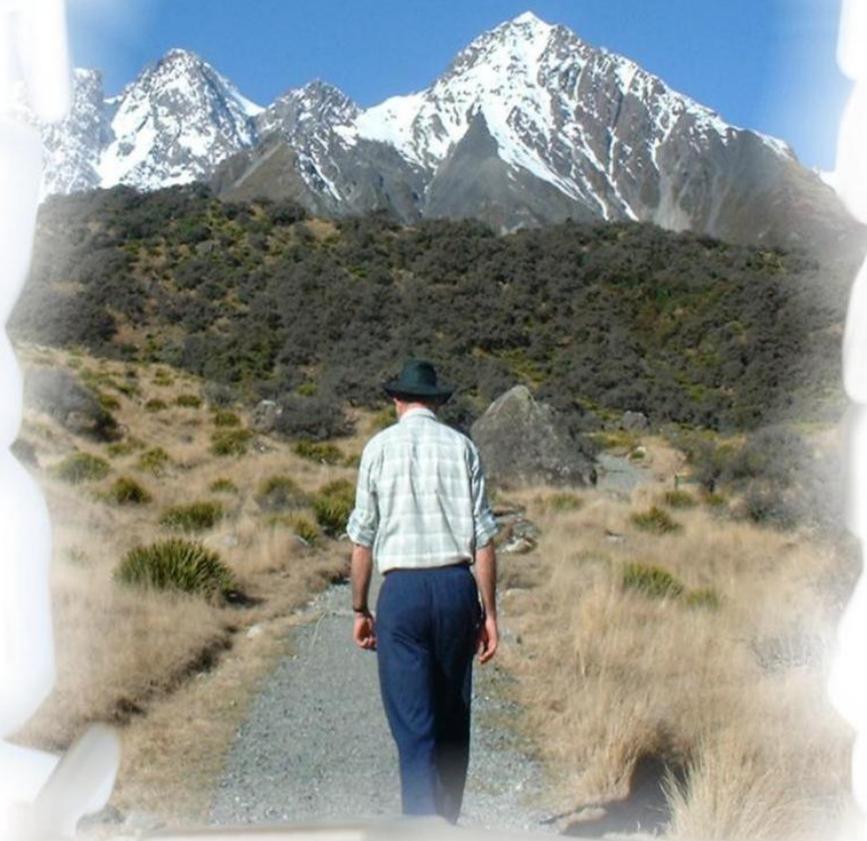


**ARE YOU CALLED
TO THE
MINISTRY?**



Rodney W. Francis

Rodney W. Francis is the Founder/Director of "The Gospel Faith Messenger", a Ministry involved in proclaiming the Gospel through tracts, books, manuals, three Bible Correspondence Courses, a Newsletter, Barnabas Bulletin, audio and video tapes, letter writing, mail counselling, International Training Schools, Seminars, preaching, Prophetic Teams and Holy Spirit Conferences.

It commenced in 1964 and has been instrumental in touching multiplied thousands of people in over 90 nations. Rodney's ministry takes him to the wider Body of Christ internationally, where he is able to impart a unique combination of the love of God and Holy Spirit giftings. He has had many years of church involvement, Pastoring, Leadership positions, Church Planting, Training Timothy's and Equipping for Leadership. More than 20 books have been written which are read in numbers of countries.

Since the commencement of the year 2000, Rodney and Jean have been full-time in "The GFM", trusting the Lord for their provision. Rodney is credentialed with the U.K. Elim Churches Incorporated (ECI) and "The GFM" Ministry.

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MINISTRY?**

By Rodney W. Francis

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This book is dedicated to all who sincerely desire to learn more from the Word of God in order to live a God-glorifying life-style, and to those who will use it to teach others the positives of God's Word in the here and now.

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INTRODUCTION

Jesus is **ALIVE** in the hearts of His people! The Holy Spirit has been given and sent to abide with us for ever (John 14:16).

Praise the Lord!

He asks that we give Him ourself, and in exchange He gives us Himself. Man could not get a better deal anywhere!

Don't you miss out on this, dear reader. The Lord Jesus is standing at the door of your heart right now, waiting for you to open to Him, to worship Him in spirit and truth; to yield your whole life to the One who gave Himself for you.

May the Spirit of the Lord rest upon you . . . the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him (Ephesians 1:17) - may it be your lot and joy always.

“Are You Called To The Ministry?” is a series of short articles written over a period of several years. They are presented with the desire that you will be able to sift from them the message that to serve God in His ministry is to be totally dedicated to whatever He has called you to do! God must be **FIRST** in our lives!

For me, there is no greater vocation in life than being called to the ministry; therefore I encourage you to fulfil all that God has purposed for you.

- **Rodney W. Francis**

NEEDED IN THIS HOUR – THE DOING OF GOD’S WILL!

MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WITHOUT CHRIST! Every where you go, multitudes of people are on the move; the majority of whom have never heard, nor believed on Jesus Christ. How can they be told? How can we reach them before it is too late?

Surely the burden for lost souls must grip our hearts more than it does at this moment! The Gospel appears to be making such little impact. What can be done?

Jesus has clearly told us that *“This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached* (“proclaimed, published”) *IN ALL THE WORLD for a witness unto ALL Nations; and then shall the end come”* (Matthew 24:14). Not only **CAN** all the world hear the Gospel, but **IT WILL** hear the Gospel.

Our responsibility is to wait on God and find His will for our life.

When His will is being done in our life, then He is able to work through us and touch the hearts of people. It is not for us to try new methods to see if they will work any better. That the need is great, there is no doubt about it. But as great as the need is, God knows the best way to reach lost humanity.

Let us wait upon Him, receive His Word for this hour, then apply it as He enables us by His Spirit. Some will plant, others will water; but it is GOD who gives the increase.

It is “***Not by might*** (not by an army), ***nor by power*** (man’s effort), ***but by My Spirit,***” says the Lord of hosts (Zechariah 4:6).

The key is knowing the mighty anointing of the Holy Spirit of God in our lives and allowing it to be released to touch mankind at his point of need.

CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS

EVERY YEAR IN THE MONTH of December millions of people think of Christmas and remember the birth of Christ. It is a major tragedy that even though the birth of the Son of God is remembered by millions, **very few know Him as He is today.** We need the revelation of Jesus in our hearts; Who **He IS** and what He can do for us in this day and generation.

Jesus is no longer the little baby in the manger, but the risen, ascended, glorified Christ of God who is seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high!

He lives!

He reigns!

“O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!”

CHRIST IS IN US

The Christian's true position is in Christ, and Christ is in us. It is a union of love and fellowship. ***“God is love, and he that loves is born of God and knows God”*** (1 John 4:7).

We are called into the fellowship of His Son (1 Corinthians 1:9). Let us, each one, shower upon the glorified Christ our love and adoration. He is worthy to be praised!

“Praise, my soul, the King of heaven!”

A TIME OF GIVING

We remember Christmas as a time of giving. But no matter how good, or how expensive our gifts may be, they are all very inferior to the great gift God gave to the world “***. . . God SO LOVED the world, that He gave His only begotten Son***” (John 3:16).

God gave because He so loved. He so loved He gave His very best – all that He had! Let us seek to be partakers with Him and “so love that we give” our all to Him.

WORSHIP IS AN EXPRESSION OF LOVE

The wise men, when they saw Jesus, fell down and worshipped Him. But they did not stop at that. We read that they opened their treasures and presented unto the Lord gifts:

“On coming to the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh” (Matthew 2:11, NIV).

Worship is an expression of love; a love that will cause us to give our most precious treasures to Jesus. This, surely, is the greatest gift to God at this time which He longs to receive from us – to see our hearts so full of His divine love and nature. That our **ALL** will be given to Him – a renewed dedication – a greater desire for His Word. For it is through the Word and by the Holy Spirit we get the

revelation of Jesus today.

WE ARE NOT OUR OWN

What I am writing here does not apply only at Christmas time, but all the year through.

The Bible says: ***“We are not our own”*** (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). When we fall in love with Jesus, we give Him the only gift acceptable in His sight, our body:

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will” (Romans 12:1-2, NIV).

We can no longer do as we please, but as He pleases. It is here where many people have failed to know the fullness of the blessings of the Christian life – our love was not great enough to make us **WANT** to lay down our will, our ambitions and desires, and surrender **ALL** to Jesus.

There is a saying which says: “If Christ is not valued above all, He is not valued at all” – and this is true. **CHRIST IS LORD** and He only takes first place!

Is He your Lord? Do you really love Him?

So much so that all of you is upon the altar of sacrifice? The altar where all flesh is burned up? Is the will of God your only desire? These are the questions that every one of us should be able to answer a positive “Yes” to.

SERVING CHRIST IS NOT A HOBBY!

Serving Christ is not a hobby – it is a life! It is not once a year, or once a week – it is every day, every moment! May Jesus be much more than a hobby to you. He is worthy of all you can give to Him. The blessings He gives are beyond anything we hold back from Him, so be encouraged to seek this wonderful Lord today, with a full surrender of your heart and will.

