

*Pursuing The
Divine Nature
Of Christ*

The New Gold Rush

Don Randolph

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Introduction

In pursuing the “divine nature” of Christ we must be seeking Christ earnestly, diligently, and daily. The “divine nature” is a treasure each Christian should be energetically and enthusiastically seeking to possess. When we seek to be FILLED with the “divine nature of Christ” with our whole heart, we will be FILLED with His fullness.

As Christians we should all desire to be “filled” with the “fullness of Christ.” Christians should be excited about their relationship with Christ and the power He has given to us by and through His Spirit. I believe there are treasures hidden in the “divine nature of Christ” which are yet to be found. When we seek to KNOW Christ with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength we will find those hidden treasures. As we seek to be more like Christ, He will reveal more and more of Himself to us.

The Ark of the Covenant was a type and shadow of man. It was made of wood which is symbolic of man. In the making of the Ark of the Covenant, the Ark was overlaid with “pure gold.” Gold represents the “divine nature of Christ.” Pure gold represents the pureness of the “nature of Christ.” Pursuing the treasures of the “divine nature” should be the rallying cry of every Christian.

The Bible says “Yes, the Almighty will be your gold and your precious silver.” Gold represents the

“divine nature of Christ” and silver represents “redemption.” Once we have been “redeemed” by the Blood of Christ it is our duty to become FILLED with the fullness of Christ by embracing “His divine nature.”

Pursuing the “divine nature” will take us on a wonderful journey as we become filled with the “Spirit of Christ.” We will be changed from glory to glory as we seek to become more and more like Christ.

God lifted up a standard for us when Christ died on the cross at Calvary. Christ is our example. A “standard” is a flag or emblem which is lifted up on a pole or staff which represents certain principles such as “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Standards are symbols of unity and dignity. A standard can be a rallying point during chaos in battle. A standard is also a rallying point for military personnel and private citizens who are unified together in their quest for freedom and solidarity.

Christ is our standard. His “divine nature” represents the standards by which we are to live as Christians. We will become Christ-like in nature when we are FILLED with His FULLNESS. The more we “hang around with Jesus,” the more we will become like Him.

Jesus said, “If I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all men unto me.” (John 12:32). We must conform to the standards of the “Christ-like “nature” if we are going to be “like Christ.” Jesus said if we are going to be His disciples we must “deny ourselves, pick

our cross daily, and follow after Him. (Luke 9:23). If we are not willing to deny ourselves pick our up cross and follow Jesus, we are not worthy to be called His.

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CHAPTER 1

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PURSUING THE DIVINE NATURE

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. 2 Peter, ch. 1, vs. 4.

Nothing is more important to the believer than being FILLED with the “divine nature of Christ.” Peter said we have been given the opportunity to be partakers of His “divine nature.” We obtain the “divine nature” by believing and receiving the great and precious promises of God. We have access and power to receive the “divine nature of Christ” through the promises of God. As we grow in Christ we become more and more sensitive to the things which are most important in life such as grace, mercy and faith.

When we speak of the “divine nature of Christ,” we are speaking of the divine personality, attributes, and moral character of Christ. Being FILLED with the “divine nature of Christ” should be the goal of every believer. Without the fullness of the “divine nature” we cannot live, move, or have our being in Him.

If we are not rooted and grounded in Christ, you can be sure we will be subject to being “blown about by every wind of doctrine” by the cunningness of ungodly men. Without Christ we are like a ship on the ocean without a sail. The wind will take us in the direction it is blowing, not in the direction which we may need or want to go.

The Lord spoke to me a few years ago and said, “My people are not pursuing me enough.” The word pursue means to “follow” or “chase after.” God is not playing hide and seek with us, nor is He trying to run away from us. God is waiting on us to listen and obey His voice when He speaks. He is waiting for us to follow the directions He has already given us in His Word concerning our walk with Christ.

Christ has a plan and purpose for each one of us. If we are going to fulfill His plan and purpose for our life, we are going to have to FOLLOW (pursue) Him on a daily basis-not once or twice a week. We have not been called to be weekend warriors but full time soldiers of Christ.

Why does Christ desire for us to pursue Him? Does He have something we need? Yes, He does. Above all things, we need HIS “divine nature.” Does Christ have something He wants to say to us? Yes, He does. He wants to explain to us why we need His “divine nature.” Does Christ have something He wants to give to us? Yes, He does. He wants to impart to us the “divine nature” so we can be FILLED with His FULLNESS.

Does Christ need us to communicate with Him? Yes, He does. He desires for us to tell Him we love Him and we are willing to follow Him wherever He may lead us. Does Christ need us to do something for Him? Yes, He does. He needs our time, our feet, our hands, our finances and our voice to take His Word to the four corners of the Earth.

Christians need to be focusing more on pursuing the “divine nature” than pursuing information about Planet-X, the Nephilim, Chemtrails, Bigfoot, Flying Saucers, and other conspiracy theories. If the body of Christ would spend more time studying and learning about the things which positively affect them, they would find themselves experiencing more of the glorious Life Christ has to offer them. Basking in the presence of Jesus is much more desirable than worrying about being kidnapped by Aliens, poisoned by Chemtrails, bitten by Bigfoot, or crushed by Planet-X.

Without the “fullness of Christ” Christians will be unable to distinguish between falsehoods and the truth which is found only in the Word of God. The “divine nature of Christ” is called the “divine nature” for a reason. The “divine nature” is the “divine essence” or character of Christ who is the express image of God.

Without the fullness of the “divine nature of Christ,” Christians can and will be easily deceived into accepting a substitute gospel or false doctrines. False doctrines come from demonic entities and sources which are anything but “divine.” Being FILLED with

the fullness of Christ will enable us to discern between the truth and lies which the enemy is trying to establish in the hearts and minds of those who “walk in the flesh.”

DIRECTION

Direction for believers today is one of the most important needs in the body of Christ. Everywhere I go I find that many Christians are seeking direction for their lives and ministries. We must first find the plan and purpose of God for our lives before we can find His direction for our lives. If we do not know what God has called us to do, we will never find direction or purpose for our lives and ministries. Therefore, it is imperative that we seek God to find His direction for the work He has called us to accomplish.

Many Christians are seeking worldly pleasures instead of godly treasures. Many are missing the “mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” because they have failed to understand the importance and purpose of His “divine calling.” Many Christians are confused, bewildered and heavy laden because they do not understand the purpose of the “divine nature” of Christ and how to “pursue” His righteousness. Many do not know or even understand why the “divine nature” is so important to them.

When we are born again, we receive the divine nature of Christ. However, the seed (Christ) which has been planted in our hearts must be “watered daily by the Word of God” and kept free of any hindrances in

order that the seed can grow and become spiritually fruitful. Our spiritual strength will depend upon how much of the “divine nature of Christ” resides, rules, and reigns in our hearts.

The pursuit of the divine nature of Christ is the pursuit of truth and righteousness. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to us through our faith in Christ who is the TRUTH. Therefore, it is our faith in Christ and truth and righteousness which transforms us into His image. Without an impartation of truth and righteousness, we cannot and will not be partakers of the “divine nature.” We must continue to pursue “Christ” with our whole heart until we have become filled and saturated with Christ and His overcoming power.

Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross and follow Me.” Matthew, ch. 16, vs. 24.

Jesus told us if we are going to follow Him we will have to make changes in our lives. The first thing we have to do is “repent of our selfish ways,” “pick up our cross” and “daily follow Him” wherever He leads us. To repent means to “express our sincere regret for our sins, turn around and go in the opposite direction.” In other words, we can no longer think only of ourselves and what our wishes and desires are, but what God desires for our life.

If we are going to be followers of Christ, we are going to have to travel closely behind Him or hand in hand with Him in the direction which HE is going. Jesus does not lead from behind, nor does He follow from behind. Neither does He follow us where we want to go. The old gospel song does not say “Where I lead Him He will follow,” but “Where HE leads me I will follow.” Jesus can only lead those who repent of their sins, deny themselves, and pick up their crosses and follow in His footsteps.

After we have repented of our sins, we MUST pick up our cross and follow Christ. We will be unable to follow Him if we fail to deny ourselves and pick up our cross daily. The CROSS is the most important commodity we can carry within our hearts as we follow Christ. Without OUR cross, we cannot and will not be able to crucify OUR flesh.

A cross is an instrument of death. Our cross is the place where we put to death the works of the flesh so the Life and “divine nature” of Christ can be found within us. The Apostle Paul said, “I die daily.” If we are not picking up our cross daily, we will not be able to follow Christ daily. When we fail to pick up our cross daily and follow Christ, we will find ourselves falling farther and farther behind into the Wilderness of Sin.

FALLING BEHIND

Jesus has a Church to lead, guide and direct. Unfortunately, there are many who are not sincere about following Christ down the pathway of Life.

Many who are travelling along the way of Life hinder the work of Christ by putting obstacles in the way of those who are working diligently to promote and take the gospel to the world.

Unknowingly and unwittingly many people fall behind and become the pawns of Satan. They are standing in the WAY as Christ leads His sheep to greener pastures. Many attacks on Christians trying to fulfill the plan and purpose of God for their lives come from within the “ranks” (pun somewhat intended) of “Christian Soldiers.” Many “Christian Soldiers” are shooting others in the back as they move forward toward enemy lines.

Today many laborers are falling behind and are disrupting the advance of the Church because they are not SEEKING the plan and purpose of God for their lives. They have become selfish seeking only to please themselves and men rather than God. They are not pursuing Christ and the “divine nature” which qualifies them to be called by HIS NAME.

Jesus is on a journey across the land and over the Earth to seek and find lost and dying souls in order to set up His Kingdom here on Earth. He bids ALL who will “come and join Him in “His quest.” However, many believers are not yet fully prepared to take on the responsibility of preaching the gospel and/or reaching out to the multitudes which are languishing in the Valley of Decision. Many people today are lost and dying without Christ because the GOOD NEWS of the

GOSPEL OF CHRIST has not yet been shared with them.

Jesus invested in and has given His ALL to His Church through His sacrifice at Calvary. He died on the cross freely shedding His blood to fill the Church with His Spirit, His power, and His grace and mercy. Jesus expects a return on His investment. (read Matthew 25:14-30).

Listen to me, You who follow after righteousness, You who seek the Lord: Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and the hole of the pit which you were dug. Isaiah, ch. 51, vs. 1.

As we pursue the “divine nature of Christ” righteousness must be our goal. Once we start on this journey pursuing the “divine nature,” we must never allow obstacles we find in our way to hinder our purpose and progress.

Jesus has given believers everything they need in order to fulfill His plan and purpose for their lives. Many Christians who have heard the “good news” and have accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior continue to reject the call He has on their life. Many fall by the wayside because the call to “walk with Christ daily” is too much of a sacrifice for them to make.

I was having lunch with a Pastor and was telling him He needed to be “making disciples” out of his

church members. He responded to me by saying he was unable to find anyone in his Church who wanted to be disciplined. If we are going to follow Christ we have to begin as “disciples” of Christ. If people do not desire to be disciplined, they will be unable to follow Christ. Most Christians do not even realize what it means to be “disciples of Christ” because Pastors fail to have a good understanding of the word “disciple.”

Christians need to be disciplined or they will never be able to live a life free from spiritual oppression. They need to be disciplined so they can be free from the deceitfulness of riches and the cares of this world. Without wisdom and understanding Christians will continue to remain in bondage to the wiles and schemes of the devil.

Churches should be Training Centers instead of social clubs. Without “spiritual discipline” there will be no discipline in the Church. Many pastors lack discipline themselves. Pastors who lack “spiritual discipline” will be unable to teach “spiritual disciplines” to their congregations.

Many people cannot or are not able to endure sound doctrine, thus they will not have a desire to gain the knowledge they need to withstand the tests and trials which are to come. Those who cannot endure sound doctrine cannot expect to be FILLED with the Spirit of Christ. In time the tests and trials which plague them will overcome and devour them and they will fall by the wayside.

We can only be FILLED with the FULLNESS of Christ if we are seeking with our whole heart to be FILLED with the FULLNESS of His “divine nature.” Unless people hunger and thirst to be FILLED with His righteousness, they will never be filled with His righteousness. God does not impose His will or His righteousness on anyone. Read Matthew, Chapter 5, Verse 6.

The scripture tells us Jesus is coming back for a Church without spot or wrinkle. There will be no BLEMISHES found on the garments of the Bride of Christ when Jesus returns for her. If we are going to become a Church without spot or wrinkle, we must be FILLED with the FULLNESS of Christ. We must “put on” Christ and the Breastplate of His Righteousness along with the “whole Armor of God” which enables us to stand against “all the schemes of the devil.” Read and study Ephesians, Chapter 6, Verses 10-18.

CHAPTER 2

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FOLLOWING AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS

*Listen to me, you who follow after
righteousness, You who seek the Lord: Look
to the rock from which you were hewn, and
the hole of the pit from which you were dug.
Isaiah, ch. 51, vs. 1.*

Righteousness should be our goal as we pursue the “divine nature of Christ.” Once we start on our journey pursuing the “divine nature,” we must never allow obstacles which we find standing in our way to impede our progress. Many become frustrated, discontent and discouraged along the way when they fall short of the goal. Our goal is not only to “seek Christ,” but to **BECOME LIKE Him**. If we are going to be filled with the “divine nature,” it will have to be on His terms not on our terms. There are no short cuts or alternative routes to our destination of righteousness.

We can be encouraged knowing this journey will take us to our desired destination if we keep pressing on toward the “mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We must not lose heart and become like many

who have started this journey and have fallen short of their goal and given up.

The enemy will always try to place obstacles along the pathway in order to discourage us and hinder our pursuit of the “divine nature of Christ.” If we place our focus on the enemy and what he is doing rather than what Christ is doing, we will fail to reach our eternal goal. I assure you the “divine nature” is attainable for all who press forward toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

If we keep our focus on Christ and follow Him, He will lead us down the path of righteousness. We must always look first to the ROCK of our Salvation who is Christ. He is our example and our victory. We are hewn from that ROCK which Moses struck with his staff when the Children of Israel became thirsty in the Wilderness. (Isaiah 51:1). We are to be Ambassadors of the “Living Water” which will quench the thirst of many as we walk along the trail to our destination with Christ.

