reader. Many times people are hurting physically, emotionally and/or spiritually. They seek immediate relief. Many gather unto "prophetic conferences" to get a personal prophecy. They want help and they want it now. According to The Revelation, Chapter 19:10 reads in part, "*the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus Christ.*" He is the best Word you will ever receive. Once you receive Him, you will start to express Him. In that expression, material things start to lose their luster and appeal. Every reader is encouraged to go into every situation seeking Christ. Cast down every lofty thing that exalts itself above the knowledge of Him. If He is not in the situation, you should not be there.

Early in ministry, I was allied with a non-denominational group that was actually a denomination in itself. The leader's style was abrasive and ineffective. When he ministered, there was very little Word and lots of "personal prophecy." By the Spirit, I came to recognize this style as mere religion coupled with soul power paraded as Gospel truth. Take heed when the Bible speaks of lying wonders for it is very true. What a crowd it draws! Many people are seduced and held captive while looking for help apart from Christ. The "prophecies" always centered around material things or personal "words" instead of Christ. Everything was "prophesied" from millions of dollars to kingdoms themselves. Material things were given place that only Christ deserves. From first-hand experience, be warned that the Word of God is true when it says, "*no man can serve two*

masters.”

Through it all, the most powerful and true prophecies came from true servants of God who simply encouraged the ministry with the Finished Work and simplicity of Christ. They are the prophecies that came to pass and are still coming to pass for they testify of my Beloved, the Christ of God, thereby we know they are true. As stated earlier, we must meet Melchizedek *before* we meet the king of Sodom, or we may miss our visitation. The wealth comes with Christ, and He is a treasure indeed! I praise and thank God for taking care of His Church, this ministry, my family and me. May the eternal blessings in Christ Jesus be upon every reader.

ADDITIONAL STUDIES OR MESSAGES

**BY
CAROLYN P. BYNUM**

MEDIA MINISTRY

Receive monthly CDs by Pastor Bynum. You may join this powerful world-wide audience by simply asking if you want to grow in Christ.
Email your name and address to: bynumcp@restoration-cmc.org



Pastor Bynum and her husband, Prophet Paul Bynum, Sr., oversee Restoration Christian Ministries Center, Sierra Vista, Arizona, and its outreach ministries. Please visit their website at www.restoration-cmc.org.