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, if any one desires to be my disciple, let him deny himself – that is, disregard, lose sight of and forget himself and his own interests – and take up his cross and follow Me [cleave steadily to Me, conform wholly to My example in living and if need be in dying, also].

For whoever is bent on saving his [temporal] life [his comfort and security here], shall lose [eternal life]; and whoever loses his life [his comfort and security here] for My sake, shall find life everlasting.

For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life – his [blessed] life in the kingdom of God? Or what would a man give as an exchange for his [blessed]

life in the kingdom of God?” (Matthew 16:24-26, AMP). (See also Mark 8:34-38 and Luke 14:26-35).

SAINTS WITH A MISSION

“Where there is no vision, the people perish”
(Proverbs 29:18).

THE LITERAL HEBREW OF THIS VERSE IS: ***“Without a prophetic vision the people perish.”*** “Vision” is “the ability to perceive future developments.”

Perhaps, more than ever before, Christians have need of reassuring themselves as to what their first responsibilities are with regard to God’s will for the world. We know from the Scripture that ***“God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”*** (2 Peter 3:9).

God’s supreme desire is to see men and women come to repentance! ***“Except you repent, you shall all likewise perish,”*** said Jesus (Luke 13:1-5).

SHOW THE FRUITS OF YOUR REPENTANCE

Christians are people who know the meaning and reality of repentance – and the eternal benefits of a tremendous relationship with Jesus Christ. But that relationship is not for selfish means. We have an obligation to God and the world to show forth the fruits of repentance.

“But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit

unto holiness, and the end everlasting life”

(Romans 6:22, KJV).

LOVE MOTIVATION

To find and do the will of God should be the greatest desire of our life. True love seeks to please the one loved, and Christianity is a love-relationship between the Christian and his Redeemer. Jesus said: ***“If a man loves Me, he will keep My Words”*** (John 14:23).

Jesus’ words – not his own! The Word of Jesus teaches us to do God’s will – not our own. Pursue God’s call – not our own. Now, if we know God is not willing that any should perish and also that He has commissioned His Church (which is made up of all true repentant believers) to go into all the world and preach the Gospel of repentance to every creature (Mark 16) . . . to what extent are we, personally, doing to show our love for Christ?

VISION

Does our vision for the lost show itself in seeking the salvation of them? Or are we so concerned about our own salvation that we don’t have time to consider others? **If you are living for self, you have no real vision for others.**

Let us not shrug this off with “Of course Christians are concerned for others.” Perhaps a little comparison here

will bring out what I'm trying to say:

How often in conversation with fellow Christians do you hear them talking about their problems, their lack, their wishing they had more victory, faith, etc.? In these days quite often. But how often in conversation with fellow Christians are you confronted with a burdened heart seeking ways and means of reaching the lost? Not very often.

Did Jesus come talking about all the problems He faced in becoming the Son of man, or did He come sharing and doing His Father's will? He came to do the latter.

“Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; . . .” (Proverbs 29:18, NIV).

LOVE FINDS A WAY

Many problems within Christians would not exist today if they would lay hold on God for His plans and purposes for their life and begin to get “caught-up” with doing all in their power to obey His Word.

Love finds a way!

Life is too short to be wasted on trivialities! If God has called us to reach the whole world with the Gospel, and He has, what effect are we having upon it? Let's bring this right down to an individual level: If you, as a Christian, were the only means of salvation from a burning hell, how

many – as at this moment – would there be in heaven with you?

Would there be many?

Would there be few? or

Would there be only you?

DOES IT NOT CONCERN YOU?

As much as I do not like writing these kinds of messages, yet one only has to look about him today to see the results of a failing Church. Especially in our westernised countries, where we have become so materialistically minded, is this obvious. Our people have become ***“lovers of pleasures (and treasures) more than lovers of God”*** (2 Timothy 3:4). Does this not concern you, Christian?

WHY SIT WE HERE UNTIL WE DIE?

Don't you know that God longs to use **YOU** to win others into His Kingdom?

You are a “special” person with a “special” mission to accomplish.

Get a vision for it – and then put that vision into reality.

Be like those four leprous men in the Bible who questioned their own inactions because of their leprosy. They said: ***“Why sit here until we die?”*** (2 Kings 7:3). They

did something about themselves – they got up and went to the camp of the Syrians and found great spoils.

THE LORD HAS NEED OF YOU

If we sit around and leave the command of winning the lost to others, the job will never be done. The Lord has saved you because He has need of you. Get a God-given vision of His plan for your life and then do what He has ordained you to do:

“I demand that you love each other as much as I love you. And here is how to measure it – the greatest love is shown when a person lays down his life for his friends; and you are My friends if you obey Me. I no longer call you slaves, for a master doesn’t confide in his slaves; now you are My friends, proved by the fact that I have told you everything the Father told Me. You didn’t choose Me! I chose you! I appointed you to go and produce lovely fruit always, so that no matter what you ask for from the Father, using My name, He will give it to you. I demand that you love each other” (John 15:12-17, TLB).

DON’T BE PUT OFF!

We can be overly concerned about matters of finance, inflation, transport, education, etc. Remember that Christian missionaries around the world are confronted with these problems too – possibly much more than you are, and in a strange country. But they have chosen to serve God first and will reap the rewards of their Master.

The burden of the Word of the Lord constrains them to sacrifice and suffer and carry on. Are we going to let a few problems put us off demonstrating our love for the Lord? Surely not!

TOGETHER WE CAN DO IT!

These are days when we must, together, put our all into the will and work of God and give the whole world a mighty witness of their only Saviour, Jesus Christ.

It can be done

It must be done

It shall be done . . .

As we take up the challenge of the Word and proclaim liberty to the captives!

Can God count on you and me to co-operate with Him in this humanly impossible – but divinely possible – task?
If you love Him He can!

**“God’s got an army
Marching through the land,
Deliverance is their song
With healing in their hand;
Everlasting joy
And gladness in their heart –
And in this army
I’ve got a part.”**

LOOK ON THE FIELDS

(John 4:35)

*“Look, the fields are white to harvest,
Fields of precious ripened grain,
Waiting for the great ingathering,
Yet the labourers few remain.”*

*Listening to these words of Jesus,
Do we wonder what they mean?*

*Do we see a natural harvest,
Fields of corn that once were green?*

*No! – for as with eyes anointed
Looking on that vision wide –
We can see in countless numbers
Precious souls for whom He died.*

*This is then the glorious harvest
That His yearning heart desires;
Let us hasten to the reaping
With the zeal His love inspires!
– F. D. Walker (England).*

What is your vision? How are you responding? Are you prepared to rise to the challenge of helping to bring in the harvest? You are called to the ministry!

“SEEING YOUR DIVINE POTENTIAL”

GOD SEEKS MEN AND WOMEN TODAY who will be prepared to really believe what He says; to believe the promises of our being new creations in Christ Jesus His Son.

Through the Word – and by the quickening of the Holy Spirit – He wants us to see the divine potential He has placed within us. The divine potential as to what God can really do through us when we give ourselves to Him in total surrender.

OUR GOD IS A BIG GOD

God is the God of the supernatural! For too long we have, in general, limited God to the natural. He is **BIGGER** than what our tiny minds tell us! He is as **BIG** as His Word declares. And what does His Word declare?

“Behold I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for Me?” (Jeremiah 32:27, (KJV).

WHY DO WE NEED TO SEE OUR DIVINE POTENTIAL?

Because only the work in our lives that is “born of God” shall stand for all eternity. There is no divine potential in the works of the flesh – we must have much more than fleshly efforts, which are only ***“a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof”*** (2 Timothy 3:5). This type of person has no vision, purpose or goal for life; living only from one day to the next according to the dictates of the world.

God has called us to be a different people; a people whose one aim in life is to please the Lord through the divine potential He has placed within us.

It is a tragic thing to limit God in our lives. To limit Him from being Who He is, and Who He wants to be, within our hearts. The great reality and experience of Christianity is the truth of the word:

“CHRIST IN YOU, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). Jesus Christ **IS IN** every true believer! See the divine potential of it!

BELIEVE JESUS

Jesus said:

“If you can believe, all things are possible to him that believes” (Mark 9:23)!

Jesus said:

“Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believes on Me, the works that I do shall he DO ALSO; and GREATER WORKS Than these shall he DO; because I go unto My Father” (John 14:12 KJV).

Jesus said:

“And these signs shall follow them that believe; in My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover” (Mark 16:17-18, KJV).

Jesus said these things and Jesus now lives in you.

Not one of the above Scriptures make mention that these promises are only to certain ministries, apostles, prophets, preachers, pastors, etc., but to those who **BELIEVE ON HIM!**

Yes, Jesus was speaking of the divine potential of those who believe.

Has Christ changed? Are we living in a different dispensation?

No! No! A thousand times, No!

Jesus is always the same – He never changes (Hebrews 13:8). His promises still hold true to those who truly believe what the Scriptures say!

KNOW GOD

“The people that do KNOW their God shall be strong, and do exploits” (Daniel 11:32).