We must not look to the right or to the left as we walk the path on our earthly journey. When we continually keep our eyes on Christ, our goal will always be before us. Jesus is looking for people who will follow Him “wherever” He goes, without question or hesitation. Jesus is always going somewhere and we must follow Him wherever He wishes to lead us.

We must follow in the footsteps of Christ as we walk down the pathway of life. If we allow Jesus to lead

us He will walk with us daily helping us to overcome every obstacle Satan has placed in our path until we reach our final destination.

Several years ago I was praying in my den when Jesus appeared to me and said, “Follow Me.” Jesus desires to lead us on a journey we would not want to miss. If we are not “following Christ,” we are GOING in the wrong direction. Following Christ leads us to eternal life. If we are going in any other direction, we will find eternal death which is separation from God throughout eternity. We will never obtain the fullness of the victory or the prize of His “high calling” if we fail to keep our eyes on Christ. The “divine nature” can only be found in Christ, and in Christ alone.

In Christ we live and move and have our being. Outside of Christ we are nothing. Outside of Christ we can do nothing. It is Christ who fills the deep wells of our souls with Living Water. It is Christ who “bids us to come and drink of the Water of Life freely.” It is Christ who feeds us “manna from Heaven” on our journey toward the fullness of His “divine nature.” It is Christ who picks us up and sets our feet upon the solid rock when we stumble and fall along the way.

Once we have started this journey pursuing the “divine nature,” we must never allow obstacles which stand in our way to hinder our progress. Our goal is not just to “seek Christ,” but to KNOW HIM and to BECOME LIKE HIM. If we are going to be filled with the “divine nature,” we must do it on His terms, not our

terms. There are no shortcuts or alternative routes to our destination of His righteousness.

THE LAW OF PURSUIT

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. And when you seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart, I will be found by you says the Lord. Jeremiah, ch. 29, vs. 11-13.

The “Law of Pursuit” says that “whatever we are ambitiously determined to obtain we will acquire if we do not lose heart and give up.” People who desire to become doctors pursue a degree in Medicine. People who desire to become psychologists pursue a degree in Psychology. People who desire to become lawyers pursue a degree in Law. They all have one goal in common--to fulfill their desire to become proficient at their choice of occupations. They attend colleges and universities in order to study their occupation of choice.

If a student “half-heartedly” pursues to become knowledgeable in their chosen profession, they will never make the grade or finish the course. In our pursuit of the “divine nature,” we must always be ambitiously seeking to be FILLED with Christ or His peace and freedom will allude us. If we are not

continually striving for perfection, we will fall short of the glory God wishes to impart to us.

The Bible says to, “depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.” (Psalm 34:18). God’s desire for us is to live in peace. He desires to give us a future FILLED with the fullness of Christ who is our example of love, compassion, and devotion.

Peace can be elusive, and can only be found when we “pursue peace.” Christ IS our Peace. We cannot expect God to fill us with the fullness of the “nature of Christ” if we are not humbly pressing forward toward the “mark of His high calling.” If we are not persistently pursuing the “righteousness of Christ,” we will never be “filled” with His righteousness or His peace.

CHAPTER 3

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THE ARK OF GOLD

And they shall make an ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits shall be its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height. And you shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out. You shall overlay it, and shall make it a molding of gold all around. Exodus, ch. 25, vs. 10-11.

The Ark of the Covenant sat in the Holy of Holies in the Temple at Jerusalem. The Ark was the place where the Presence of God dwelt. Inside the Ark rested the Ten Commandments, the Showbread, and Aaron's Rod which budded. The Commandments were representations of the Word of God and His Holy Commandments. The Showbread (shewbread in the King James Version) represented the Bread of Life (Christ).

Aaron's Rod which budded represented spiritual power and authority through supernatural life in Christ. God instructed Moses to place the Ten Commandments, the Showbread, and Aaron's Rod

which budded into the Ark of the Covenant as a representation of salvation.

The “Showbread” was also known as “presence bread.” It represented the presence of God in the Temple, and especially inside the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark was a representation of man, and the ‘presence bread’ in the Ark represented the presence of God IN man. Jesus IS the “Bread of Life” who dwells in the heart of every believer. (John 6:35). We “represent Christ” because we carry the presence of God in our “inner most being (heart).”

Aaron’s Rod which supernaturally “budded” was a representation of the Resurrection of Christ. Christ is our High Priest and was supernaturally raised from the dead three days after being crucified at Calvary. We see that everything found inside the Ark of the Covenant represented Christ in one way or another.

In the building of the Ark of the Covenant, God instructed the Ark to be overlaid with gold inside and out. The Ark was to be a type and shadow of man being clothed in and sheltered by the “divine nature of Christ.” Wood is symbolic of mankind, and gold speaks of the “divine nature of Christ.” In essence, the gold being overlaid inside and outside of the wood of the Ark is a prophetic example of the soul of believers being filled with the “divine nature of Christ.”

The gold which was used to overlay the Ark was “pure gold.” It was gold which had been refined by fire

and all impurities had been removed. The process of refining gold is a somewhat long and arduous task, but it must be done in order to remove all blemishes and imperfections from the gold. The gold had to be pure just as Christ our Savior is pure and without sin. Likewise, our hearts must be “purified” just as the gold was in order to remove all the impurities and blemishes within our hearts.

Pure gold represents the pureness of the “divine nature” of Christ. The Ark of the Covenant also represented the “Blood Covenant” which we now have with God. The Blood of Christ was sprinkled on the mercy seat of our hearts the moment we received Christ as our Lord and Savior. We have a covenant with God which was ratified by the BLOOD of Jesus some 2000 years ago at Calvary. We become “covenant partners” with God through the shed Blood of Jesus when we accept Him as our Lord and Savior.

The Ark of the Covenant was located in the Holy of Holies in the Temple of God. The High Priest would sprinkle the blood of animals on the mercy seat. The mercy seat was located on top of the Ark of the Covenant. The mercy seat was also made of pure gold. The blood of the slain animals was placed on the mercy seat as an atonement for the sins of the people. These blood offerings were all types and shadows of things to come. They were also types and shadows of the Blood of Christ which would be shed on the Cross at Calvary at the appointed time to atone for the sins of all mankind.

The Ark of the Covenant was not the only type and shadow of mankind found within the Temple. The entire Temple of God was a “type and shadow” as well. Everything in the Temple spoke of Christ and how He would pay the penalty for the sins of all mankind. The Bible tells us we are the “Temple of God” if the Holy Spirit dwells within us. (1 Corinthians 3:16).

Everything in the Temple which was made of wood was to be overlaid in gold. All the wood (man) in the Temple was to be covered with gold so that all which could be seen was representative of the “glory or divine nature of Christ.” The walls and floors in the Holy of Holies were overlaid in pure gold.

The Temple in Jerusalem was built as a resting place for the Ark of the Covenant and the “Presence of God” as a type and shadow of things to come. Our spiritual Temples (hearts) have now become the resting place of the Holy Spirit. We become the Temple of God when His Spirit dwells within us. We have become emissaries and ambassadors of His “divine nature” to the world. God’s commandments are now written on our hearts instead of a slab of stone.

THE TWO PILLARS

Just outside the Temple stood two large pillars of wood which were also overlaid with gold. The “two pillars” did not hold up anything. They were placed there to reflect the light (Light) of the Sun (Son) into a window of the Temple. The pillars were positioned in

front of the Temple so the light of the Sun would continually shine through the windows into the Temple.

As Christians we are now the Temple of the Holy Spirit. The light of the Sun shining in the Temple represented the Light and Life of Jesus, the Son of God. The window represented the “window or eyes of our understanding.” Prophetically, light represents understanding. When the light from the Sun entered through the window of the Temple, it illuminated everything in the Holy Place.

For many Christians the “light of their understanding” is dim because they have sin, doubt, and unbelief in their hearts. Their light is also dim because of their lack of understanding due to inadequate Biblical teaching and training. A lack of understanding will always block the Light of the Son from entering into the eyes of our soul.

When the Light of understanding enters into and becomes established within our hearts, we will find the “divine nature” being revealed and established within us. The power which is imparted to believers through the “divine nature” lies dormant in many believers. ALL Christians are carriers of the “divine nature.” However, many are unaware of the “potential power” which they possess through the Holy Spirit which dwells within them.

The Bible tells us as “overcomers” we are made to be pillars which will reflect the “divine nature” into the Temple of God.” (Revelation 3:12). As Christians

we are to become pillars which reflect the divine nature through the window of the Temple of God, our spirit. As individuals we are each a “Temple of the Holy Spirit.” Corporately, as the Body of Christ, we all make up THE Temple of God in the New Jerusalem as we reflect the “divine nature” of the Son.

VESSELS OF GOLD

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel of honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. 2 Timothy, ch. 2, vs. 20-21.

Purging and cleansing ourselves of things which dishonor our spiritual house will allow the virtues of the “divine nature” to have preeminence in our lives. When the “divine nature” has preeminence, we will become vessels of honor fit for the Master’s use. If we have not purged ourselves of everything and anything which brings reproach upon His name, we will not be effective witnesses of Christ.

We are all called to be examples of Christ to the World. If we are not portraying Christ in all we do, we could be profaning our Holy Temple and dishonoring

God. We have been bought with a great price, the greatest price ever paid—the Blood and Life of Christ. In Christ our lives are no longer our own, and we should be validating and proving that we belong to Christ by virtue of our motives and attitudes.

We will all go through many tests and trials in life. Many of the tests and trials of life are designed to bring us into a “closer relationship with Christ.” They will also help to consummate and effectuate the “divine nature” within us.

When we find our faith being tested and tried, we know we are going through the process of being refined. The Bible says to “Count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.” (James 1:2-3). Many of the tests and trials we face in life are designed to build patience and faith within our hearts. Patience is one of the virtues of the “divine nature of Christ.”

CHAPTER 4

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THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus who being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Philippians, ch. 2, vs. 5-8.

The “divine nature” of Christ is found in the heart and mind (attitudes) of Christ. These “divine attributes” or characteristics of Christ are available to every believer. They qualify us to become sons and daughters of God. They give us power over all the works of the enemy. They establish the peace of God which surpasses all understanding in our hearts.

The attributes of Christ are found in His motives and attitudes. His attitudes toward the Father and man motivated Christ to become a servant even though He

was equal with God. Jesus was motivated by love and compassion as well as a great zeal to please the Father.

As we study the motives and attitudes of Christ, we will find that everything He did was pleasing to the Father. Even though He was divinely equal with God, He took on the form of a servant in order to be an example of the righteousness of God to men. Christ humbled Himself as a servant in order to fulfill the plan and purpose of God for His life. He became the epitome—the perfect example of an obedient servant. Being servants of God, we are all equally responsible to do everything we can to please God through obedience and self-sacrifice.

If we want to understand why Jesus loved people so much, we must study the “divine nature of Christ.” Jesus is the “express image of the Father.” God is love—love is a part of His nature. It is the nature of Christ to love fervently, unapologetically, and unconditionally. Like the Father--love is His most dominant and important characteristic. The Bible tells us Jesus wears “many crowns.” (Revelation 19:12). The character of Christ is crowned with love, life, liberty, and longsuffering just to name a few.

As Christians our most dominant characteristic should be LOVE. We are nothing without the “divine attribute” of the love of Christ within us. If we do not love those around us, the love of God does not dwell within us. Without love we cannot be or honestly proclaim to be the sons and daughters of God.

CHRISTIAN PSYCHOLOGY

Psychologists have studied the workings of the human mind for centuries. Yet they still understand very little about human behavior, how the mind works, and why people act and react the way they do in certain circumstances. They seek to change emotions, thoughts and social processes which affect human behavior in people by studying, observing, and interpreting behavior and offering solutions.

Psychology is merely an attempt by MAN to cure the soul of men and women who are actually in need of a “spiritual fix,” not a human solution to their problems. The practice of Human Psychology will have a positive effect upon some people. Other than chemical imbalances in the brain which some people experience, the underlying problems most people experience are really “spiritual,” not natural. Thus, they can only be correctly and irrevocably “fixed” by Christ.

In reality, Psychology, which is not Bible based can and will do more harm to an individual than good. Even some Christian Psychology is not biblically sound because it is not always tempered with faith and love and is not rooted and grounded in truth. True freedom from bondage can and will only come through the Spirit of Truth and Liberty.

Many times the precepts of “Christian Psychology” which are found in the Bible are taken out of context and used inappropriately. I am not saying all Christian Psychologists are errant scripturally.

However, one must be careful of what they are listening and adhering to when they seek spiritual guidance from Christian or non-Christian psychologists and counselors.

I have seen many Christians suffer because they were given bad advice from counselors. It is always best to seek the Lord for answers rather than man. I am definitely not saying we should not seek the counsel of men. However, I am saying we should seek help from those who we know can and will hear from God when we need advice. Jesus is the answer to all our problems.

Christian Psychologists need to be able to do “more than” just offer advice to people who are in need of help. They need to be able to perform deliverance to individuals who are oppressed by the devil. Most emotional problems come from demonic oppression and possession; therefore, a little bit of spiritual advice will not help to free people of what is really the root of their problems.

Most Christian Psychologists do not have a “good understanding,” or any understanding at all, of how demon spirits operate in the life of a person or how to deal with them. They do not have a good understanding of how things operate in the realm of the spirit. They fail to understand how demons can affect and infect the human psyche. Christian Counselors need to possess spiritual discernment, discerning of spirits, and the knowledge of how to cast out demons if they are going to be able to set people free from demonic depression, oppression, and possession.

People need to distinguish for themselves that what they are hearing from others is coming from God or from man. There is nothing wrong with seeking advice from others, however, we must always seek God for confirmation. Many times the advice we receive may not be the advice we need. All advice and solutions for our problems should be God breathed. Some advice can be cheap (inexpensive). Some advice is cheap (ineffective).

Possessing the “divine nature” will set us free from all demonic depression and oppression. If we are going to study the mind and how it operates, we need to study and understand the “nature of Christ.” We must find out what Christ our Lord says about freedom and how we can open the gates of true freedom for ourselves and others if we desire to be free.

The mind or attitudes and motives of Christ are divinely inspired to believers who fervently love the Lord and seek truth and righteousness. If we do not love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, “the divine nature” will not have dominion in our thought processes.