The best way to get to know God is to agree with His Word – to **BELIEVE** what He says. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2).

To realise our divine potential we need to be filled with God’s Holy Spirit. His Word exhorts us to ***“be filled with the Spirit”*** (Ephesians 5:18).

“The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life” (2 Corinthians 3:6 NIV) . . . and ***“the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God”*** (Ephesians 6:17).

The Holy Spirit opens our eyes to behold more of the divine potential we have in God which, in turn, challenges us to exercise our faith and ***“launch out into the deep”*** (Luke 5). When Peter did that he caught a great mass of fish!

GIDEON

Gideon was visited by an angel of the Lord and, after proving God, led Israel to a mighty victory over the Midianites (Judges 6 & 7). He saw his divine potential and did something about – and with – it! And God worked with him!

JONATHAN

Jonathan realised that his **BIG** God did not have to have a great number of people in order for Him to work. He put God to the test and brought victory to Israel over the Philistines. Only two men! But Jonathan had seen his divine potential in God (1 Samuel 14:1-18). And God worked with him!

ELIJAH

Elijah, *“a man subject to like passions as we are”* (James 5:17), so believed in the Word of his God that he crippled a nation, and brought it to repentance, exposing the false, religious prophets of his day. He saw his divine potential (1 Kings 17 & 18). And God worked with him!

THE THREE HEBREW CHILDREN

The three Hebrew children became an open spectacle because they refused to bow down to idolatry. Through their publicly confessed faith in God they were miraculously delivered from the fiery furnace.

They wouldn't bow, they wouldn't bend, and they wouldn't burn! The result was the changing of the laws of a nation. They saw their divine potential (Daniel 3). And God stood with them to deliver them!

PETER

The Apostle Peter was greatly used of God to bring

deliverance to the captives. Many miracles of healing took place during his ministry. The dead were raised, palsies cured, cripples walked. Even his shadow was used to bring healing and help to many (Acts 5:15-16). He even walked on the water! (Matthew 14:29). Peter saw his divine potential and exercised it. And God worked with him!

PHILIP

Philip, a wise man full of the Holy Ghost, was serving at widow's tables. He saw his divine potential and went down to Samaria, where he preached Christ unto the people (Acts 6 & 8:5-8). In his simplicity he moved a city for God. And God worked with him!

WE MUST DARE TO BELIEVE

The Bible is full of these "happenings." For any Christian to deny these things is really an open confession of unbelief – and the promises of Jesus only apply to those who believe.

Today the need is tremendous. God is longing to meet that need. But the only way He can do it is through men and women who will see their divine potential. We must dare to believe God's Word to us. He will work with us!

The men mentioned in this article are great examples of what can be accomplished in your life. God's Word gives us an even greater example: **Jesus Christ His Son**. As great as those men were, **we, today, are called to be like Jesus . . . to follow in**

His steps. Think about this! What tremendous potential – divine potential! AND JESUS LIVES WITHIN US!

HOW ABOUT YOU?

My dear friend, do you really believe God's promises to you? Have you seen the divine potential of your believing and are practising it? God will not fail you. He's with you where you are to give you all the enabling you need – just act upon your believing. Do what He says you can do through the authority He has given. Know in reality that through His divine power we have been given all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Jesus, and that great and exceeding precious promises are given us that we might be partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:1-4). His divine nature!

What potential is yours!

May we all in these days be seeing an outworking of these promises as we endeavour to release more of the divine potential God has placed within us through His Word. God bless you mightily as you release the divine potential within!

SPEAK THE WORD

“For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12, KJV.).

HOW OFTEN CHRISTIANS FAIL TO REALISE the power that the Word of God contains! There is nothing more powerful than God’s living, active Word. He spoke the Word and the Universe was created... ***“And all things that therein are”*** (Genesis 1); and today is ***“upholding all things by the Word of His Power”*** . . . By Christ Jesus (Hebrews 1:1-3).

“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the Word of the Lord endures forever” (Matthew 24:35 & I Peter 1:25).

JEREMIAH

God, speaking through the Prophet Jeremiah says: ***“Is not My word like fire? Declares the Lord; and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?”***

In the verse before this, He says: ***“but let the one who has My word speak it faithfully . . .”*** (Have YOU got

God's Word? There are many words and voices around today, but they are not all God's Word).

“And he that has My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? says the Lord” (Jeremiah 23:28-29, KJV.).

“Wherefore thus says the Lord God of hosts, Because you speak this Word, behold, I will make My Words in your mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them” (Jeremiah 5:14, KJV.).

So many say, “I cannot speak, I am not able to testify . . .” God never told us that. Jeremiah himself tried to use that excuse, but it didn't work with the Lord. **God put His Words in Jeremiah's mouth!** (Jeremiah 1:4-9).

MOSES

Moses tried the same excuse and was met with a rebuke from God.

“Who has made man's mouth? . . . Have not I the Lord? . . . I will be with your mouth” (Exodus 4:10-12 KJV.).

“And Moses said to the Lord, O Lord, I am not eloquent or a man of words, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant, for I am slow of speech, and have a heavy and awkward tongue. And the Lord said to him, Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Is it not I,

the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth, and will teach you what you shall say (Exodus 4:10-12, AMP.).

YOU AND ME

So often we fail to realise just how close the Word of God is to us.

“But what says it? The Word is near you, even in your mouth, and in your heart: that is, the Word of faith, which we preach; That if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved” (Romans 10:8-9).

If this is the Bible way of salvation (and it is), then how much more important it is for us to keep our salvation by confessing Jesus and believing His Word!

One of the main reasons why Christians “dry up” in their experience is because they do not tell others of Jesus. We fail to open our mouth and speak **the Word**. Paul said to Timothy: ***“Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season”*** (2 Timothy 4:2). Jesus said, ***“You shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you and you shall be witnesses unto Me . . . even to the uttermost part of the earth”*** (Acts 1:8 KJV.).

The Word can take you anywhere and everywhere!

THE WORD OF JESUS

We have no greater example of speaking the **Word** than that of Jesus Himself. After He had finished preaching the sermon on the mount, the people were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as all the scribes and religious leaders (Matthew 7:28-29).

When Jesus rebuked an unclean devil in a man in the synagogue, and the devil came out of him, the people were all amazed and said: ***“What a Word is this! for with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out”*** (Luke 4:33-37).

At the **Word** of Jesus, Peter let down his net and caught fish, in spite of the fact that he had toiled all night and caught nothing (Luke 5:1-11).

When Jesus spoke to the multitudes He preached the **Word** unto them (Mark 2:2).

At the **Word** of Jesus the blind received their sight, the dumb were made to talk, the lame were made to walk, the devils were cast out.

At the **Word** of Jesus men and women were set free – and still are today.

Because Jesus so preached and exalted the **Word**, the people had faith to receive the answers to their needs.

“Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Romans 10:17).

The Centurion came to Jesus on behalf of his sick servant:
“Lord, I am not worthy for you to come to my house, but speak the Word only and my servant shall be healed.”

The result was that the servant was healed in the self-same hour (Matthew 8:5-13, Psalm 107:20).

To those who want to be disciples, Jesus says:

“If you continue in My Word, then are you My disciples indeed; And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31-32).

My Christian Brother and Sister, let me exhort you to **speaK the Word – to preach Jesus**. ***“The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God”*** (Ephesians 6:17). **God’s Word** never returns to Him void (Isaiah 55:11). When you and I speak the **Word of God** in the anointing of the Holy Spirit, it **will** always accomplish something good, whether visible or invisible – but never will it return unto the Lord void! **And that Word is in your mouth!**

THE WORD BURNS WITHIN

The Word of God is a fire, and it burns. When Jesus preached the **Word** unto the two on the road to Emmaus, they said their hearts **burned** within them (Luke 24:32). When Jeremiah become discouraged, the **Word** of the Lord was so much in his heart that it **burnt** within him.

He said, ***“But His Word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay”*** (Jeremiah 20:9). That’s an experience you and I need continually. ***“Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly”*** (Colossians 3:16).

THE WORD IS TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE

God has chosen by the preaching of the **Word** to save those who will believe (1 Corinthians 1:17-31). If we do not open our mouths to witness and speak **His Word**, how can the people believe? (Romans 10:14).

- ***“Say not, I am a child”*** (Jeremiah 1:4-8).
- ***“See, this day, I have put My Words in your mouth”*** (Jeremiah 1:9).
- ***“The Word is near you, even in your heart and mouth”*** (Romans 10:8-9).
- ***“The Word is quick and powerful”*** (Hebrews 4: 12).
- ***“Is not My Word like as a fire? Says the Lord; and like a hammer that breaks the rock into pieces?”*** (Jeremiah 23:29).

Speak the Word – Confess Jesus! If you are saved you have the Word:

“Being born again . . . by the Word of God which lives and abides forever” (1 Peter 1:23).

Let us not doubt the Word of God, but believe it. ***“And as***

you go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely you have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:7-8). ***“These signs shall follow them that believe*** (The Word).”

Those early disciples travelled everywhere – preaching the Word. How do we know they preached the Word? Because the Lord went with them, confirming the Word, with signs following (Mark 16:15-20). If God does not confirm the Word we preach, then there is something wrong with our preaching – or us . . . not God! Preach the Word – confess Jesus Christ.

May the Holy Spirit use this word of exhortation to bless and stir our hearts in a mighty way. May our eyes be opened to behold the potential of the living Word of God at work within us right now – that Word which is sufficient to conquer every foe that would dare rise up to prevent us from being exactly what God has ordained that we should be! Speak the Word . . . release it, and you will be released into a new realm of authority in your Christian experience. Amen.

WHAT IS YOUR VISION?

THIS MAY SEEM TO BE somewhat of a direct question, but one nevertheless that needs to be faced, as well as positively answered.

It is so easy to follow the crowd, but if any of us are ever going to accomplish anything effective in life, then it is most important that we define our vision and actively work towards the fulfilling of it. The Bible declares, *“Where there is no vision, the people perish”* (Proverbs 29:18), and this is so true. This statement is a two-sided one; for if we Christians do not have a vision that is in harmony with the will of God, then not only will others perish, but we will perish also – in the area of fulfilment, fruitfulness and service.

What is your vision? Is it to reach a world – lost in sin and bound with Satanic deception – with the glorious news of the risen Jesus? Or, is our vision so small that we cannot see beyond our own personal, daily needs and have not time or real interest in the needs of humanity? **Unless the Church’s vision can rise to that which Jesus gave us – a world vision – we are missing the mark and will fail to achieve the full potential He has given us through the Holy Spirit.**

Let us not be slack in the area of our responsibility to others.

Remember. ***“God so loved the world*** (not just you and me), ***that He gave His only begotten Son*** (His very best), ***that whosoever believes on Him*** (that includes all, irrespective of race, colour or creed – not just you and me), ***should not perish*** (does it really concern you that multitudes today are perishing? – going to hell!), ***but have everlasting life***” (we who know Christ have everlasting life – what if **WE** were perishing and headed for everlasting death? We would love to have the opportunity to be saved!) (John 3:16).

May the burden of the Father-heart of God as revealed in John 3:16 cause each one of us to see our world today in the light of eternity.

This will help us to clarify our vision, which in turn will inspire us to give ourselves wholeheartedly to it. The result will be a new thrusting forward for the cause of Christ in our generation.

“He that goes forth and weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him” (Psalm 126:6).

And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them. Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the

next day to Neapolls; And from there to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a riverside, where prayer was expected to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women who resorted there. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, who worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, if you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there. And she constrained us” (Acts 16:9-15).

DO YOU HAVE A VISION? What is the vision of your life? Where are you going from here? We need to be able to individually answer these questions to our own heart's satisfaction. God has not called us to be “accidents going somewhere to happen.” He wants us to be people of vision, purpose and direction. Having got a vision, how do you fulfil it?

10 WAYS TO FULFIL A VISION

I would like to share with you 10 different things the Apostle Paul did in order to fulfil the vision God had given to him.

“Where there is no vision, the people perish” the Bible declares (Proverbs 29:18). People are perishing because in many respects they have never seen the impact of our

vision. And if we don't have a vision, then we will eventually perish also.

We must have a vision because a vision is life-giving. Especially a vision that is born in our heart of God.

Paul had a vision: what we know as "the Macedonian call."

Where was Paul when the vision came? Well, he was in quite a nice little place called Troas, right by the sea-side, maybe a little holiday resort.

But this man was also looking to God: "Where do You want me to go from here?"

And the vision came - "Come over to Macedonia and help us. Macedonia wasn't down the next street. It wasn't even just out of the city. It was right across the seas in another land altogether.

God gave to Paul a large vision!

What do you do when you get a vision?

Do you run around being a visionary?

Do you jump on a boat or an aeroplane and become a missionary?

God wants us to be able to fulfil the vision.

You can't fulfil a vision if you haven't got one.

Let God give you a vision. I have a vision. And the same principles that applied to Paul fulfilling his vision apply to every one of us with the vision we have from God. What are those ten principles?

1. IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

First of all it will mean change. To fulfil a vision you cannot sit where you are, doing the things you have been doing up until now. What was the first thing Paul did when he got the vision?

“Immediately,” verse 10 tells us, ***“he endeavoured to fulfil it”***

Immediately. What does that mean? It means that immediately he set about with cutting his links, his responsibilities with the place he was already at. To fulfil it he was going to have to loose himself from all the responsibilities that he had to Troas. And immediately he set about this because now in his heart he had a call and a vision that the next place was to be Macedonia.

2. KNOW THE VISION IS OF GOD

Secondly, he was assured that the vision was the call of God. This is important. How do you know your vision is of God? You can know. God can speak through His Word. God can answer your prayers. The Holy Spirit can speak to your heart and cause you to know and to understand that which is come into ***for to preach the Gospel unto them”***.

The Christian vision must always involve the on-going preaching of the Gospel. We must always put the preaching of the Gospel in the forefront of our spiritual vision, because without the preaching of the Gospel the people will perish.

God wants us to always have a great emphasis on the preaching of the Word of God. It is Good News!

4. CUT OFF THE HINDRANCES

Fourthly, what did he do? He then cut off his ties with the present place he was at. How many times do we hear people say they have had the call of God and allow circumstances, homes, jobs, family . . . so many things to get in the way? The vision is hindered and the vision dies.

Christian, in these days we have to learn to hold onto this world's goods lightly. To hold onto the possessions of this life with an open hand, so that if God wants them, He gets them.

So many people miss God because they cannot cut the ties with the things that hold us back from moving on in God.

5. A STRAIGHT COURSE

Fifthly, we read in Verse 11: ***“we came with a straight course.”*** Is that the kind of life we live? We have a vision, our eyes are upon it and nothing is going to side-track us? Nothing is going to cause us to waiver! We have a vision in our life that is born of God and, with a straight course, we are pursuing it. That's the type of life-style that we need to have. Having a straight course!

God wants us to have the excitement of a vision being outlived and fulfilled within each of our lives. We are going somewhere in God! And God will not leave us,

nor forsake us, nor let us down. He has set a straight course for us in order that we may fulfil His vision.

6. THEY CONTINUED TO PRAY

Sixthly, as they were fulfilling the vision, they continued to pray. It was not a time to give up and say, "What's the use? God doesn't seem to answer any more." Keep praying! Keep believing!

It is as we are moving in God, as we are going forwards endeavouring to fulfil the vision, that we find God answers prayer. God will release what we need to fulfil the vision because, remember, the vision is His more than yours or mine. God will stand behind His Word to back it up. Don't lose sight of the need to pray.

7. THEY CONTINUED TO WITNESS

Seventhly, they continued to witness. They continued to share their testimony. They continued to share Jesus with other people. That's the life of a Christian, to be able to open your mouth and to witness to others of what Jesus has done for you. Very important we see in verse 13: ***"And as we sat down and spake to the women who resorted there,"*** the result was a baptismal service.

They witnessed effectively.

They witnessed with purpose.

They witnessed with results.

God wants us to be people like that, where our vision produces results.

8. GOD TOUCHES HEARTS

The eighth point was that as they went forward to fulfil the vision, God touched hearts. God touches hearts today. Whatever we need to fulfil the vision, God can touch hearts to do it. God will supply the needs and, because God touches hearts, we can be assured that souls will be saved and baptized.

Even in jail they continued to fulfil the vision. They continued to see souls saved and baptized. Nothing stands in the way when we obey God!

9. OPPOSITION TO THE VISION

Ninthly, with any vision there will be opposition. We need to be aware of this. There will always be opposition to the fulfilling of the vision of God.

It will come from people who are not saved and it will come from people who are saved. It will come from those who are jealous and it will come from those who do not understand. It will come; that is why we need to know that the vision is born of the Lord.

Pursue the vision with a straight course, otherwise you will find that opposition and persecution will discourage you; and if you get discouraged the vision will die. That must not be allowed to happen. We must get beyond the stage where we are easily offended and put off because of what other people say when we know that we are fulfilling

the vision of God. God will test us as we seek to fulfil it, make no mistake about that. But I tell you – God gets the glory out of the end result. Hallelujah!

10. CHURCHES ARE ESTABLISHED

The tenth thing that happened with Paul fulfilling the vision was that other churches were established. There is a great need for churches to be established in God; that people can see and sense and feel the security of the church that is established, rooted and grounded in the faith of Jesus Christ. A strong church will protect the weak; it will shelter those that are failing, and it will strengthen them and minister life to them and build them up. **This is the purpose of the vision: to establish people in God.**

All around us there are people who are hurting. There are people who are defeated. There are people who are sad. There are people who are living a lie. And they will continue to live like that until we demonstrate to them a better way.

When others come into your presence they should feel your strength and security. If they are lost in sin they should feel that somehow, you have got the answer to their problem. All because the vision of JESUS burns within your spirit.