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such there is no law. Galatians, ch. 5, vs. 22-23.

I think it would be reasonable to say that Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit. He was led by the Spirit in everything He did. When we become filled with the “divine nature of Christ,” we will be filled with the fruit of the Spirit. We will have no problem portraying the love of Christ to others. If we love the Father as Christ loves Him, we will humble ourselves before Him; and be more than willing to obey His every command.

When we are FILLED with the Fruit of the Spirit our motives and attitudes will reflect the motives and attitudes of Christ. We will be faithful witnesses of the truth. We will be kind and gentle. We will be filled with joy because the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard our hearts and minds in Jesus. We will be filled with goodness and longsuffering. We will possess self-control, even when things seem to get out of control. The “Fruit of the Spirit” are all motivational characteristics of the mind of Christ. Jesus was motivated by the Holy Spirit in everything He did and said.

We are commanded by God to “walk in the Spirit.” The scripture tells us that “if we walk in the Spirit we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.” (Galatians 5:16). If we are not walking in the Spirit, the flesh will dominate our thinking, thus our entire life. We are commanded to “put on the mind of Christ.” If

we fail to put on the “mind of Christ,” sin will have dominion over us.

We should always be pursuing the righteousness of Christ by insightfully studying and bearing the Fruit of the Spirit. The knowledge which we gain from studying the “Fruit of the Spirit” will lead us into a greater relationship with Christ.

The “Fruit of the Spirit” is what sets sincere believers apart from those who are not FULLY committed to walking daily with Christ. God tells us to be “Holy as He is Holy.” If we are going to be Holy, we must be FILLED with the “Fruit of the Spirit.” True Holiness comes from the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives as we walk daily in the Spirit with Him. The Fruit of the Spirit are all listed in Galatians 5:16-26.

CHAPTER 5

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FOCUSING ON THE DIVINE NATURE

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be anything praiseworthy--- meditate on these things. Philippians, ch. 4, vs. 9.

Meditating on the Word of God will help us stay focused on the “divine nature.” As we daily seek after the righteousness of Christ, we will find ourselves drinking from the Wells of Salvation. Christ imparts His wisdom, understanding, and peace to those who keep their hearts and minds focused on Him and His words. Whatever we keep our focus on during our journey here on Earth will empower us to reach our final conclusions and destinations whether right or wrong. If we keep our hearts and minds stayed on Christ, we will receive the promise of the fullness of His “divine nature.”

God’s Word is truth. If our focus remains on the Truth (Christ), we will find that the TRUTH (Christ) will always remain faithful to us. If we fail to keep our focus on Christ, we will have a hard time convincing

others of the legitimacy and validity of the gospel, thus the truth will be compromised.

Many people today are searching for the truth, but they do not know where to find the truth. That is one reason why cults are able to entice many people into believing THEY have all the answers to life's problems. It is easy to lead those astray who are searching for the truth but lack spiritual understanding. Many fall into "spiritual traps" with cultic messages which "mimic truth," but are in reality satanically engendered.

Most people seeking the truth are sincere about wanting to do the right thing. However, they are unsure what the "right thing" is and where it can be found. Unfortunately, there are many deceiving spirits in this world who are anxiously waiting to deceive people into believing their damnable heresies. Substitutes may look appealing, but they will never satisfy the thirsty soul. The devil walks about seeking to devour those who are spiritually weak and feeble minded by offering them a substitute gospel.

Many cannot endure and will fail to understand sound doctrine because their hearts are not set on "seeking holiness." They will end up having a "form of godliness" which is the same as a "form of godlessness." They will deny the power of the true God because the god they serve is the god which promotes avarice, selfishness, and pride. They have itching ears which seek to hear doctrines that will help them fill their pockets with money and their hearts with pride, vain glory and selfish ambitions.

When Christians fail to keep their focus on Christ, they are in danger of falling prey to doctrines of devils. They were obviously seeking for truth when they found Christ or they would not have found Him. Unfortunately, there are many Christians who find Christ but look for shortcuts in their walk with Him along the pathway of life. Many will easily accept substitutes when and if they take their focus off Christ; subsequently, they will fall by the wayside on their journey through life.

Some Christians find that the pathway of righteousness is too hard for them to follow. Because their spiritual roots are shallow, they do not and will never have the spiritual strength to carry their cross. Many will fall by the wayside and stop following Christ because they think the journey is too hard for them to complete. Many do not know any “true believers” who can or will help them carry the “burden of their cross” so they can find victory at Calvary through the sacrifice of Christ.

LOSING FOCUS

From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?” Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” John, ch. 6, vs. 66-67.

At one time Jesus had many disciples following Him, including the original twelve which He had chosen. Some of them were following Him because of the miracles they saw Him perform. Many of them followed Christ out of curiosity. Others followed Him because they were looking for the truth. Unfortunately, many found that His sayings were too hard for them to understand or follow so they turned and walked away from Him.

Today many Christians are losing their focus for the same reasons. Many of them are losing their focus because they have been drawn away by the lusts of their flesh. Others lose their focus because of many false doctrines which are being promoted today in their churches. Whatever the reasons may be for walking away from Christ, we have to understand people who walk away from Him have not been rooted and grounded in faith.

Many churches make converts but fail to make them disciples. Pastors are more concerned and focused on the social aspect of Christianity than they are “equipping the saints for the work of the ministry.” Many pastors serve their congregations a “watered down gospel” which results in their congregations becoming “thirsty and dry.” It is no wonder Christians run from church to church looking for a fresh drink of LIVING WATER. Unfortunately, “living water,” is hard to find and cannot be found in many churches today because the sermons the pastors preach lack “divine purpose” and “spiritual truths.”

Many fail to become rooted and grounded in faith because they are taught a false gospel which is not rooted and grounded in truth. When the storms of life come, their “spiritual houses” are not built upon a strong foundation and thus their houses will fall. Unless our “spiritual house” is built upon a “firm foundation,” which is Christ Jesus, it will be unable to endure the spiritual “storms of life.”

When we take our eyes off Christ we are treading on dangerous ground. I know and have known many Christians who lost their focus on Christ and ended up falling from the grace of God. Many of them experienced great catastrophes from which they were unable to recover because their “spiritual roots” were shallow. Others ended up losing their lives because of the lifestyles they were living. Sadly, many of them were ministers and many others were lay members. Others were church members who had at one time spent much time in church who were once on fire for the Lord. Many of them unfortunately were Christians who had been hurt by other members in the church.

There are many reasons why people lose their focus and “fall away” from the Church. As Christians we must understand there are many obstacles the enemy will place before us as we walk the pathway of life. The Bible tells us there are many traps set by Satan which are designed to hinder, deter, discourage, and dishearten us in order to keep us from receiving the promises of God. Satan can even appear as an “angel of

light” to individuals to deceive those who are not rooted and grounded in faith.

The enemy will use anything, everything, and anyone he can to hinder our walk with Christ. Satan will use wives, husbands, family, friends, co-workers, church members, and even ministers to steal our peace and the promises God has given us. Satan will use anyone or anything he can to draw Christians away from Christ.

FINDING FOCUS

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. Hebrews, ch. 12, vs. 2.

If we are going to be victorious over “all the works of the enemy” we must “keep our eyes on Jesus “the author and finisher” of our faith. We cannot expect to win battles on the battlefields of life if we are not keeping our eyes on Christ.

It is imperative for us to understand that “we are not battling flesh and blood.” Our warfare is a spiritual one--not a natural one. Natural man is not our spiritual enemy. Our worst enemy is the flesh. The flesh has the propensity to become easily offended. When others around us are “not using wisdom” or “treating us fairly,” some of us have a tendency to “fly off the handle” and allow our fleshly emotions to rule our spirit man. The flesh has the propensity to cause us to lose control.

The flesh causes people to sin when they are drawn away by their lustful desires and erotic emotions. In reality, the flesh can become our worst enemy if we allow it to be. The enemy (Satan) knows our “hot buttons,” and he will place others in “our way” to steal our peace, joy and victory.

If we can control our flesh, we will have no problem handling the devil. When we have learned how to keep the flesh in subjection, the devil will have no place in us. If we can put the flesh under subjection, we will walk in victory even when the enemy uses others to try to discourage and dishearten us along our earthly journey.

We become our own enemy when we reject the counsel of God and refuse to keep our hearts and minds STAYED upon Christ. When we lose our focus on Christ, we lose our discernment. When we take our eyes off Christ, we will be placing our focus on someone or something else which will hinder our walk with the Lord.

If we are not totally focused on Christ, the deceitfulness of riches and the cares of this world will keep us from living victoriously in Christ. The “divine nature” within us will not focus on earthly things but on the things which are above where our life is hidden in Christ. When we are determined to pursue the “divine nature” above everything else, we will be able to control our earthly emotions and attitudes because His Spirit will be dwelling richly within us.

CHAPTER 6

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THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every work into judgment including every secret thing, whether it is good or it is evil. Ecclesiastes, ch. 12, vs. 13-14.

The “whole duty of man” is to fear God and keep His commandments. If we do not fear God, we will be unable to KEEP His commandments. If we are going to KEEP His commandments, we have to stay focused on Him. We must be determined to do all we can to fulfill His plan and purpose for our lives. The “fear of the Lord” is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge. (Proverbs 1:7 and 9:10). Without the “fear of the Lord,” we cannot or will not possess godly wisdom and knowledge.

Everything we do here on Earth will come under judgment, whether it be good or whether it be bad. Evil will be punished, and good will be rewarded. Nothing people do here on Earth will escape the judgment of God. We must not fall into the same trap

as many others who lost their focus, rejected godly counsel, and fell from grace. Our focus must continually be on Christ and the cross we have to pick up and carry every day in order to follow Him. Our cross is not heavy nor burdensome, but is a place of death where we must “crucify our flesh” in order for us to be raised to life in His likeness.

THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews, ch. 12, vs. 1-2.

Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith. He is the author and finisher of the “divine nature” which He imparts to us as believers. Determination will assure us we can and WILL walk in the fullness of Christ as we run this race with patience and endurance.

Many disciples who followed Christ in the beginning left Him because they could not keep their

focus on the prize which was set before them. They were not determined to “press forward toward the mark of the high calling.” They had more important things to focus on than “the gospel.” For them the gospel of the Kingdom was hard to understand and receive. However, the original disciples, excluding Judas, resolved to keep their eyes on Christ and follow Him wherever He went because He had the “words of eternal life.” (John 6:68).

Eleven of the original twelve disciples would “go into all the world” to preach the message Jesus had entrusted them with. Judas would betray Christ for 30 pieces of silver and die a horrible death because of his love for money. Another disciple, Matthias, was chosen to take the place of Judas. These twelve disciples have been credited with “turning the whole world upside down” as they “went into all the world” to “preach the gospel.” (Acts 17:6).

Many people today are betraying Christ in their hearts for fortune and fame. If Christians are not careful and fail to guard their hearts, the spirit of greed can enter into their hearts and deceive them. The Bible says the “deceitfulness of riches” and the “cares of this world” will choke the Word (Christ) of God. Choosing earthly treasures rather than the true riches which are found only in Christ is not wise.

As Christians we must be determined to follow Christ wherever He may lead us. During our journey through life we will find the fullness of Christ and the power He wishes to give to us. God cannot trust

everyone with His power. He is looking for those He can trust to carry the power of the “gospel of Christ” to again “turn the world upside down” for Him.

Elisha was determined to get a double portion of the spirit of Elijah. Elijah told Elisha he would receive a “double portion” of the Spirit if he saw him taken up to heaven. Therefore, Elisha refused to leave Elijah alone and followed him everywhere he went for several years. Finally, with Elisha watching, Elijah departed and was taken up to Heaven in a whirlwind as his mantle fell to the ground. Elisha picked up Elijah’s mantle and received the “double portion” he was promised by Elijah.

Persistence is what God is looking for in people. God is looking for people like Elisha who are determined to receive the power of the Spirit which is imparted to believers through the “divine nature of Christ.” If we keep our eyes on Christ and continue to follow Him wherever He leads us, we will receive the “divine mantle” Jesus wishes to place upon each one of us.

Imagine what would happen if the Church was full of Elishas. Imagine what would happen if every Christian was determined they were going to be FILLED with the fullness of Christ. If the entire Church pursued the “divine nature of Christ,” we could “turn the entire world upside down--over and over again.

Jesus is still looking for Elijahs, Elishas, Peters, Pauls, Johns, Janes, and Judys who will “forsake all” and take the gospel to the nations. Jesus is waiting on the people He has chosen who have not yet “picked up their crosses” to follow Him wherever He may lead them. Many have been called, but few are chosen because many refuse to “heed the call.”

For many the “call” is just to share the gospel with those in their neighborhood or those they may work with. This is the part of the world which they have been called to minister to. Unfortunately, many will not even follow Jesus to Church on Sunday much less follow Him to their neighbor’s house to tell them about Christ.

For others, the call to the ministry is to help support their local churches or financially support the mission fields at home and abroad. Even that seems to be TOO MUCH of a burden to bear for most. Many have been chosen to “go into all the world” to preach the gospel. Others have been called to go into their neighborhood. Still others have been called to go to nursing homes and hospitals, or share the gospel on the street with people who have no homes.

We will all be held accountable if we fail to “heed the call” or fail to FULFILL the calling God has placed on our life. For those who do not KNOW or understand what God has called them to do, now would be a good time to ask Him. I prayed and fasted for several days before the Lord gave me “marching orders.” Others have received orders in different ways.

However “HOLY ORDERS” have always come by earnestly praying and seeking the Lord for His “true direction” for our lives.

CHAPTER 7

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BUYING GOLD

Because you say I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked—I counsel you to “buy from me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich, and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed: and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. Revelation, ch. 3, vs. 17-18.

Gold is used in scripture to prophetically illustrate the “divine nature of Christ.” Gold is the most precious of all metals here on Earth. It is long lasting, durable and beautiful. Gold is one of the most sought after treasures on Earth. Men have searched since the beginning of time to obtain this precious metal because of the POWER it gives them to obtain what they desire most.

Gold and what gold can buy is what natural men seek for more than anything else on Earth. For some people, it is the things that gold can obtain for

them which make it most important. For others, it is the things they can buy and the POWER it gives them to control and rule over others. For many the desire to obtain gold, money and/or other precious minerals is an “obsession” which leads to sin, sorrow and depression for all who are under the beguiling spell of avarice. The lust of the eye and the lust of the flesh will never be satisfied with material things.

In the Bible we find that gold represents the “divine nature of Christ.” There is nothing more precious or valuable to believers than “His divine nature.” True riches are found only in the character of Christ. Unfortunately, natural man is more interested in “natural gold” than the “DIVINE GOLD” which can free them from the bondage of sin and the deceptive allure of power, natural wealth and riches.

The Laodicean Church had lost their spiritual focus. They had turned away from Christ, their first love, and traded their faith and love of Christ for mammon. The deceitfulness of riches had blinded their minds, and the WORD of God was no longer a priority to them. Because they were wealthy in worldly goods, they thought they had need of nothing. They trusted in their wealth rather than the true riches which can only come by possessing “the divine nature.”

Jesus sent the Laodicean Church a harsh rebuke telling them they were “spiritually wretched, poor, blind and naked.” The first thing Jesus told them to do was to “buy gold.” Jesus admonished them to “buy GOLD from Him that had been refined in the

fire.” Jesus was counseling the Church at Laodicea to buy the “true riches” which would have an eternal impact on their lives. Jesus is saying the same thing to the Laodiceans which are found in many of our churches today.

THE REFINER’S FIRE

Buy from me gold refined in the fire.

Revelation, ch. 3, vs. 18.

The words “tried” and “trial” in the Book of Revelation originated from the Greek word which means “refined” or “purified.” It speaks of an object being placed into a melting pot to purify it of the things which made it impure. Natural gold must be purified or melted in order to separate the “pure gold” from the impure elements found in and around the gold.

In Bible days gold was purified by placing it in a crucible and heating it until all the impurities were melted out. When the gold had been purified, it could be formed or molded into whatever someone desired to make. Unfortunately, for many the gold was made into idols of worship as they turned away from God.

The “divine nature” or “person of Christ” was tried in the fires of tribulation when He was crucified at Calvary. The “true riches” in Christ were found to be pure, holy unblemished, unadulterated, and untarnished. Jesus had committed no sin, however, He was tried and declared guilty in the court of opinion by

those He had created. He willingly was crucified on their behalf for THEIR iniquities and sins.

Gold is usually found in rock or quartz to be specific. Quartz is a crystalline rock. Today crystals are sought out by New Agers and others who dabble in the occult, magic, mysticism, and divination. They believe crystals have certain powers which can help them obtain the things they desire most. In reality, the idea that crystals have some kind of supernatural powers is just a lot of hocus pocus engendered by demonic entities to draw others into the world of the occult.

In Christianity the crystalline which is found around gold represents the “false precepts” in the minds of believers which block them from breaking through to where the true riches or the “divine nature” can be found. False teachings in many churches today have kept believers from obtaining the true riches (the divine nature) which is able to free them from sin, sorrow and demonic oppression. The “true riches” are hidden in the heart of every “true believer” waiting to help the believer to rule and reign with Christ in this life.

My, brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect

and complete, lacking nothing. James, ch. 1, vs. 2-4

The quartz which is found around the gold represents the “hardness of the heart” in many believers which must be removed in order to get to the “true riches.” At times we all will go through trials and tests in our life. However, because of the hardness of the hearts of many people, they become purified through MANY trials and tribulations. When the “old man” has been crucified, the “new man” (Christ) emerges to rule and reign in our hearts through truth, faith and righteousness.

One of the warnings for Christians found in Scripture regarding the end times is that “false teachings” will abound in the Church. False doctrines will always block the true riches found in the “divine nature” from being revealed in and to the believer. The refiner’s fire, the true Word of God, purifies the believer who seeks after the truth.

In the Sermon on the Mount discourse Jesus stated “only the pure in heart will see God.” If our hearts are not pure, we will be unable to see clearly through the eyes of our understanding or understand His Word clearly. We will be unable to fulfill His “entire” plan and purpose for our lives.

Jesus is coming back for a Church without “spot or wrinkle, or any such blemish.” (Ephesians 5:27). There will be no BLEMISHES left in the Church when

Jesus comes to receive His “Holy Bride” to consummate the age. Jesus adores His bride and will make her Holy by the “washing of water” by the power of His Word.

If we are to become a Church without spot or wrinkle, we MUST be filled with the FULLNESS of Christ. We cannot be filled with the fullness of Christ unless we are washed, purified and FILLED with His “divine nature.”

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you, but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. 1 Peter, ch. 4, vs. 12-13.

Along with the “washing of the water of the Word” comes persecutions, tests and trials which are designed to PURIFY the Church, the Bride of Christ, and “make her Holy.” When the Word of God is dwelling richly within us, we will be able to stand victoriously during times of persecution, tests, and trials which we face.

The Bible tells us to “Be Holy even as He is Holy. (1 Peter 1:16). Holiness is one of the greatest and most honorable characteristics of the “divine nature.” Without Holiness “no man will see God.” (Hebrews

12:14). If we fail to put on “the fullness of Christ,” we cannot and will not be completely “set apart” and “fully sanctified” unto the Lord. Without Holiness we will be unable to consummately fulfill GOD’S perfect plan and purpose for our lives.

CHAPTER 8

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FOOL'S GOLD

ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD.

During the Gold Rush days of the 1800's many miners found what they believed to be real gold, but they were mistaken. They thought they had found the "Mother Lode," but all they had found was something that looked like gold. They had found what is called "fool's gold." Fool's gold is a mineral called "pyrite." On close inspection fool's gold does not look exactly like the real thing.

Many in churches today trust in "fool's gold" because their leaders do not understand the difference between the real and the profane. Christians need to seek for the "true riches" which can only be found in the "true nature" of Christ not in their own motives and desires.

We can use this analogy when confronted with a gospel which "looks like the truth" but instead is an attempt to subvert and change the "true gospel." Satan deceives many into thinking there are many pathways which lead to Heaven. In reality there is only one pathway to Heaven. Jesus is the Truth (reality), the Life and the Way (pathway). Unfortunately, many people fail to seek the truth for themselves, thus they end up following a substitute Jesus (fool's gold) who

leads them down the pathway which leads to spiritual death and destruction.

In reference to gold mining, the term “Mother Lode” is defined as a “principle vein of gold ore.” The term is also used metaphorically referring to things which are valuable or in great abundance. When people suddenly become wealthy, one of the similes which some use is “I have hit the Mother Lode.”

As Christians we all should be seeking the “Father Lode.” Prophetically, gold found in the “Father Lode” speaks of the “vein of gold (treasure)” which ran through the “veins of Jesus.” There is no greater treasure in Heaven or on Earth than the “Blood of Jesus.” The “Blood of Jesus” which was shed on the Cross at Calvary was paid as ransom for the souls of all mankind. However, only those who accept Christ as Lord and Savior will have access to “His divine nature.”

The “true gold,” the “divine nature” is administered to believers by and through the power of the “Blood of Jesus.” When we accept Jesus and become born again, His “Blood” runs through our “spiritual veins” to give us NEW LIFE and establish His “divine nature” within us.

As Christians our victory can only be found in the overcoming power of the “precious Blood of Jesus.” Our victory over sin, sickness and disease is found only in the “Blood of Jesus.” The power to tread upon serpents, scorpions and over all the power of the enemy is found ONLY in the “Blood of Jesus.” “OH THE

BLOOD OF JESUS—THERE IS POWER IN THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS!”

We all need to be “down-loded” (downloaded) with the principles which are found in abundance in the Word of God. We need to be “down-loded” (downloaded) with the “divine nature of Christ” which is offered to us through the power of “His precious Blood.” There is no greater treasure which we can seek and possess than the “divine nature of Christ.” There is nothing more important or valuable for Christians than being FILLED with the fullness of Christ.

Fool’s gold looks much like real gold, and many have been deceived by thinking they had found “the real thing.” Fool’s gold has the yellowish color of Gold. It shines like gold and resembles gold in many ways, but it is not gold. Fool’s gold does not have the hardness of real gold, nor can it withstand the pressure “real gold” can stand.

Many of the gold miners who thought they had found “real gold” fooled themselves into thinking they had become rich; however, in reality they were “foolish” and sadly mistaken. Charlatans sold fool’s gold to many people who “foolishly” thought they were getting a bargain as many do today. They were surprised and thoroughly embarrassed when they tried to exchange their “newly found” wealth for cash.

When it comes to reality fools cannot or will not acknowledge the truth when they are exposed to or confronted with the truth. The truth of the Gospel sets

**men free, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.
(Proverbs 1:7).**

Many in churches today are unable to distinguish between the “true nature of Christ” and a Christ who Church Leaders proclaim to be Christ, but is an imposter. The Apostle Paul said “If anyone comes preaching another Jesus or another gospel than he preached let him be accursed. (read 2 Corinthians 11:3-4 and Galatians 1:8). There is a curse which comes upon those who preach “another Jesus,” as well as those who follow their teachings.

Not all that looks, sounds, and feels like the “divine nature” is the “divine nature.” Many accept spiritual substitutes which are the “habitats of fools.” Many do not look to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith, but to a substitute Jesus who will allow them to do anything they desire and still make it into Heaven.

Real gold (the divine nature) will not fall apart under pressure, but will stand firm during the trials and storms of life. The “true gold (the nature of Christ)” has been tested and tried in the fiery furnaces of affliction and will stand victoriously against the onslaught of the enemy without disillusion or repudiation.

Many Christians today have accepted a substitute gospel which will never bring them true peace and freedom from deception, depression, and demonic subjugation. They listen to the cunning fables of

spiritual charlatans and shamans who tell them they can do what they want and still make it to Heaven. They teach them that “earthly prosperity” is more important than “heavenly posterity.” They teach them that “earthly profits” are to be desired more than “heavenly prophets.” They tell them that they can “buy a stairway to heaven” and “walk them golden stairs” when they die. Unfortunately, many people think they are taking the “UP ESCALATOR” to Heaven. However, in reality they are taking the “DOWN ESCALATOR” which leads to death and destruction.

Fool’s gold is found today in the hearts and minds of many of those in churches who have ears that “itch” to hear that God does not have a problem with their sins. Their itching ears prove they despise true wisdom and instruction. They will find themselves following the pathway which leads to death and destruction because they refuse to listen to the voice of righteousness, reason, and reality.

False doctrines are like fool’s gold. They may look like the real thing, but they are man-made and worthless. False doctrines will be useless when the trials and tribulations of life encompass the believer. Fools will walk in the counsel of the ungodly and sit in the seat of the scornful. Ungodly counsel produces foolishness in those who listen to and/or adhere to spiritual charlatans who are only interested in promoting their own agendas while making themselves rich.

The Church at Laodicea mistakenly thought they were rich. Unfortunately, they were unable to distinguish between true riches and “fool’s riches.” Jesus said the Laodiceans thought they were rich, but in reality they were poor and wretched. They had chosen earthly riches over the true riches which can only be found in the “divine nature of Christ.” Their focus, motives and attitudes were geared toward earthly treasures rather than the treasures of righteousness, grace and peace. Their love and reasonable service to the Lord had become non-existent.

The Laodiceans had become spiritually naked, destitute and blind. Their hearts were not pure and their understanding of truth had been compromised. Jesus told them to “anoint their eyes with eye salve” so they could clearly see the condition of their hearts. If people prefer “earthly riches” over “heavenly riches,” they will never be changed into the image of Christ.

The Bible says only the “pure in heart (the sincere)” will see God. (Matthew 5:8). Only the sincere will be able to see God and understand the truth in His Word. Only those who seek to be “like Christ” will become “Christ-like.” Only “the pure in heart” will see God. The “sincere” will seek to find the “divine nature of Christ” and become transformed into His “divine image.”

THE GOLD RUSH

In 1848 gold was discovered at a place called Sutter’s Mill near Sacramento, California, setting off

the great California Gold Rush. When word spread about the discovery of gold, hundreds of thousands of people RUSHED to California from all over the world in search of gold. This event is known as the “Great California Gold Rush.”

In relation to the numbers of people who RUSHED to California to find a fortune in gold, there were relatively few who became rich. Many people died in the gold fields as they were seeking to become wealthy. Many others became sorely disappointed when they failed to find any or very little gold. Many died at the hands of others who killed them in order to steal their claims.

Greed has a way of gripping the hearts of men causing them to do many foolish things, including murder. Earthly riches are deceptive and can bring much pain and sorrow to those who trust in riches rather than Christ.

The Bible says, “Those who trust in riches will fall.” (Proverbs 11:28). This scripture is not saying that people should not HAVE riches, but rather that they should not TRUST in riches. The Bible also says, “God gives wealth to people so His covenant can be established on Earth.” (Deuteronomy 8:18). Riches are not inherently evil. However, trusting in wealth and ignoring the “true riches” which comes from being FILLED with Christ will leave people spiritually blind, destitute and poor.

Many people have spent everything they owned in an effort to “gain wealth.” Many men have lost fortunes by squandering what they owned. Still others dedicate their lives to trying to become rich and successful, but never obtain anything except an empty bank account and a broken spirit. Money is not the answer to mankind’s problems. JESUS IS THE ANSWER to all of mankind’s problems.

There needs to be a “New Rush for Gold,” for believers. Christians need to RUSH to Jesus if they desire to be partakers of the true riches found only in the “divine nature of Christ.” The greatest treasure in existence is CHRIST JESUS and His “divine nature.”

The treasures which cannot be seen are GREATER and more precious than those which can be seen. True riches can only be found in the “divine nature of Christ.” These riches cannot be bought. They have already been paid for by the Blood of Christ, and they are freely given to all who will “believe on His Name.” True riches are freely given to believers who seek after them with their whole heart. Above all things Christ must be our “first love” and the “greatest desire of our heart.”

Everything we own in the natural can become hindrances to us if we desire them more than we do Christ. If we put Christ second place in our lives, we will not be partakers of the “divine nature.” We must RUSH to Jesus if we are to find the hidden treasures of His righteousness, love, joy, grace, peace, and mercy.

CHAPTER 9

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GO FOR THE GOLD

Therefore, we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

Hebrews, ch. 12, vs. 1.