HAVE A VISION THAT SEES PEOPLE DELIVERED FROM SATAN'S POWER

“But rise, and stand on your feet for I have appeared unto you for this purpose, to make

you a minister and witness both of these things which you have seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto you; delivering you from the people. . .”

(So many don't fulfil a vision because they are afraid of the people. God delivers us from the fear of man).

“Delivering you from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send you, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them who are sanctified by faith that is in Me.”

Your vision can bring people to the saving, secure place in Jesus Christ where you are. This is the purpose of the vision going forth in our lives. ***“Whereupon I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.”*** (Acts 26:16-19, KJV.).

It was the heavenly vision in the heart of Paul that motivated him to press on beyond all the odds, caused him to overcome, and to fulfil the will of God for his life. The result was that not only were other individuals established, but whole churches were planted and established because God found a man who was obedient to the heavenly vision.

SIMPLE OBEDIENCE

Nowhere in all this does it tell us that we have to go off for years and study it.

Nowhere does it tell us that we have to have anything else but simple obedience.

GOD WANTS US TO OBEY!

God wants us to so live that if He were to speak to us today and to say, "I want you to go or to do such and such a thing," you would be able to say, "Lord, yes I will." There is no substitute for the will of God. None whatever. God wants us to fulfil the vision! How?

Let's sum up how to fulfil a Godly vision:

- 1) Immediately let us set about to fulfil it.
- 2) Be assured that the vision is of God.
- 3) Know that it is for the furtherance of the Gospel.
- 4) Cut off all ties that are going to prevent you from fulfilling that vision.
- 5) Set a straight course and don't be dissuaded. Head after the vision.
- 6) Continue to pray and uphold it before God so that God can keep it alive in your own heart and life.
- 7) Continue to witness. Any vision of God should make us want to witness more.
- 8) Rest assured that God will touch hearts as you fulfil the vision.
- 9) Know that there will be opposition. ***"Beware when***

all men speak well of you” the Bible says (Luke 6:26).

10) Finally, know this, that in the fulfilling of the vision of God we can see people and churches established to the glory of God.

These points are important enough to repeat:

Immediately let us set about to fulfil it.

Be assured that the vision is of God.

Know that it is for the furtherance of the Gospel.

Cut off all ties that are going to prevent you from fulfilling that vision.

Set a straight course and don't be dissuaded. Head after the vision.

Continue to pray and uphold it before God so that God can keep it alive in your own heart and life.

Continue to witness. Any vision of God should make us want to witness more.

Rest assured that God will touch hearts as you fulfil the vision.

Know that there will be opposition. ***“Beware when all men speak well of you”*** the Bible says (Luke 6:26).

Finally, know this, that in the fulfilling of the vision of God we can see people and churches established to the

glory of God.

Is this the kind of vision that you are a part of?

Are you called to the ministry?

That's what God has laid hold on your life for. With all your heart seek to fulfil His vision/will for your life.

MY WILL OR GOD'S – WHICH?

“Teach me to do Your will; for You are my God; Your Spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness” (Psalm 143:10).

“If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself” (John 7:17).

THE PROMISES OF THE SCRIPTURES to those who receive and believe on the Lord Jesus are surely very great, and present a challenge to our hearts to “press on” and prove the reality of them. To enable the promises to become reality within our lives we have to do our part and give ourselves to walking in the way of God’s Word. That means more than an acknowledgement that the Bible is true – more than going to church – more than our giving to charitable organisations. In the Person of Christ God gave Himself for our redemption – He gave all – He gave His very best. Not one of us who confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour should want to give less to Him who died for us.

We would be failing God in our calling if we did not proclaim the absolute necessity of a complete surrender to the will of God. Many have failed to prove the power and blessings of the Gospel because they have

not continued on to “lay down their life” **after** accepting the Lord Jesus as Saviour. Our concept of what Christianity is, is wrong if we think we can have salvation, be pleasing to God and at the same time allow our life to be taken up in the doing of **our own will**. Jesus laid aside His will for the Father (and for us):

He said, **“Not My will, but Yours be done”** (Luke 22:42). If we expect to receive the full benefits of the New Covenant, then we, too, will have to come to the same place of laying aside our will, our plans and ambitions for the sake of the Master.

Jesus said, **“You seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you”** (Matthew 6:33). **“GOD FIRST”** must be more than a motto – indeed a reality! There will be battles – be sure about that – for the true Christian path is a spiritual warfare fighting against wicked spiritual powers (Ephesians 6:10-20); pulling down the strongholds of Satan (2 Corinthians 10:4-5); and holding forth the Word of Life (Philippians 2:15-16). If we are doing our own will, then we surely will not be found fighting the spiritual warfares of life – and we will be ignorant of the true victories of life.

The Gospel of Christ must be allowed to minister in the realm of our will, for it is there that the greatest hindrances to Christian growth lie. While we are occupied in the living out of our own will we are unable to produce fruit that will endure for time and eternity. God cannot be glorified through the life we live – for He is glorified only when our lives bear much fruit (John 15:8).

WE CANNOT HAVE THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

If we are trying to get the best of both worlds (the Christian life and the worldly life), then we are going to be very disappointed. Jesus told us we cannot serve two masters, for we cannot be loyal to both (Matthew 6:24). A will not placed on God's altar will make us serve two masters and the result of that will be a life void of the true anointing of the Holy Spirit. May the deep conviction of the Word of God be in each of our hearts, that we shall always be willing to allow the will of the Lord to be done - and that we will not hinder God from having His own way in every area of our being.

WE NOW BELONG TO GOD

We rightfully belong to God, and it is His desire to possess us through and through - that through our transformed lives He might show forth His love and power to a world lost in trespasses and sin. I certainly do not want to stand before God on Judgment Day guilty of not allowing God to be glorified in me because I was not willing to allow Him to break my own selfish will so He could use me in His own divine will. These are days when we need to take stock of ourselves, so let us not treat God's Word lightly. Let us yield our lives completely to His service that He might use us, each one, as never before. He is still seeking people who are usable, whose lives are on the altar and in subjection to that which God has willed for us. The future is as bright as the promises of God to all those who will go God's way, and who at all times seek to do His will.

“For whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother” (Matthew 12:50).

“I delight to do Your will, O my God: yes, Your law is within my heart” (Psalm 40:8).

My will, or God's - which will it be?

My will, or God's - who will win?

The real battle in life is the battle of the will. Let it be won to the glory of God!

NEEDED: THE ANOINTING!

DOWN THROUGH THE AGES of Christian history the “success” of ministers and ministries has been dependent upon the enabling power of the Holy Spirit – the anointing. Yet, strangely, it is too often the only thing missing among us! The Church has no shortage of learned, talented people. Ideas and knowledge abound. Churches and their programmes are very impressive. But all these things are not enough to fulfil the purpose of God if there is no anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Even “Spirit-filled” people can become so “mechanical” in their ministry and exercising of the gifts of the Spirit if it does not flow in the realm of the anointing. This does not meet the needs! We must have the anointing! The church stands or falls according to how much anointing of the Spirit it has!

A STRIPPING DOWN

God is dealing with His people today with a specific purpose in mind. All those who have a real heart desire to do His will are being stripped of all those things that have acted as alternatives and excuses to the anointing being manifested through us. ***“No flesh can glory in His presence”*** (1 Corinthians 1:26-29).

The Prophet Jonah is a fine example of God’s dealings with His anointed servant – the more he was stripped of

himself, the more the Lord was glorified through him.

IT IS THE ANOINTING THAT FULFILS GOD'S PURPOSES

It needs to be made very clear that in no way can any child of God totally accomplish the eternal purposes of God without the anointing of the Holy Spirit – God's enabling ability to accomplish supernaturally through us, all He promises in His Word.

The anointing is more than being able to speak in tongues or to testify of an experience that took place, one, two, five, ten or forty years ago.

The call of God can never be fulfilled in our natural strength. God's call is always a supernatural call. It is a mistake for Christians to think that natural ability automatically makes it our Christian calling in God. Yet, because the anointing of the Holy Spirit is not experienced or taught as it ought to be (often through ignorance; other times just plain unbelief and fear of the supernatural) people have no choice but to depend on their own talents and qualifications. That is a tragedy.

The very purpose of Pentecost was that the disciples who had been taught by Jesus would so know the power of the anointing of the Holy Spirit to fulfil His call in their lives. It was not enough for them to know how He did things. They needed that anointing to do what He told them.

This pattern has not changed. You will never accomplish anything worthwhile that will last for time and eternity without that anointing which comes from Jesus. And nor will I!

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

The writer's personal experience of being a **"Spirit-filled"** Christian for over 35 years is that too much of that time has been wasted through not abiding in the anointing like one should have. So many good intentions and zealous efforts have come to nothing because one did not wait on the anointing. On the other hand I also know what it is to move in the power of the Holy Spirit and see God working wonderfully. What a mighty difference there is between preaching a sermon and delivering an anointed Word to the people God sends you to – and seeing God confirming that Word supernaturally. Only the anointed Word meets the needs. ***"The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life"*** (2 Corinthians 3:6, NIV). (We should meditate much upon the message of 2 Corinthians 3).