For several months before the Olympic Games take place every four years we continually hear the term “Go For The Gold.” The best athletes from around the world gather together during the Olympic Games to compete for gold medals in their respective sports.

Olympic athletes train for years in order to win the prestigious awards which are given to these athletically gifted individuals. Every athlete gives his or her best effort to achieve the status of “best of the best.” The Gold Medal which the winners receive is proof they arose above all adversity and competition to become winners of the best athletic prize on Earth.

Going for the “true Gold,” the divine nature of Christ, should be the desire of the heart of every believer. The Bible says there are heavenly “witnesses”

watching us and are cheerfully praying for us “to win the gold” as we run with endurance the race which is set before us. Jesus is standing at a heavenly portal watching the race we all are running. He is optimistically encouraging us to reach out to Him as we “press forward toward the mark of the high calling of God.”

The Holy Spirit is running beside us and encouraging each one of us as we press forward toward “the finish line.” If we wish to “win the prize” of the “high calling of God,” we must faithfully run until we finish the race we have begun. Our greatest desire should be to hear the words “Well done My good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord” when we have finished our course.

THE RACE

Several years ago I had a dream about a race. In the dream I was living in a large city. One morning I got out of bed, got dressed, and went outside. There were a few people who were jogging down the street in front of me. The people were not looking from side to side, but kept their focus on the road straight ahead of them as they were “running the race.”

Everything looked natural and normal to me. I walked over to the street where the people were running. Without hesitation, I found myself jogging and running along with the others. The farther I ran, the more people I saw joining in the race. Ahead of me

in the distance I could see there was a great crowd of people who were also running in this race.

The farther I ran “with the crowd,” the more people I could see around me running in the race. The “crowd” of runners became so thick that soon everybody was running shoulder to shoulder with their shoulders rubbing up against each other. The runners finally became so pressed together that no one could move in any direction except forward. I did not know where I was going or why I joined in the race. I was just “following the crowd.”

There were so many people behind me and in front of me that the forward motion of the press of the crowd became terrifying. About a quarter of a mile ahead of me the street narrowed down as we came closer and closer to a small underground tunnel.

We came to a place where there were high walls on both sides of the street which could not be climbed. Unfortunately, the only direction which people could go was forward toward the dark tunnel which was looming perilously ahead of us. No one was able to turn around because the press of the crowd was driving everyone forward from back to front.

The press became tighter and tighter as the people came closer and closer to the tunnel. The momentum of the runners which were behind us was pushing forward the runners in front of them into the dark tunnel. Panic began to set in among the runners because everybody was now being crushed and pushed

forward into the tunnel by the multitudes of runners behind them.

As I came closer and closer to the tunnel, I realized it was not a tunnel but a gateway to Hell. I began to panic as I realized any escape had become impossible. There was no way of escape as the momentum and press of the crowd pushed me closer and closer to the Gateway of Hell.

There was no way of pushing back because the momentum of the masses was too great. I knew if I entered into the tunnel there would be no way of escape for me. I knew that the other runners would all be doomed for eternity. To say I was “desperate for help” would be an understatement. I cannot describe or express the fear which gripped my heart as I was being pushed closer and closer to the tunnel. My fear grew stronger and stronger as I approached the Gateway to Hell.

Just as I was at the brink of being pushed by the crowd into the mouth of the dark tunnel, I looked up. I realized the only way I could be saved from the destruction which was immediately ahead of me was to somehow get “above my circumstances.” However, everybody was pressed together, and there was absolutely nothing I could grab onto in order to pull myself out of the press of people pushing me forward toward the tunnel.

Suddenly, I looked up and saw above me a man who I will call an Angel. The Angel appeared “over

me” and looked down at me just as the crowd was beginning to push me into the mouth of the dark tunnel. He appeared to be monitoring events which were taking place below him on a computer. He then motioned to another Angel to reach down and help me. As I reached my hand up toward the Angel above me, he grabbed my hand and pulled me out of the crowd and up to safety.

As I was waking up my body was shaking all over. The dream I had just experience seemed so real it was unnerving. I had just experienced what it would feel like when someone enters into the Gateway of Hell without a way of escape.

I guess you could say the race I was running could be called the “human race.” We are ALL part of the human race. Every person is running this race. We all need to realize that we are running a race “toward eternity.” Those who are running this race without Christ will eventually find themselves entering into the gates of Hell.

At first the race seemed harmless as I ran in the same direction as all the other runners. Many people were already in the race, and many others were continually joining us as we were running down the road. For a while everything seemed to be going well for all those who were running the race. However, before I realized what was happening, the race suddenly became a literal nightmare and it seemed as though I would not and could not make it out alive. I did not realize at the time that the race which I was running

would lead me to the Gateway of Hell where I would be unable to escape.

The road which leads to Hell is a wide and deceptive one. There are many things along the “Broad Way” people focus on which will lead them to the gates of Hell. One day everything will seem to be fine and everyone will be enjoying the race. However, there are deadly and dire consequences for those who are running along the “Broad Path” of life toward the finish line of Hell.

If people fail to lift their eyes and hands toward heaven and reach out to the only one who can save them from their sins, they will be doomed for eternity. Once people have entered into the depths of Hell, there is no hope for salvation. There is NO WAY of escape for those have taken the “Broad Path” in life and end up in the throes of eternal suffering, agony, and torment.

At first glance the people who were running the race with me did not seem to be any hindrance to me. As I ran farther and farther in the race I began to realize that the mass of people running in the race with me had become a hindrance to me, as well as my downfall. The proximity to me and the press (pressure) around me would have soon forced me into the tunnel along with the others if I had I not reached up to Heaven for help.

When we sincerely lift our hands up to Jesus and ask Him for His help, we will find His grace and mercy in our time of need. When we sincerely repent

and confess our sins to God, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9).

THE PRIZE

Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before me, I press toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians, ch. 3, vs. 13-14.

The truth is we are ALL running a race toward either Heaven or Hell. The Apostle Paul admonished us to run this race set before us with “patience and endurance.” As Christians our race is pointed in a different direction than those who are headed toward the gates of Hell. As Christians our race is being run toward the Gate of Heaven. We need the “divine nature of Christ” to help us run that race purposely, patiently and perfectly so we can finish the race and win the “Crown of Life” which is awaiting us in Heaven.

As Christians we are all running the race in a different direction than the world. However, there is always pressure from others in the world who sometimes knowingly and unknowingly pressure us into “running” in the direction which they are going. Those who live among us and beside us, including those we closely associate with, are influencing our lives daily--some negatively and some positively.

There are principalities and powers who are continually trying to lead us off the “Narrow Path” onto the “Broad Path” which leads to destruction. We and we alone decide which goal we race toward and where we will spend eternity. We alone decide which path we are pressing forward on and which goal we are running toward.

If we are going to win the prize which is set before us, it is our responsibility to **PRESS FORWARD toward the finish line in the race we are running. We do this by laying aside every weight and the sins which so easily besets us and hinders our progress in Christ. Pursuing and obtaining the fullness of the “divine nature of Christ” will ensure us we will win the prize of the “mark of the high calling of God.” We must be determined to pursue Christ and “go for the gold” as we run our race with determination and patience.**

CHAPTER 10

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DIVINE LOVE

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us that we should be called children of God! Therefore, the world does not know us, because it does not know Him. 1 John, ch. 3, vs. 1.

Divine love can only be found in the “divine nature of Christ.” The greatest characteristic or virtue of Christ is LOVE. God’s love transcends all other virtues of the “divine nature.” Love is more than just an emotion or feeling, it is a person. The Bible says “God is love.” Love is not just a part of His nature, but love defines who He is.

Jesus is the express image of the Father. The “divine love” which dwells in and motivates the Father is the same love that dwells in and motivates the Son. No greater love exists in Heaven or on Earth than the love which dwells in the bosoms of the Father and the Son.

God bestowed His love upon us so we could become and be called the “sons and daughters of God.” (1 John 3:1). God is Life AND Love, and He desires to share His Life and Love with everyone. Jehovah is a

Father who desires to produce children after His own kind--children of Light who are filled with His Life and Love as well as His grace and mercy.

God has always desired to share His love with all who will accept His love, grace, and mercy. Everything God does on our behalf is based on “His love for us.” Even when He has to chastise us, it is because of His undying love for us. The Bible says “He chastens those He loves.” (Hebrews 12:6).

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John, ch. 3, vs. 16

John 3:16 is probably the most well-known, and one of the most powerful verses of scripture which is found in the Bible. Many people have been drawn to the Lord and committed their life to Christ through the power of this one verse. God loved mankind so much He sent His only begotten Son to die a cruel death at Calvary. Only those who choose to believe on the sacrifice of Christ at Calvary will receive forgiveness of their sins and eternal life.

“Divine love” is not just a “fuzzy little feeling” we get in our stomach which makes us want to cuddle up closely with someone. Love is the strongest of all emotions. Divine love is much more and goes far

beyond just a strong desire to be with someone you have deep feelings for in a natural sense.

Divine love is also “pure love.” It comes out of a pure heart motivated by unselfishness and compassion. Pure love--the God-kind of love--is not based upon how we perceive a person’s physical appearance, their personality, how well they can speak, or how much talent they may possess. It is not based upon what someone can do for someone else, or on the capacity of one to return love. The God-kind of love goes beyond human understanding and cannot be understood by the finite minds of men.

Love is the most powerful force in the universe. Love was the motivating factor behind the creation of the universe, and subsequently the creation of mankind. Love has the propensity to and can change the course of human nature. Through the knowledge of God we can find the existence and power of His amazing love when we seek Him with all our heart.

Divine love has the power to change the emotions and attitudes of people who are bound by animus, hatred, malice and prejudice to name a few. Divine love has the power to change the way we feel about the destitute, indigent, needy, poor, and downtrodden. When people encounter, experience and acknowledge the virtues of “divine love,” they will treasure God’s “divine love” in their hearts for eternity. Rejecting the love of God is the most foolish thing a person can do. It is a death sentence which damns souls throughout eternity.

GOD IS LOVE

He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 1 John, ch. 4, vs. 8-9.

The Bible tells us “God is love” and that LOVE never fails. Love never fails BECAUSE God is love and He CANNOT fail. If God could fail, love would no longer exist and life could never be found again in Heaven or on Earth. Eternal life exists only through the power of God’s Love and Life.

The God kind of love is a perpetual virtue which rules Heaven perpetually. The love of God is more powerful than anything which exists. It is God’s nature to love. It is the nature of God to love even those who are unlovable. It is God’s nature and desire to love people, even when they are unworthy of His love.

Without love there is no hope, only anguish, pain, sorrow, loneliness, and despair. Without love the “hope of salvation” would not exist. Without love mankind would be eternally lost in their sins destined for an eternity in the Lake of Fire where their “worm does not die and the flames are never quenched.” (Mark 9:48).

LOVE’S DIVINE PURPOSE

That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge: that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Ephesians, ch. 3, vs. 10.

Love's "divine purpose" is to give eternal life to all who will believe in Jesus Christ. God is not only LOVE, but He is also LIFE. God prefers love over hate and life over death. He does not wish for anyone to perish, but desires for all to receive the life He offers through the Blood Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

God prefers justification over judgment and justice over injustice. God loves those who hate evil and hates those who love evil. Yes, God is love, but He is also a God of severity, justice and judgment. (Romans 11:22). God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him and a rock of offence to those who oppose Him. God rewards those who sincerely repent of their sins. He gives grace to the humble. God rejects the proud and the haughty. (James 4:6).

The concept of "divine love" surpasses all knowledge and understanding. Why God loves people who do not acknowledge or love Him is a mystery.

Many fail to believe or understand how this can be possible, but it is true.

We are filled with the fullness of God when we are filled with the fullness of His love. The love God has bestowed upon us gives us the power and ability to “walk in and be conduits” of His “divine love.” In Christ we live and move and have our being. In Christ we can love those who are unlovable and those who do not love us because we are emissaries of the “divine nature.”

As Christians we are Ambassadors of Christ sent to the four corners of the Earth to gather in a harvest of souls for our Lord. We are able to go into “all the world to preach the gospel” because we have become channels of His “divine love.”

“Divine love” is self-sacrificing. It is longsuffering and kind. It rejoices in truth. It seeks not its own. It is not selfish. It rejoices in hope. It bears all things. It endures all things. “Divine love” never fails.

In 1975 Prophet Bob Jones died and found himself standing in line with others at the Pearly Gates of Heaven. Jesus was standing at the Gates of Heaven to welcome the saints who had “finished their course” and kept the faith. As each person came before the Lord He asked them one question: “Did you learn to love?” When Bob came before the Lord, Jesus told him he had not yet finished his assignment on Earth and sent him back.

God created each one of us to be instruments of His DIVINE LOVE, grace and mercy. He placed His love within us when we accepted Christ as our Lord and Savior. Without love we will be unable to show mercy to those who sin against us. Without love we will be unable to show the unmerited favor of God to others. Unfortunately, many Christians have not yet “learned to love.”

Jesus commanded us to show mercy and have compassion for our ENEMIES. He told us to forgive those who revile and persecute us. If we only love our families, friends, and our brothers and sisters in the Lord and despise the rest of the world, we are not characterizing “divine love.”

Love is the bond which binds the body of Christ together as we walk corporately together with the Lord. Unfortunately, many people in the Church fail to love others in the Church, much less love other people in the world. Many people are lost and have not been as fortunate as we have been to have heard the gospel and accepted Christ as Lord and Savior.

Loving those who love you is admirable. Loving those who despise, ridicule, hate, persecute, and forsake you is divine. To “err is human—to forgive is divine.” We have all made mistakes in our lives. We have all fallen short of the “glory of God.” We all have need of a Savior.

If we have not truly “learned to love,” we are not fulfilling the Law of Christ. If we have not “learned

to love” unconditionally, we will not be able to answer Christ in the affirmative when He asks us the heartfelt question: “Did you learn to love?”

We must remember that at one time we were all unlovable and have been unkind to others around us. Those who do not know Christ will not have access to His “divine nature” which we now have. We cannot expect those who do not know Christ to act Christ-like. Unless people accept Christ as their Lord and Savior, they will not possess the propensity to be “Christ--like.”

There are many in churches today who are not yet portraying the “divine nature of Christ.” Many Christians have not yet learned how to “walk in the Spirit.” Many Church leaders have failed to make disciples within their congregations. Many Christians do not even know how to “pray effectively.” When Christians do not know how to “pray effectively,” they “effectively fall prey” to the schemes and wiles of the enemy.

The power which enables us to walk in the fullness of the “divine nature of Christ” is available to ALL believers. When we “learn to love” we will learn to forgive. When we “learn to love” as Christ loves, we will walk in the fullness of the “divine nature.” When the Spirit of Christ dwells richly within us, the “love of Christ” will also dwell within us richly.

CHAPTER 11

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DIVINE HUMILITY

And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke, ch. 1, vs. 40.

The King of Kings and Lord of Lords was not born in a King's Palace. Born in a stable (a cave to be exact) in "humble surroundings," the Savior of the world began His earthly Crusade.

The King of Kings had left His home in Heaven on an earthly pilgrimage which would take Him from humble beginnings in a dirty, dark, damp cave surrounded by farm animals to a lonely hill called Mount Calvary. There the King of Kings would suffer a horrific death as He hung on a "cruel cross" bleeding and dying for the sins of all mankind.

Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the sayings which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which

were told them by the shepherds. Luke, ch. 2, vs. 17-18.

The angel Gabriel first announced the news of the new born “King of Kings” to “shepherds” tending their sheep on the hillsides near the Town of Bethlehem Judea. He did not go to the religious leaders in the area or to local authorities, but shepherds. The shepherds were told by Gabriel that the Messiah had been born in the nearby Town of Bethlehem.

The shepherds went to the cave where baby Jesus was lying in a manger to worship Him. After finding and worshipping the new born King of Kings, the shepherds went into the surrounding areas sharing the “good news” of the birth of Christ with everyone they came in contact with.

It is interesting to note that Gabriel shared the news of the birth of Christ first with lowly shepherds rather than religious leaders or people in authority in Bethlehem or anywhere else in the land of Canaan at that time. We see that the shepherds which announced the birth of Christ were types and shadows of the shepherds or church leaders today who share the gospel with the “sheep” within their congregations.

Modern day shepherds also share the “gospel” (good news) of the Messiah--King of Kings and Lord of Lords—Jesus Christ. When the gospel is preached and people receive the news of the Messiah, a new birth

takes place in the caves (inner most being) of their heart.

Jesus came to Earth as a King who would never sit on an earthly throne. He came as a King who would never wear a crown except one made of prickly thorns placed upon His Holy Head. He came to Earth as a King who would serve His subjects instead of rule over His subjects while here on Earth. “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45). Although He had created this world, His Kingdom was not of this world.

JESUS WAS LAID IN A “MANGER” IN BETHLEHEM. A few years back my wife and I lived on a farm in East Tennessee. I was raised in Detroit, Michigan, and did not know much about farm life until we moved to the farm. My wife, on the other hand, was raised in the country in East Tennessee and her family had a small farm. Therefore, she knew much more about country living than I did.

After obtaining the farm my wife and I were in the barn looking around. She pointed out to me what looked like a feeding trough and said “There is a manger.” I never knew that a manger was a feeding trough. Needless to say, I was surprised. I guess I never thought much about a manger or what it was used for in times past. Many farmers still feed their animals in this same way.

I looked at my wife and said, “That is really interesting.” The scripture came to me where Jesus said in John 6:53, “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood you have no life in you.” I said to my wife, “How appropriate. Jesus was placed in a feeding trough as a prophetic sign that people were to spiritually eat of His flesh and drink His blood.”

The flesh and blood of Christ represents the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary. We become partakers (spiritually) of His flesh and blood when we receive Him as our Lord and Savior. We continue to partake of His flesh and blood as we grow in Christ. His flesh represents “His broken body” or the WORD which is the “Bread of Life.” His Blood represents the “Life which is in the blood (new wine) of Christ.”

We are symbolically “eating His flesh” and “drinking His blood” as we continue walking in Christ and partaking of “His divine nature.” When we are partaking of the “sacraments,” we are prophetically “eating His flesh” and “drinking His blood.”

Eating the “Bread of Life” is more important than eating “natural bread.” It is the BREAD which preserves and sustains “eternal life” in believers. Jesus told us to pray “give us this day our daily bread.” Eating the “Bread of Life daily” will strengthen our faith and give us the spiritual nutrients we need to defeat our spiritual enemies and bless those around us.

THE HUMBLE HEART

*For the Lord takes pleasure in His people;
He will beautify the humble with salvation.
Psalm 149, vs. 4.*

Biblical humility is described as “unselfish, meek, and lowly in heart.” The word translated from the Greek as “humility” means: “lowliness of mind.” One of the characteristics of the “divine nature of Christ” is being humble minded.

Humility is an attitude of the heart. Jesus said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit (humble) for theirs is the Kingdom of God!” (Matthew 5:3). The Kingdom of God is set aside and reserved for the humble. Humility is a prerequisite for people who desire to enter into the Kingdom of God. “Whoever exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” (Luke 14:11). When we come before God we must come to Him as children with “child-like faith” or we will be rejected.

When we exalt ourselves we are opposing the “divine nature of Christ” and portraying the works of the flesh. When we exalt ourselves, we neutralize the grace and mercy of God in our life. Pride always glories in self-righteousness and opposes the righteousness of Christ. If we are going to pursue the “divine nature,” we must do so with humbleness of heart.

THE REST OF HUMILITY

Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Matthew, ch. 11, vs. 29-30.

Jesus said He was “lowly in heart (humble).” We can only find rest in Christ when we are “humble” in heart. True humility is found only in the “divine nature of Christ.” When we put on Christ, we are putting on the virtue of His “divine humility.” Being humble merely means “we are not arrogant, prideful, or boastful.” When we are truly humble, we will not think more highly of ourselves than we should. (Romans 12:3).

The Bible tells us to be “clothed with humility.” (1 Peter 5:5). When we get out of bed in the morning we should already be wearing our “cloak of humility.” If we are not clothed with humility others will see our “nakedness and shame.” If we fail to clothe ourselves with humility, Satan will find an opportunity to use us for his plan and purpose for our lives.

Humility is one of the virtues found in the “divine nature” of Christ. Jesus always humbled Himself before the Father. He was always found to be an obedient Son who would rather please the Father than the wishes and desires of himself or men. Jesus wore humility as a cloak. Christ is our example of humility as well as our place of rest. Jesus said in Matthew to “Learn of Me. I am to be your example of

humility. When you humble yourselves before the Almighty God, you will find rest in me.” (Matthew 11:28-30).

If the “divine nature” is to be found within us, it must be “birthed in and surrounded with humility.” With humility we can confidently go before the Throne of Grace in our time of need. (Hebrews 4:16). I call this BOLD HUMILITY. If we think too highly of ourselves in the presence of the King of Kings, our petitions will not be respected or granted.

God rejects the proud, but gives grace to the humble. (Proverbs 3:34). I have eaten a lot of “humble pie” in my life by approaching God with prideful motives and attitudes. Humble pie is very humiliating. It tastes like chicken without the meat. It makes the stomach feel empty and the knees kind of weak. God has a way of putting us in our place when we think more highly of ourselves than we should.

Humility will ensure us a “place of rest” in the Kingdom of God. Jesus Christ IS our rest. However, we will never find rest in Him until we learn how to humbly live before Him and in Him. If we are going to be changed into the image of Christ, we must humbly put on the “divine nature of Christ.”

CHAPTER 12

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DIVINE DESIRE

For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, And was clad with zeal as a cloak. Isaiah, ch. 59, vs. 17.

Jesus was passionate about pleasing God. His “divine desire” to please the Father led Him through life on Earth all the way to Calvary. He had a zeal to please God which goes beyond human understanding. Jesus was determined He would please God in everything He did. He delighted in fulfilling the plan and purpose God had for His life here on Earth. Jesus delighted in being obedient to the Father in every area of His life. He never succumbed to human desires, human aspirations, or human ambitions.

Jesus knew His sacrifice on the cross would please God. It was for this purpose God sent Him into the world. It did not please God in the sense that He enjoyed seeing His only Son suffer a horrible, painful death at Calvary, but in the sense that it would satisfy the need for justice. Christ paid the penalty for the sins and transgressions of the world enabling mankind to

become justified by “faith in His finished works.” The death of Jesus on the cross and His resurrection opened the door to Heaven for all who would trust in His “divine sacrifice.”

The greatest desire of Christ was to please God no matter what the cost. Even when it meant His own excruciating death at the hands of vengeful men, Jesus was willing to lay down His life for all mankind. Jesus, who knew no sin, became sin so the righteousness of God could be imputed to mankind. He knew His “death on the cross” was the plan and purpose of God for His life. Despising the shame and selflessly enduring the agonizing pain at Calvary, Christ paid the price for the redemption of everyone who would believe on His Name.

DIVINE DELIGHT

I delight to do your will, O my God, And your law is within my heart. Psalm 40, vs. 8.

“Divine desire” will always delight in pleasing God rather than self or man. When the “Law of the Lord” is written deeply within our hearts, our desire will be to please Him. When we have learned to forsake all others and follow after Christ, we will be pleasing to the Father.

God takes pleasure in giving us the Kingdom. (Luke 12:32). When we “delight in the Lord” we will “hide His Law within our hearts.” Fulfilling the Law of

God gives us access to His Kingdom. When we are fulfilling the Law of the Lord, we are fulfilling the plan and purpose which God has for our life. We will not be seeking to please ourselves but rather to be pleasing the Father in all we do.

Delight yourself also in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Psalm, 37, vs. 4.

Haggai calls Christ “the desire of all nations.” If we are truly delighting in the Lord, HE will become the desire of our hearts. What greater desire can one have but to be FILLED with the Spirit of God and clothed with the “divine nature of Christ?” Nothing pleases God more than seeing His people desiring to be more “Christ-like.”

When we are delighting in the Lord we will become clothed in His righteousness. When we delight ourselves in the Lord He fills us with joy and peace which passes all understanding. When we are delighting in the Lord, we will be filled with the God kind of love for everyone. When we are delighting in the Lord, we become candidates to receive all the promises written in His Word which He has assured us would be ours.

Our desire to dwell in the presence of God will always help us persevere in times of trouble. We will never lack any good thing when we are delighting ourselves in the Lord. (Psalm 34:9). God will keep us

safe in His bosom because we delight in being there. He assures us our enemies will not overtake and defeat us because we abide under His almighty shadow in the Cleft of the Rock where Christ is our refuge.

INORDINATE DESIRES

Therefore, put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, inordinate desire, and covetousness which is idolatry. Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. Colossians, ch. 3, vs. 5-6.

James said to “put to death,” among other things, inordinate desires. Inordinate desires are contrary and in total opposition to the “divine order and nature” of God. Inordinate desires are described as being “irregular or excessive” in nature.

Inordinate desires are a overindulgent condition of the human heart. They are inexpressible longings to have more than one would need. Inordinate desires will never be satisfied because the things “human nature” seeks for the most can and will never satisfy the soul. People with inordinate desires will heap upon themselves all the “pleasures of life” which they can obtain. The lust for “mammon and wealth” can never and will never be satisfied. Satisfaction will elude

them because true wealth and satisfaction can only come from being partakers of the “divine nature.”

Satan is always scheming and trying to pervert the will and desires of the human heart. The heart of natural man is susceptible to being entrapped by the longings of natural possessions and wealth. The desire for natural possessions can become excessive and impede the progression of Christ-like attitudes and behavior in Christians. True repentance for seeking natural possessions rather than the true riches of Christ will put us on the path of being endued with and empowered by the “Holy Spirit.”

God’s desire is that the heart and mind of every Christian be purified with the refining fires of “divine fervor” in order for us to be changed into the image of Christ. Human motives and attitudes can only be replaced with the “divine nature” by fervently and continuously seeking to be FILLED with the fullness of Christ Jesus. When we are filled with the fullness of Christ, we will be filled with the fullness of His “divine nature.”

Chapter 13

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THE RICH YOUNG RULER

Then Jesus looking at him, loved him and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way and sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me. But, he was sad at this word, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions. Mark, ch. 10, vs. 21-22.

The rich young ruler had "labored" to keep the Mosaic Law all his life. The character of the young man was a testimony of his lifestyle as a devout Jew who desired to please God by keeping His commandments. He followed the "letter of the Law" until He was confronted with the one command from Jesus which would separate him from his greatest possession--his wealth.

Many people today are falling into the same trap which the rich young ruler fell into. The deceitfulness of riches and the cares of this world will always conflict with the principles that promote and perfect godliness in the believer.

The rich young ruler was dedicated to observing the Law and was probably well known for his philanthropy. However, when confronted with making a choice between his wealth and following Christ, he could not separate himself from what he desired most—his earthly possessions. Therefore, in rejecting Christ he was rejecting the promise of “eternal life” which can only come by receiving and obeying Christ as Lord and Savior.

The rich young ruler had secured a place of trust and high position in life. He had accumulated great wealth and possessions. However, when he was faced with parting from the one thing which could bring him “position” in the Kingdom of God, he could not bring himself to part from the wealth he had gained. Wealth can become a stumbling block to those who trust in riches rather than Christ.

In the Kingdom of God nothing short of obedience is accepted by Christ. Self-surrender to Christ is the only yoke Jesus places on those who follow Him. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. For many people the yoke of worldly wealth keeps them continually in bondage to the things which really matter “least in life.” The deceitfulness of riches has sent many well meaning men and women to the pit of disillusion, depravity and destruction.

The only burden Jesus places upon His people is a burden for others who are less fortunate than they are. Jesus said “My yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:30). The yoke and burden of

riches is one which no man can carry without consequence when they trust in riches rather than Christ.

Had the rich young ruler accepted the challenge of Christ and given all his possessions to the poor, he would have placed himself into a position to receive even more than he already possessed both spiritually and naturally. Jesus said, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or lands for My sake and the gospel’s, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life.” (Mark 10:29-30).

COVENANT WEALTH

Jesus does not have a problem with people being rich. As a matter of fact, God gives some people wealth in order for His covenant to become established on Earth. (Deuteronomy 8:18). This is known as “covenant wealth.” God does not have a problem with people having wealth. However, God does have a problem with riches having people. We must not allow anything to come between us and Christ our Savior. Our relationship with Christ is much more important than our relationship with wealth and possessions. If we are not willing to give up all we possess and/or all those things which possess us, we are not a good fit for the Kingdom of God.