Preacher friend, are you killing your congregation, or are you ministering the life of God to their needs? **God hasn't called us to kill them with sermons, but to transform them by the power of the Holy Ghost!**

STUDY THE WORD OF GOD

The anointed ministry in the early Church was one of divine direction, authority and results. Study, for example, the conversion of Saul and the way God used Ananias to minister to him (Acts 9). Saul became the great Apostle Paul. (See also Acts 22:1-21 and Acts 26:7-23).

In Acts 8 we read of Philip's mighty revival in Samaria and then being sent out into the desert by the Holy Ghost to minister to one Ethiopian eunuch. That was the start of the Gospel going to Ethiopia.

It took the anointing of the Holy Ghost to turn the Apostle Peter's attention to the Gentiles. By divine guidance God brought Peter and Cornelius together; the result being an outpouring of the Holy Spirit ***"on all them who heard the Word."*** The divine anointing made them to ***"magnify God"*** (Acts 10:44,46). (The whole chapter should be read).

THE ANOINTING IS THE POWER

The plans of God are accomplished through the anointing. Jesus told His disciples they would receive ***"power after the Holy Ghost was come upon them"*** (Acts 1:8).

The anointing releases the power. The anointing is the power.

“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him” (Acts 10:38 KJV).

The anointing manifests the presence of God and reveals **“God is with us”** – He confirms His Word when it is ministered in the power of the Spirit.

Let us, each one, seek at all times to know the anointing of the Spirit – to live and walk in that realm. The Bible tells us ***“the anointing which we have received of Him abides in us”*** (1 John 2:27). But **WE** must learn to abide in that anointing!

THE POWER MUST BE WORKING!

That power must not lie dormant within us. It must be released to fulfil the purpose of God. Look at the tremendous promises of Ephesians 1:17-19, 3:7, 16-20, and Colossians 1:27-29. The anointing power of the Holy Spirit must be **WORKING** in us!

It is not sufficient for us to have had an infilling of the Holy Spirit in the past . . . to know theoretically what the Holy Spirit is for and, at the same time, not to have His power working through us to benefit others. We need to continually stir ourselves – or ***“build up ourselves on our most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost”*** (Jude 20) – so that we are living in an atmosphere of divine expectancy. Expecting the anointing of the Spirit in us to work mightily to meet every present need. Christianity is no good without it.

If you're not satisfied with your experience in God, then take time to go to God afresh and allow Him to deal with "self" which is the main hindrance to an anointed life. God will quicken His Word to your heart and you shall be ***"anointed with fresh oil"*** (Psalm 92:10).

The burdens and yokes of life can only be destroyed ***"because of the anointing"*** (Isaiah 10:27).

Nothing can stand before the anointing of God. And nothing eternal can be accomplished without it.

Do you know the Holy Spirit anointing in your life?

May we all seek to abide in the Holy Ghost anointing at all times and see kingdom living firmly established as never before (2 Corinthians 1:20-22). God bless you.

THE “JAWBONE” MINISTRY

THERE IS A LESSON TO BE LEARNED by all Christians from the jawbone which was used by Samson when he slew a thousand men of the Philistines (Judges 15:14-19). Of itself the jawbone was of no use whatsoever: its natural task had been fulfilled – the ass it came from was dead! Therefore, although the jawbone was new, it was, nevertheless, also dead. But from that “death” God was able to place it in the hands of Samson – a man who was moving in the power of the Spirit – and use it to bring victory for His people, the Israelites.

The jawbone was a weapon used of God to bring deliverance to those who had been dominated by their enemies.

But even though the jawbone had played such a major part in this great deliverance, its ministry was not fully understood. Not even by the man who was using it! Samson did not see the jawbone had more than one use in the plan of God. After he had finished slaying the Philistines, Samson must have looked at the jawbone and thought how insignificant it was – why, he just threw it right back where he got it from. As far as he was concerned it had fulfilled its ministry. But little did he

realize that that same jawbone with which he had ministered judgment upon his enemies, was now going to minister revival to his own life!

REVIVED THROUGH THE JAWBONE!

Even though Samson used that jawbone in the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, he himself had been physically exhausted – he felt he was going to die of thirst. So he cried unto the Lord to help him in his time of need. God heard Samson’s cry and answered his prayer by ministering to his need through that wonderful jawbone! From out of the innermost being of the jawbone, God caused water to come out and minister to Samson’s need. Instead of dying, his spirit came again and he revived!

Today, many of God’s people are still in bondage to the enemy of their soul. The god of this world has been allowed to dominate too many areas of our lives and, as a result, the true liberty of walking in the power of God has not been what He really intends for us. The need is for “jawbone” ministries – men and women who have “died” to self-will and to living in the “natural” realm; people who **KNOW** that of themselves they are **NOTHING** and that the true life of Christ only comes forth from the “death” of the “old nature.” The “jawbone” ministry is totally dependent upon another (even Jesus Christ, through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit) and knows that as he abides in the place of “death to self,” God is able to use him to bring deliverance to others. Because he is “dead,” he does not get offended when cast aside by some great preacher – he relies upon **the Lord** to use him, not the Lord’s servants. Because he is “dead” to himself and his “natural” usage (feeding the ass’s carnal appetites) the

“jawbone” ministry is able to minister that Living Water which brings revival to all who will drink.

Let us learn the lessons of the “jawbone” ministry and be willing to “die.” When we are “dead” to self we are free for God to use us to bring deliverance and revival to needy souls around the world. Will you be a “jawbone” ministry? Are you called to the ministry?

MINISTERING IN GOD'S TIMING

ST. LUKE 1:76-80 (KJV.)

“And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Highest: for you shall go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the day-spring from on high has visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts until the day of his showing unto Israel.”

JOHN THE BAPTIST

Luke 1:76-80 records the prophecy concerning John the Baptist at his birth. I want you to remember that last verse, *“The child grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the DESERTS (“wilderness”) until the day of his showing unto Israel.”*

One of the hardest things we find in life is to be able to sit still and learn. Especially in the Christian life we need to sit and learn at the feet of Jesus; to stop and be able to listen to the voice of God. One of the most important things in the Christian walk is to learn to

know the voice, the will and the plan of God for our life.

John Grew and Waxed Strong in the Desert.

We find that in the greatest prophet's life up to the time of Jesus, that this man who had had such a great prophecy on his life, lived in the **DESERTS** for approximately 30 years - waiting, learning, being disciplined and trained for the ministry that God was going to shake the world with. A ministry that lasted no more than six months!

That man was in the desert, where he grew and waxed strong. **In the desert he learned to know God.** We are not told much about the life of John in the desert, except we know he was there. I think God allowed the people to forget all about him.

John Was A Prepared Vessel

When John was born, he caused no small stir among the people because he was a miracle child. He was born to parents that were old and past childbearing age. But God came. God in His own time and in His own way answered the cry of their hearts - and John was born. **He was born to be a vessel of God, fit for the Master's use. John was a prepared vessel whose calling in life was to serve God; to live for God and to do the will of God. In the Book of Acts it is written that he "*fulfilled his course*" (Acts 13:25).**

He did that which was required of him and then he was beheaded.

God Has a Time For You!

God has a time for your life. Right now God may have a special meeting for you in your life – a time when you meet with Him and you will never be the same again. Seek such an encounter.

If you do not know the will of Jesus Christ, the Bible says

“Now is the accepted time: behold NOW is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2). This is a message to ministers – if we will hear His voice.

- God wants your attention;
- He wants your ear;
- He wants you to listen in this day because He has a message for YOU;
- He has a plan for you, and, if you are willing, God will work that plan out through your life and ministry.

The Word of God Came in the Wilderness:

John was in the wilderness until the day of his appearing (or showing) unto Israel. In Luke 3 we read: ***“The Word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.”*** When everything was in place (as far as God was concerned) **THE WORD CAME**. John’s time in the wilderness – as long as it was – was spent in waiting for that Word to come to him. **And when it came John was a force to be reckoned with. He began to shake Israel. He began to turn a wicked nation back to God.**

John didn't go to the people - the people came to him! He had a Word from Heaven. No wonder the Bible says: *"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John"* (John 1:6).

God is looking for men who will hear from Heaven; men who will sit and listen and wait for the Word of the Lord to come; that they might come from their wilderness; that they might rise out of a desert existence and experience, and begin to go forward in the Name of the Lord.

God has given you and me a special privilege to be that man or woman in our day and generation. For we have been born of God to do the work of God - not born out of time, but born in God's time. GOD is our Father and we HAVE come to the Kingdom for such a time as this. Let God share with you the Word for this hour! That Word released through you will turn people back to God.

An Unpopular Message:

John came with a message that the people didn't like! A message of repentance; a message of making lives straight, getting rid of the crooked paths, etc. That message penetrated the hearts of the people. From the lowest to the highest, from the fairest to the darkest, from the richest to the poorest, the people needed to hear from God. And John had the message. He had the Word to give to the people - not a sermon to preach and tickle their ears with. He had the Word from God that would transform their lives and not just change their habits.