We cannot follow Christ without being obedient to His commands. The rich young ruler was more interested in his possessions than he was in serving Christ. His possessions became more of a liability to him than an asset when it came to his relationship and obedience to Christ. Jesus expects total obedience. He is looking for people who are willing to obey his commands without hesitation or question. Christ accepts nothing less from us than complete obedience.

Jesus could have told the rich young ruler that if he gave all his possessions to the poor he would receive many more earthly possessions as we see in the scripture above. However, the rich young ruler may have been giving his possessions away just to receive more wealth. His motives would not have been pure. He would have never been free from his possessions unless he gave them away for the right reasons. That is a lesson we should all take to heart. If we are attached to earthly possessions, we will be detached from the heavenly treasures which empower us to be free from covetousness and avarice.

The rich young ruler wanted to follow Christ, however to give up his possessions was “too much” for Jesus to ask of Him. Without Christ no one has the ability on their own to give up riches and possessions which hold them in bondage. People will never be truly free until they are FREE of the things which they deem to be more important than being FILLED with the “divine nature of Christ.”

Human desire is viewed in Heaven as evil, sinful, lustful, and covetous. If desire is self-centered or self-indulgent, it is not “divine” but is a byproduct of idolatry. Jesus told His disciples, “If any of you desires to follow me you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross and follow me.” (Luke 9:23) NLT. Men will be unable to follow Christ until and unless they purge themselves of their selfish ways.

Sometimes purging ourselves of selfishness is a process which happens over a period of time. Christians have to free themselves of selfish desires which hinder their walk with Christ before they can fully comprehend the love of God which passes all human understanding.

Jesus is looking for people who possess “divine motives and attitudes.” Jesus is looking for people who will follow Him wherever He goes without hesitation. Following Jesus for all the wrong reasons will not produce godly fruit in anyone. Christians will never be able to withstand the onslaught of the enemy when he comes in “like a flood” if they are following Christ for all the wrong reasons.

When the Lord is our greatest desire, all our other desires will be “divinely inspired and motivated.” The desire to fulfill the plan and purpose of God for our life should be first and foremost in our life or we will be missing the many blessings He has in store for us. God promised us He would give us the “desires of our hearts” when we “delight ourselves in Him.” (Psalm 37:4).

When we delight ourselves in the Lord, the FULLNESS of Christ will become the “desire of our heart.” Those who are emboldened and empowered with the “golden (divine) nature” of Christ will always “delight in Lord” rather than earthly riches and possessions.

YES THE ALMIGHTY WILL BE YOUR “GOLD” AND YOUR PRECIOUS SILVER; FOR THEN YOU WILL HAVE YOUR “DELIGHT” IN THE ALMIGHTY, AND LIFT UP YOUR FACE TO GOD. Job, ch. 22, vs. 25-26.

CHAPTER 14

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DIVINE PURPOSE

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself. Ephesians, ch. 1, vs. 9.

The mystery of God's plan and purpose for mankind is no longer a mystery since Christ has redeemed us through the power of His Blood. God desired to have a family which He could place His Spirit in. He also desired to have a people He could have fellowship with. God has a plan and purpose for His family which exceeds the understanding of natural men. God has given us the wisdom to understand His "divine plan and purpose" for our lives through the knowledge of His Word. Read Ephesians, ch. 3, vs. 1-12.

Divine purpose is rooted and grounded in the "divine nature of Christ." Finding "divine purpose" for our lives should be the goal of every believer. Without "divine purpose" we will be like a reed blowing in the

wind. We will be blown about by every wind of doctrine which comes along.

False doctrines are designed by the enemy to subtly lead people in the wrong direction. False doctrines will always lead people away from the cross of Christ and the very principles which graciously provide our souls a spiritual foundation to build and rest upon.

Many believers are unsure what their purpose is in life. They do not know that as Christians there is a “divine purpose” for their lives here on Earth. We have ALL been given a “divine purpose” which was foreordained before the foundation of the world to bring honor and glory to Christ and the Father.

Each Christian has been given different responsibilities. Each one of us has been given a ministry to perform. The five-fold ministry was not just given for the purpose of overseeing the Church, but to train and “equip the saints” for the work of the ministry. The five-fold ministry was a gift from Jesus to the Church to enable the Church to live together and function as ONE BODY as we dwell together in the unity of the Spirit. The gifts of the five--fold ministry were to be a seed or seeds which produce after their own kind.

We are all qualified to “do the work of the ministry” if and when we are equipped and trained to do so. God has given “talents” to each person according to the ability which resides within them. We ALL have

something we can contribute to the “work of the ministry.”

In the “Parable of the Talents,” Jesus gave talents to ALL His servants. (Matthew 25:14-30). One servant whom Jesus called “wicked” buried his talent in the earth (heart), and the talent produced nothing. When we do not use the talents God has given us to help further the cause of Christ, we are not and will not be fulfilling the plan and purpose of God for our life.

Those who pursue the “divine nature” will find God’s divine purpose and destiny for their lives. As Christians our purpose is to first “follow in the footsteps of Christ.” The steps of a righteous man are order by the Lord. (Psalm 37:23).

When we are following in the footsteps of Christ we will find our purposed destiny and righteousness will be instilled within us. We become rooted and grounded in faith as we follow Christ step by step. The plan and purpose of God for our lives is found in following Christ. We must follow in His footsteps if we are going to accomplish what He has called us to do.

AMBASSADORS OF CHRIST

All who accept Christ and follow Him are Ambassadors of Christ. We all have been called to be witnesses of the goodness of God and the grace and mercy He extends to all mankind, even to those who do not believe in His existence. We are all called to be

emissaries of the “divine nature” wherever we may go and whatever we may do in life.

Without purpose people will continue to wander aimlessly through life never receiving the promises or even understanding that the promises of God are for each and every one of us. When we fully understand the plan and purpose God has for our life, we will realize that our purpose for living is to be a reflection of His “divine nature” wherever we may go.

God offers the plan of salvation through the promise of the seed (Christ) to a lost and dying world. We are born again through the “power of that seed.” The “divine nature” of Christ is found in the “seed of promise.” Christ is the promise. Christ IS the “seed of promise.” When we are clothed with the “seed of promise,” we will carry the “divine nature” of Christ wherever we go as a witness to others of the love, goodness and mercy of God.

DIVINE WITNESSES

If we are going to be “divine witnesses” for Christ, we must first be clothed with the “divine nature” of Christ. The cause of Christ must take preeminence in our life. Nothing can be more important to us than serving Him. Nothing must stand in the way of our relationship with Christ. Our relationship with Christ is our most prized possession.

In Christ we MUST live and move and have our being if we are to be witnesses of His power and glory.

It is Christ “in us” that is the hope of glory “for us.” It is His “divine nature” which enables us to be like Him. It is His “divine nature” within us which gives us the power to do the “greater works” Christ told us we could do in His name. It is the “divine nature” which enables us to perform the miraculous, heal the sick, raise the dead and cast out demons IN HIS NAME.

If we are going to be “divine witnesses,” of Christ we must do it His way and not our way. We must be rooted and grounded in faith or we will be unable to do the “greater works” He said we could do. We must believe in the power of His Name when we call upon Him in our time of need or He will not respond to our prayers in the way we need Him to respond.

“Divine witnesses” are “divinely inspired” and led by the Holy Spirit to carry the gospel to others without hesitation, haughtiness, or hype. Their main goal is to prayerfully and purposely share their testimony of the goodness and mercy of God wherever they go to everyone who will listen.

“Divine witnesses” carry the “anointing” with them to the workplace, the market place, the home place and every other place they go. They carry out the orders they receive from headquarters which is based in heavenly places. They reject a mere “form of godliness” and become “conformed to the righteousness of Christ.” Their works are their testimonies, and Christ is their inspiration to perform righteous works.

THE WORKS OF THE ENEMY

He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 1 John, ch. 3, vs. 8.

The Bible tells us the devil comes to steal, kill and destroy. The purpose of Christ was/is to destroy ALL the works of the devil. As emissaries of the “divine nature,” we are all called to “destroy the works of the devil.” The scripture tells us that Christ has given us power and authority over ALL the works of the enemy. We have been endued with “power from on high” which enables us to perform the “works of Christ” as we faithfully minister to others.

When we obey the commandment to “go into all the world and preach the gospel,” we are fulfilling the Law (commandment) of Christ. When we have been transformed into the image of Christ, we will be able to perform the “works of Christ.” When we are clothed in the “divine nature of Christ,” we will possess the same power and authority over the enemy which He possesses.

It is imperative that we embrace the “divine assignment” which God has given each of us so we can fulfill the plan and purpose He has for our lives. If people are not seeking to complete the “divine assignment,” which He has given them, they will fail to receive His help in THEIR time of need.

The devil comes to steal the WORD when it has been sown into the hearts of God's people. If we are not rooted and grounded in faith, the "seed of promise" is stolen and the works of the enemy will dominate our circumstances. Traditions which are planted in the hearts of people by the enemy will cause the Word of God to become of no affect. The traditions of men will choke the Word of God, thus the promises of God become unattainable. Those who allow themselves to become "steeped in tradition" will have a problem embracing the promises of God.

Without the "divine nature," people will not be able to distinguish between falsehoods and the truth which is found only in the Word of God. The "divine nature" is called the "divine nature" for a reason. It is the "nature of Christ" who is the express image of the "divine God."

Without the fullness of the "divine nature of Christ," people will be easily led into accepting false doctrines. False doctrines always come from demonic sources and are anything but "divine." Putting on Christ will enable us to discern between the truth and the lies the enemy establishes in those who "walk in the flesh."

CHAPTER 15

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CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

I have been crucified with Christ; it is not I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave His life for me. Galatians, ch. 2, vs. 20.

The Apostle Paul said he had been crucified with Christ and he no longer lived, but it was Christ who now lives in Him. When we are born again, the “old man” dies and the “new man,” which is Christ (the seed), is born within us. Christ, the “new man” now lives within us, and the “old man” has become crucified with Christ.

Like Christ who came to serve and not to be served, we have been raised up to dwell in heavenly places with Him. Even though Jesus was the “Son of God,” He came to serve not to be served. On Earth, it was the purpose of the “nature of Christ” to serve. (Matthew 20:28). It was the nature of Christ to “seek and save the lost.”

In Heaven, it is the “divine nature” IN Christ which rules and reigns over His Church. Those who receive His “divine nature” were foreordained to serve

Him as “Lord and Savior” for eternity. Christ, the “only begotten” Son of God, became the “first begotten” Son to lead the way for others to receive HIS righteousness. That righteousness is imparted to individuals when they become born again and receive “His divine nature.”

Being the propitiation for our sins and the Redeemer of our souls, Christ became our Lord and Master. Now that we are crucified with Christ and Christ now lives within us, He becomes the voice of our conscience to rule and reign forever in our hearts.

The life we now live in Christ we live by the faith of Christ who dwells within us. We are no longer subject to the Law of Sin and Death because the “Law of Life” is written upon our hearts. At times, however, many Christians are tempted to raise the “old man” from the dead when they allow themselves to be drawn away by the lusts and desires of the flesh. Demonic entities are hard at work in this world to deceive and draw godly men and women away from Christ.

We must be diligent in our efforts to keep the “old man” subdued and allow the “new man” to dominate our lives. The “old man” will always be trying to stick his head up from his “spiritual coffin” to see if the “new man” is still willing to “keep him under subjection.”

Christians are most certainly not immune from being tested and tried in this life. However, we do have an advantage over the rest of the world in that we have

access to the “divine nature of Christ.” Christ lived a sinless life. Although He was tempted and tried in the same ways we are, Jesus was able to overcome the trials and temptations because of His “divine nature.”

THE INNER MAN

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. 1 Corinthians, ch. 6, vs. 19-20.

Many Christians today are more concerned about how they look on “the outside” than on the inside. As Christians we should be more concerned with how we look on the inside than how we look on the outside. The inner man is where the true “beauty of holiness” resides. We become the Temple of the Holy Spirit when we accept Christ as our Lord and Savior. The “divine nature of Christ” then dwells within our Holy Temple which we have set aside and dedicated to God our Father.

When we neglect or fail to empower the inner man with the character of Christ, we are doing Christ and ourselves a great disservice. We neglect the inner man when we reject the righteousness of Christ. If we

do not hunger and thirst after His righteousness, we will never be filled with the righteousness of Christ.

We will fall short of God's glory if we are not continuously walking in the Spirit. If we are walking in the Spirit we will not be fulfilling the "lusts of the flesh." We may fail God at times but He will never fail us. God is always ready to help us overcome unrighteous behavior when we call upon Him and sincerely repent of our sins. God is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins if and when we repent with a contrite heart.

The Apostle Paul said, "I die daily." (1 Corinthians 15:31). Our walk with Christ cannot be a once or twice a week event. When we have been crucified with Christ, we will pick up our cross DAILY and follow Him. (Luke 9:23). Like Paul, we must die daily. If we have been truly crucified with Christ, we will be hanging out with Christ and will follow Him wherever He leads us. We will faithfully and conscientiously be obeying His every command.

We cannot follow Christ if WE choose the direction WE wish for our life. Many Christians never fulfill God's plan and purpose for their life because THEY choose to do what they want in their life. Paul said "And you are not your own, for you were bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Many Christians choose the wrong mate in life because they are more concerned about how their mate

looks on the outside rather than how they look on the inside. Many Christian marriages end in divorce because people chose to marry someone who was not God's choice for them, but their own choice. We must prayerfully seek the Lord in every important decision we make. If we fail to seek God for the answers we need, we will find that we will be dealing with many problems in our life.

For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the Sons of God. Romans, ch. 8, vs. 13-14.

The Spirit of God empowers us with the “divine nature” so we can live a life free from sin. The “divine nature” gives us the power to be led by the Spirit of God. When we are completely crucified with Christ, we will live according to “Kingdom Principles” which effectuate and govern the “divine nature” within us. When we become FILLED with the fullness of Christ, we will be shepherded by the Spirit of Christ who dwells within us. We can rule and reign in life because the “divine nature” empowers us to do so.