John was a man sent from God and who fulfilled the will of God because his life had been trained and made by God in the wilderness – the place that most of us seek to avoid!

ELIJAH

John, in the Scriptures, was likened unto the Prophet Elijah. Elijah went through the same kind of experiences in preparation for God to use him mightily. We are not told much about his early life – he suddenly appears on the scene and preaches a message to the king of Israel that there would be no rain until he (Elijah) said so. (1 Kings 17). God then spoke to Elijah, saying, ***“Go HIDE yourself!”*** And Elijah ***“went and did according to the Word of the Lord.”*** He knew that when God spoke He meant what He said. ***“Go hide yourself!”*** For a period of three-and-a-half years Elijah had to hide himself. He was hidden away day after day in the place appointed of God, while he watched the country become crippled through drought.

He watched the brook dry up! It was God’s provision to him, yet even that dried up! What an experience! What a testing! But this man was living in God’s appointed place in God’s appointed time.

Then, when the brook dried up, the **WORD** came: ***“Go to Zarephath, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain you.”*** So he went to Zarephath

There he found a starving lady with a bowl and a few sticks, preparing for her last meal. God said: “This is the

woman. You are going to stay with her.” Through faith the woman saw God’s provision to them each day in the supplying of their food. But no one could find Elijah because **GOD** had hidden him.

God’s Word is Even For Wicked Kings:

Elijah dared to speak the Word of God to the king – the king, whom the Bible records, did more wicked things than all the kings before him. He did more to make God angry than any other king. To King Ahab Elijah gave the Word of the Lord!

Of course he didn’t believe it! He had seen a lot of weird people in his time – but this little hairy man . . . “Who are you? What are you?”

Elijah delivered the Word and was gone. From that time there was no rain! As much as Ahab and his people didn’t want to accept Elijah’s word, the fact was it didn’t rain! They were forced to believe that word!

The Bible tells us they began to search all over the country looking for Elijah. But they couldn’t find him because God had hidden him! He was in God’s place, in God’s time.

There’s a Time to Show Yourself:

But you can’t stay hidden all the time. In the third year the Word of the Lord came to Elijah, saying: **“Go SHOW yourself”** (1 Kings 18:1). There’s a time to hide and there’s a time to show yourself. There’s a time to do things and there’s a time not to do things. The question is: **“Do WE**

KNOW WHEN these times are?” Oh, that we might so learn to know the ways and will of God in this day that we may be able to go forth in His power to accomplish that which **HE** purposes. This challenge needs to sink deep into our hearts while we **“sit at ease in Zion”** (Amos 6:1); while we go through life with an easy “happy-go-lucky” style, there are people perishing because we are not receiving God’s Word to give them. We need to be able to say with the Apostle Paul: **“I was NOT disobedient to the heavenly vision”** (Acts 26:19). To say that truthfully we have to know what it’s all about. We have to know what the heavenly vision is! Let us learn to recognize and know it, and then live in the powerful outworking of it.

So the time came for Elijah to **SHOW** himself. Everybody was so surprised to see him. But, you see, he was ministering in God’s timing, (and you know the story) how he challenged Ahab and the people; how God sent fire from Heaven, **ALL** according to Elijah’s word.

Elijah ministered by divine appointment. He ministered in the knowledge of God – he knew God Himself, not just about Him. The Bible says: “The people that do KNOW their God shall be strong and do exploits” (Daniel 11:32 KJV).

ISAAC

We read in the Bible about a man called Isaac. He was born by a miracle of God’s timing. Three times in the Book of Genesis we are told how God promised Abraham that He would visit him and Sarah at an appointed time – **“At the set time next year; you shall have a son”** (Genesis 17:21, 18:14 and 21:2).

Isaac was born by divine appointment. He was born when all natural ability and hope was gone.

God in His great wisdom and divine timing stepped in, and Isaac was born. The Scriptures teach us that we, as Isaac, are the children of promise (Galatians 4:28). We are children of divine appointment; people who minister by the direction of God's wonderful "time clock."

- Have you been looking at God's time clock lately?
- Do you know God's time for you?

MOSES

We could go through example after example of men who heard from Heaven – men who learned to sit and wait for God (Isaiah 64:4).

Take Moses. His life of 120 years was divided up into three different parts of 40 years each. The first 40 years he was raised as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He had it pretty luxurious. He lived in the king's palace. The next 40 years were not so good. He lived in the backside of the desert (Exodus 2 and 3) where he learned to lead sheep; where God emptied him of himself and prepared him for that which was to come.

The final 40 years we see God using this man in a mighty signs and wonders and miracles ministry to deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt. We like to think of the last 40 years of his life, overlooking the first 80 years of preparation, heart-ache and trials so Moses could minister

in the strength of God's timing and place of appointment. The former years were necessary to produce the ministry of the latter years.

God Puts Us in the Wilderness:

This is why so often we find ourselves in the wilderness, in trials and testings. God wants to show us a better way. Too often we are trying to mould our lives upon somebody else. We go along to a meeting and hear a great preacher, and we want to be like him. Or we hear some great singer, and we want to sing like her. All the time we are trying to make ourselves what God doesn't want us to be. So He has to get us out into the wilderness. He has to get us aside for a while, till we learn to receive the Word from Heaven. God has a divine appointment for you and me.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Let's look very briefly at the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are told:

“When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son into the world” (Galatians 4:4).

Jesus came on time! He wasn't a minute late. He came on time –and He came for YOU!

HOW ABOUT YOU?

Are you on time in God's divine appointment for your life? Don't try and run ahead. Don't try and lag behind. Be on

time in the Lord! ***“See then that you walk circumspectly (“carefully, cautiously”), not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be you not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is”*** (Ephesians 5:15-17).

Let us redeem the time today – God’s time. It is so easy to waste it on things that do not matter! **Unless we are prepared to make it count for God, we are not going to have any sort of impact on the world.** Let’s mean business with God – learn to minister in His timing, with all the resources of Heaven available to confirm and fulfil the Word we are called upon to deliver.

I believe the hour is now coming upon us when we will see an increase in the numbers of Spirit-filled men and women entering into a new dimension of God in life and ministry, because they have learned the secret of ministering in His timing and ability. It will be this kind of ministry that will set the captives free and cause the Word of the Lord to be fulfilled.

“So shall My Word be that goes forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11).

“. . . Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfil it” (“complete, accomplish, perform fully”) (Colossians 4:17).

DOING WHAT JESUS SAYS

THE SCRIPTURES ARE VERY DEFINITE in telling us the importance of doing what Jesus says. It is not sufficient to be hearers only. **In fact, one of the major areas of deception among Christians is not of Satanic deception but that of self-deception.** James 1:21-25 clearly shows us self-deception comes as a result of being hearers only and not doers of God's Word.

Jesus Christ also taught in Matthew 7:24-29 how important and necessary it is for each one of us to ***“hear these sayings of Mine, and do them.”*** Jesus knows the whole of successful living – for time and eternity – **depends entirely upon our hearing and doing His Word.** The person who builds his life upon the Word of Jesus will be triumphant in every area – no storms, floods or winds will undermine it. Just so, the person who listens to the Word of Jesus and does not practically apply it in daily living is sooner or later going to “self destruct” as a result of the pressures of life. **The whole of life's success depends entirely upon what we do with what we hear!** Now, if this is as important as Jesus says it is, then it is imperative that we know what He is saying. **Do you know what Jesus has said? Do you know what He is saying today?** This is the challenge before us and, more than ever, we need to know what He

is saying.

When Jesus told us about the wise man building his house (personal life, then church life) upon the rock and the foolish man building his house on the sand, we have to know what He was referring to when He made such a statement. What did Jesus say?

Matthew 7:24-29 is the summing up of what we know as "The Sermon on the Mount" (recorded in Matthew Chapters 5, 6 and 7). Therefore we need to know what Jesus was saying in these Chapters in order to be able to build right. These Chapters are the solid foundations upon which we build our life.

THE BEATITUDES

At the beginning of Matthew 5 we have what is called "The Beatitudes" – definite blessings for a definite way of living. If we want God's blessings upon us in all that we do, then let us live by the principles of Jesus that are laid down in these Chapters.

Notice: "***Blessed are . . . for they shall***" is the sure promise of Jesus. This applies in every case in the beatitudes except two where, on both occasions, it refers to the kingdom of heaven: "***Blessed are . . . for theirs IS.***" This is interesting because there is such a tendency among Christians to make the kingdom of heaven a future possession, whereas Jesus expresses it as a **NOW** relationship and experience. Listening to what Jesus says **NOW**, and practically applying what Jesus says **NOW** means kingdom living **NOW** (and safe-guards the future). **The power of Christianity is not so much what we are**

going to be, but what WE ARE and can be NOW. We must obey Jesus today – NOW. Good intentions count for nothing.

Let us remind ourselves of something else Jesus said in John 14:23-24, ***“If a man love Me, HE WILL KEEP MY WORDS” . . . “He that loves Me not keeps NOT My sayings.”*** There’s no fooling Jesus! ***“The Lord knows them that are His”*** (2 Timothy 2:19). If we love Him then we do as He tells us.

If we say we love Him and do not do what He says, we are living in self-deception; we deceive ourselves: not the devil, or our neighbour, or friend, but, we deceive ourselves. We need to clearly understand this.

You and I are responsible to God for what we hear of His Word. If we do nothing about it, then we profit nothing – we lose out on the blessings and joy of kingdom living. Listen to what Hebrews 4:2 says: ***“For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.”***

We must apply faith, showing it by our obedience to God’s Word. We all want to succeed in life. Jesus said we can, just as long as we follow His instructions. He said **WE ARE** the salt of the earth and the light of the world, ***“a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid”*** (Matthew 5:13-16).

Let us now look at a list of some areas of living that Jesus said we need to do in order to stand against all the storms of life:-

- **Spiritual hunger will be satisfied** (Matthew 5:6).
- **Christian living includes persecution** (Matthew 5:10-12).
- **Our light** (life) **must shine for all to see** (Matthew 5:14-16).
- **We must not overlook the “little” or least things in God’s Word**(Matthew 5:19-20). It is *“the little foxes that spoil the vine”* (Song of Solomon 2:15).
- *“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much”* (Luke 16:10).
- **Self-control** (Matthew 5:21-22). Self-control (“temperance”) is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).
- **Reconciliation and forgiveness** (Matthew 5:23-24 & 6:12 -15; Mark 11:25-26).
- **Inward purity – guarding against the lust of the eyes** (Matthew 5:28-29 & 6:22-23; 1 John 2:15-17).
- **Sanctity of marriage and sex** (Matthew 5:27-32, Hebrews 13:4).
- **Swearing** (making of oaths) **and speech** (Matthew 5:33-36 & 12:34-37). It is also important to know the power of our spoken word, both positive and negative (Mark 11:23). Watch your words!

- **Decision making** (Matthew 5:37). This is an area we need to watch as well. We must be able to make positive decisions in the light of the teaching of God's Word. Indecision and double-mindedness gets nothing from God (James 1:6-8).
- **Re-actions** (Matthew 5:38-47). How do we re-act to persecution, people, problems, etc.?
- **Friendships** (Matthew 5:44-47). Contrary to what many teach, we are not to be segregated from the people of the world. Living and mixing only with those who believe as you do tends to isolation. If we cannot freely mix with all kinds, how is the power of kingdom living going to be manifest to those who need it most? If we cannot mix with others, Jesus said we're no better than the worldly publicans! We are in the world, but not of the world.
- **Giving** (Matthew 5:42 & 6:1-4; Luke 6:38; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8). Giving is the Christian life-style and incorporates every area of life, not just finances. Giving is an act of worship.

Abounding in love (Matthew 5:43-48; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; 1 John 4:7-21). God is love and God's children love .

- . . . ***“the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost”*** (Romans 5:5).
- **Being perfect** (Matthew 5:48) is God's divine standard for us (2 Corinthians 13:11; 1 Peter 5:10).

It is the result of being in right relationship with Him. Jesus never tells us to be anything that we cannot be (in His sight). The Bible tells us the way to perfect (complete) living:-

- (1) **Love** Colossians 3:14; 1 John 4:12.
- (2) **Obedience to the Word** 1 John 2:5.
- (3) **Good works by faith** James 2:22.
- (4) **Patience** James 1:4.
- (5) **Control of tongue** James 3:2.
- (6) **Giving and laying up treasure in heaven**
(see Matthew 19:16-22).

God told Abram to be perfect (Genesis 17:1).

Paul's desire was to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus (Colossians 1:28).

- **Prayer and fasting** (Matthew 6:5-18 & 7:7-8). Done in secret it is rewarded openly. As with perfection, let us pray and fast and not make excuses! There's fullness of joy in answered prayer! (John 16:24). Be specific.
- **Laying up eternal treasures** (Matthew 6:20-21 & 13:44).

- **Divided allegiance** (Matthew 6:23-24). We cannot serve two masters. (Joshua 24:14-15).
- **Trusting in God's provision** (Matthew 6:25-34; Philippians 4:19; Psalm 23:1).
- **Fault-finding and hypocritical living** (Matthew 7:1-5) must be finished with. This applies to professing Christians and church-goers more than the heathen.
- **Do unto others as you would have them do to you** (Matthew 7:12).
- **Guard against "wolves" and deception** (Matthew 7:15-23).
- **Our WALK is more important than our WORK** (Matthew 7:16,29).
- **Obedience is the only way** (Matthew 7:24-29; 1 Samuel 15:22).

No doubt there will be other things that you will see in the Sermon on the Mount that will speak to your heart. ***"Whatever He (Jesus) says unto you, do it"*** (John 2:5).

Each of us needs to take time to see that these areas of life are given attention to, for they all help to make up the strong foundation necessary to stand against all the storms of life. We neglect them to our own hurt. Jesus knows best for us and so let us prove our love for Him by

keeping His Word (Proverbs 4:20-27).

Remember that He is using time to prepare us for eternity - to be sure of eternity we have to obey Him in time (the here and now).

May God richly bless His Word to you and open the truth of its pages to your understanding through the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

FRUITFULNESS

JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT THE SOWER who went forth to sow and sowed his seed upon the ground.

Some seed . . .

fell by the wayside,

Some on . . .

stony ground,

Some in . . .

thorny ground:

but there was some that . . .

fell into good ground, and it brought forth fruit.

- Some thirtyfold,
- Some sixtyfold,
- Some an hundredfold (Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23).

God wants us to enter into His wonderful multiplication of fruitfulness in our living. In our whole manner of living we can be fruitful. We can harvest a fruitful field for the Lord Jesus. As our hearts are open before God, as we look at Him daily to direct our paths – and grow where He has planted us – He will bring it forth. Yes, even an

hundredfold, and as we just trust and commit ourselves to His wonderful love and keeping power, we will find that God will use us in most unexpected ways. No wonder the Bible tells us that we should always be ready to give an answer to those who ask us of a reason of the hope which lies within us (1 Peter 3:15).

REAPING AN HUNDREDFOLD

I believe God's calling for you and me is that it might be a fruitful calling, that your life and mine might be a fruitful one to the glory of the Lord.

If our hearts are really in love with Jesus, and we are on fire for God, our goal and our desire should be to become an hundredfold Christian. Why be a thirtyfold Christian when God says you can be an hundredfold one? Why even be content to be a sixtyfold Christian when there is an hundredfold harvest which we can reap for the Lord Jesus Christ?

KNOW YOUR CALLING AND ABIDE IN IT

It is good for us to find out and to know what God requires of us, the avenue of service, the calling which He has for us, etc., for the Bible is very definite in teaching us that every man should abide in the calling to which he is called (1 Corinthians 7:20,24).

As we abide in that calling we can expect God to make it fruitful for His glory.

Jesus said: ***"You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring***

forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you” (John 15:16).

He has given us that which is necessary, that we might go and bring forth much fruit, and that our fruit should remain.

GOD SEEKS FRUIT THAT WILL REMAIN

We are hearing in these days about much fruit, but we are not hearing too much of the remaining fruit, the abiding fruit. So many people in the Christian church today have become “swallowed up” with statistics, glowing reports, etc., whereas God is looking for fruitfulness – fruitfulness that remains.

WE PLANT FOR FRUIT – SO DOES GOD

In the natural, we do not plant a tree in the ground tonight in its seed form and expect to see it loaded with fruit in the morning.

It has to be cultivated, . . . looked after, . . . pruned . . . so the fruit will be right. It takes all kinds of weather and testings, and man-ures put around the seed of that tree to make it grow and come to a place of maturity where it is able to bear fruit to the satisfaction of him who planted it.

So we must be careful in this day that we are not carried away with surface results.

If your heart is right and your motives are right, God will give you fruit.

The Bible says: ***“Whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap”*** (Galatians 6:7; Judges 1:7).

If we are going to sow to the flesh then we are going to reap what we sow, and that is corruption. But if we sow to the Spirit the things of God, then we shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. The Bible says in that same chapter:

“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season WE SHALL REAP, if we faint not”
(Galatians 6:7-9).

This is not a time to be having “dizzy spells.” God has a fruitfulness for our lives and, as we abide in His calling, an hundredfold harvest.

“(Most) blessed is the man who believes in, trusts in and relies on the Lord, and whose hope and confidence the Lord is. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, that spreads out its roots by the river; and shall not see and fear when heat comes, but his leaf shall be green; he shall not be anxious and careful in the year of drought, nor shall he cease from yielding fruit” (Jeremiah 17:7-8, AMP.).

I trust you have found this book a challenge to your faith and commitment to Jesus Christ. May your desire to fulfil the ministry God has for you be found growing in the fruitfulness and anointing of the Holy Spirit. There is a harvest for you and I pray you will

**fully discover it with a tremendous testimony of how
God has worked through you to bring it to pass.
Amen**

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