Faithful sons and daughters of God will always be led by the Spirit of God. They prefer to walk in the Spirit rather than fulfill the lusts of the flesh which conflicts with and opposes the “divine nature.” When we “put to death the works of the flesh,” we become

raised in the likeness of the “divine nature of Christ.” His “divine nature” within us empowers us to daily walk and talk with Jesus.

Several years ago I worked as a Terminal Manager for a Trucking Company in the Knoxville, Tennessee, area. The Company had terminals in several cities in the Southeast. The President of the Company gave all the managers a plaque to place on the desk in their offices which read “TALK THE TALK AND WALK THE WALK.” The plaque was a reminder for us to back up our words with our actions.

Many Christians “talk the talk” but fail to “walk the walk.” In the Kingdom of God our actions speak louder than our words. If we are going to talk the talk, we must walk the walk or we will be as a sounding brass or clanging cymbal. (1 Corinthians 13:1).

We can say we love the Lord with all our heart. However, our actions speak louder than our words and shows who we really are and who we are faithfully serving. If we are led by the Spirit of God, we will walk in the Spirit and not give place to the devil. When we are led by His Spirit, we will be following in the footsteps of Christ. If we are not following Christ, we will be fulfilling the lusts of the flesh.

THE WOUNDS OF JESUS

From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks (puncture wounds) of the Lord Jesus. Galatians, ch. 6, vs. 17.

The Apostle Paul said he had been “crucified with Christ.” He died to the flesh and the life he now lives he lives by faith in the Son of God. (Galatians 2:20). In other words, Paul identified with the crucifixion of Christ and he put to death the works of his flesh by his faith in Christ when he became born again. He said the life he now lived he lived by faith in Christ.

When we are born again we identify with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ because the Spirit of Christ now lives within us. We do not actually bear the wounds of Christ in OUR bodies, but in our spirit because the Spirit of Christ dwells within our bodies. We did not suffer with Christ on the cross; however, the Spirit of Christ whose hands and feet were nailed to the cross now lives within us.

Paul suffered many wounds in his body while taking the gospel to the nations. He was stoned, beaten with rods, and received forty lashes minus one on five occasions. Paul received many wounds for his faith and labor of love for Christ. He was stoned and left for dead on one occasion.

Isaiah declared that Jesus would be wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and the chastisement of our peace would be upon Him, and by

His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5). We identify with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ because Christ now lives within our hearts.

No one will ever feel or suffer the pain and anguish Jesus felt as He hung upon the cross at Calvary. However, we can put to death the “works of the flesh” by allowing Christ who suffered and died for us to have preeminence in our lives. When we put to death the works of the flesh, Christ who died on the cross for us rises to take His rightful place on the throne of our hearts.

CHAPTER 16

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SPIRIT WORDS

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. John, ch. 6, vs. 63.

The words Jesus speaks are “Spirit Words.” They are words which produce Spiritual Life in people. Spirit Words are words which contain “spiritual substance.” They are words which are heavenly inspired, inspired and delivered Spirit (God) to spirit (man).

The words of Jesus are Truth. The Bible calls the Word of God “Truth.” The “truth” is delivered to man by and through the “Spirit of Truth.” Jesus said when the Spirit of Truth (Holy Spirit), has come, He will guide or lead us into all truth, for He will not SPEAK on His own authority, but whatever He hears from the Father He will speak. (John 16:13).

We are born again by the Spirit of Christ. When we ask Jesus to come into our life, His Word (the seed) enters into our hearts (spirits). We then become a new creation in Christ Jesus through the power of our

confession of faith. Jesus, who is the Word, then produces NEW LIFE within us.

The Spirit of Truth sanctifies us and makes us Holy. The Spirit of Truth changes us into the image of Christ as we seek to “know and receive the truth.” When we know the truth, the truth will set us free. The Spirit of Truth fills us with the “divine nature of Christ.” When we become filled with the fullness of Christ, we will be filled with His “divine nature.”

THE VOICE OF GOD

God speaks to us in many different ways. When God speaks to people with His voice, He speaks to them by His Spirit. As Christians we should be able to know and recognize the Voice of God. We should be familiar with His Voice and know it is “His Voice” when He speaks to us. Unfortunately, the door to our hearts are not always open to “hear the Voice of God.”

God speaks to us audibly at times. Other times He may speak to us in a still, small voice. Still other times He may speak in a loud, booming voice as He did when Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. There are incidents in the Bible when God spoke and the people thought it had thundered.

God communicates with us in many different ways. Sometimes He speaks to us as we read and absorb His Word. At other times He may speak to us through a sign or a message we hear from a friend or minister as they teach or preach an anointed message.

God is always trying to communicate with His people. Unfortunately, His people are not always listening for His voice.

There is also another voice which is always trying to communicate with us as well. It is the voice of Satan. Satan tries to communicate his will and desire to us. He tries to lure us away from God and cause us to sin. Christians should KNOW the voice of the devil, as well as how he operates. The devil's words are also spirit, but they do not possess or produce any life or truth.

When the devil speaks to people, he speaks to them to confuse and deceive them. He comes to steal, kill and destroy. There is no truth in him. Satan is incapable of telling the truth. The Bible tells us he is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44).

I have heard the audible voice of God on a few occasions. I have heard the audible voice of the devil as well. We must be able to distinguish between the voice of God and the voice of the enemy. The voice of the enemy will always lead us in the wrong direction. The enemy will always try to lead us AWAY from the TRUTH and into sin.

Jesus said, "My sheep know my voice and they will not follow another." (John 10:27). Unfortunately, many Christians have a hard time distinguishing between the voice of God and the voice of the devil because they hide sin in their hearts. I believe that sometimes when the devil is speaking to some

individuals, they hope the voice they are hearing is coming from God. At times Satan will appear to people as an “angel of light” in order to deceive them. (2 Corinthians 11:14).

Many Christians have told me God spoke something to them. However, what they told me did not sound like it came from God. God will never tell us anything that is contrary to His Word. God cannot lie. He will never contradict “the more sure word of prophecy” we find in His Word. (2 Peter 1:19). If a voice we hear tells us something which is contrary to the Word of God, the voice is not from God, but the enemy. If we are not walking closely with God, we WILL HAVE A PROBLEM distinguishing between His voice and the voice of the enemy.

THE VOICE OF TRUTH

Sanctify them by your truth, your word is truth. As you sent me into the world I also have sent them into the world. John, ch. 17, vs. 17-18.

We are sanctified (set apart) by the Word (Spirit) of Truth. We see at the beginning of this Chapter that the scripture says words of Jesus are “Spirit Words.” Jesus speaks to us through the Spirit which dwells within Him. The words of Jesus have the same power which the Father possesses. Jesus created the World by the power of His words. He said, “Let

there be “Light,” and Light appeared. Jesus said, “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters,” and it was so. (Genesis 1:1-6). All things were made through Christ, and without Him nothing was made which was made. (John 1:3-NLT).

Jesus told the Father He was sending His disciples into the world just as the Father sent Him into the world. Thus, we understand Jesus sends us into the world in the same way as the Father sent Him into the world. Jesus came to “do the works of the Father.” He said He only did the things He saw the Father do. (John 5:19-20).

As Christians we are sent to do the “greater works” which will glorify the Father and the Son. Unfortunately, most Ministers are failing to preach the gospel with signs and wonders following. There are many who are not doing the “greater amount of works” which Jesus said we would do because they do not have enough faith to believe they can do the works Jesus did. Unfortunately, they obey the voice of the enemy rather than the voice of God.

ASSIMILATING THE WORD

Most assuredly, I say unto you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

Whosoever eats My flesh and drinks My

blood has eternal life, and I will raise Him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. John, ch. 6, vs. 53-55.

To assimilate means to “absorb and fully understand;” or “to absorb and digest food and nutrients into the body.” The Word of God is called the Bread of Life. The Blood of Jesus is called the New Wine.

When we receive Christ as our Lord and Savior we are figuratively drinking the New Wine (the Blood of Christ) and eating the Bread of Life (His body). When we are eating the Bread of Life and drinking the New Wine, we are partaking of a heavenly feast.

The Feast of Pentecost was a type and shadow of the New Birth. When Jesus was speaking of “eating His flesh” and “drinking His blood,” He was speaking of fulfilling the Feast of Pentecost. Jesus was the Lamb of God whose Blood was shed on the Cross to redeem mankind from the curse of sin.

When we are “assimilating” the Word of God, the Light of understanding illuminates our hearts. When we eat of the Bread of Life, we are spiritually digesting the divine nutrients or virtues which help us to grow spiritually in order to become Christ-like.

A few years ago on one of my trips to “heavenly places,” I found myself standing before Christ Jesus.

As He spoke to me I could feel His words go “inside” me and become a part of me. His words were powerful and wonderfully stirring and inspiring.

I believe the Lord was showing me how “assimilating” and “absorbing” His Word works. When we hear the Word of God spoken, we do not usually feel the Word as it enters into our hearts. Yet, the scripture tells us the “Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12).

When we get a “revelation” from the Holy Spirit, it is like a “Light” has been turned on inside our spirit and mind. Receiving “revelation” is also a way of receiving, absorbing and assimilating the “Word of God.”

The Word of God is like a refiner’s fire which cleanses the soul of all its impurities and blemishes. The Word replaces the “old man” with the powerful virtues of the “new man” when we grasp, understand, accept and receive the Word with thanksgiving. When the “old man” is crucified, something “NEW” must replace the “OLD” or the “old man” will raise his ugly head and say I AM BAAAACK!

A few years ago I heard the testimony of a young girl who had received Jesus as her Lord and Savior at a Children’s Church Camp. She told the camp counselor who led her to the Lord she felt her words go inside of

her. When we are speaking the “Words of Christ,” we are planting seeds of Truth and Life. We may not always FEEL the power of the WORD, but the Word of God may still be imparting NEW LIFE into our spirit.

Once I heard the testimony of a lady who said she was reading a book about the Knowledge of God. She said that as she was reading the words in the book they seemed to literally “come off the pages of the book” and “go into her spirit.”

These testimonies are examples of the power which is in the Word of God. As we assimilate the Word of God, we will be changed from glory to glory as our souls are transformed into the “divine image of Christ.”

The Seed (Word) which has been planted into the heart of many Christians is stolen by the enemy before it has had time to take root and grow. Some fail to receive “the Seed” because of their lack of understanding. Others reject the Seed because they are not interested in “pursuing the divine nature.”

Several years ago my wife and I attended a powerful Camp Meeting. The manifest presence of God permeated the entire building. There were many signs, wonders and miracles present at the Camp Meeting. Many people were being touched by the Holy Spirit in their seats as the assemblage sang and the praise and worship team lifted up the Lord with their instruments of praise.

I enjoyed the anointed praise and worship so much I bought a recording of the music and singing. One day I was playing the recording in my car as I was driving down the highway. I was being blessed by the praise and worship just as I had been blessed at the meeting. Suddenly I saw words along with musical notes coming from my audio player. I watched them come toward me and felt them go into my ears and down into my heart.

I believe the Lord was giving me a demonstration of what happens when the power of anointed praise and worship enters into our spirit and the effect it has or can have on us. When we are listening to anointed music, we can feel the music move us to the point of true praise and worship. However, what I saw and felt was supernatural. We can feel the power of God's presence in praise and worship, but we do not always understand what is happening inside us.

There are many testimonies of the power of God's Word and how it affects people when they are touched and stirred by His "Spirit Words." The Word of God is more powerful than a two-edged sword. His Word is able to move mountains, change the course of rivers, and create a universe out of nothing. Surely, He can change the hearts of men and women who choose to seek to be pure in heart as they pursue the "divine nature of Christ."

CHAPTER 17

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DIVINE FAVOR

My son, do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands: for length of days and long life and peace they will add to you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, and so find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and men.

Proverbs, ch. 3, vs. 1-4.

Those who are FILLED with the “divine nature of Christ” will keep the commandments of God because His laws are indelibly written upon their hearts. Obeying the commandments of God will add peace and long life to those who “walk in the Spirit.” The favor of God rests upon all who seek to obey the call and the will of God for their lives.

The word “favor” in the “divine sense” means to “pursue with grace.” When we find favor in the sight of God, He pursues US with His grace or “unmerited favor.” We become candidates of His favor when we pursue the “divine nature” zealously.

Believers are accepted by God because of what Christ did for them at Calvary. The favor of God was

always upon the Son. Christ had “divine favor” with God because He was quick to obey and always sought to please the Father. Jesus always did what He saw the Father do. Everything the Son did was pleasing to the Father. The favor of God rests upon ALL who are FILLED with the fullness of Christ. It is the “nature of the Son” which dwells richly within us which pleases the Father.

“Divine favor” is available to all Christians. However, many Christians are not pursuing God or the benefits which come from possessing the fullness of Christ, thus the favor of God eludes them. When we are not seeking to please God in all we do, we are missing out on ALL the Lord has to offer us.

God favored Abraham and blessed Him because he sought to please God. God called Him His friend. (Genesis 12:1-3). Because Abraham believed God he was blessed, and in being blessed, he became a blessing to others. God’s favor and the blessings of Abraham are available to us today and come upon us because of Christ and His sacrifice at Calvary. (Galatians 3:14-29).

DIVINE REWARDS

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Hebrews, ch. 11, vs. 6.

The Bible tells us “God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek or pursue Him.” God’s “divine favor” rests upon those who obey His voice and His commandments. God’s blessings come upon those who seek and are clothed with the “divine nature.”

God is always blessing those who bless Him and keep His commandments. If we are not keeping the commandments of God, we cannot expect to be filled with His grace and favor. Some Christians are missing many of the blessings of God because they do not seek or praise Him enough. When we withhold praise and worship from the Father, we cannot expect God to bless us.

Christians who are clothed in the “divine nature” are not interested in the favor of men, but in the favor of God. They are not expecting a reward for what they do for Christ. Their reward is bringing honor and glory to the Father by imitating and portraying the nature of Christ wherever they go.

The Bible says to be “Imitators of God as dear children and walk in love.” (Ephesians 5:1-2). If we are going to be imitators of Christ, we will be walking in love wherever we go. When the love of God dwells in us richly we will be sharing the love of God with people we meet.

“Divine favor always rests upon those who are at rest in Christ.” Jesus IS our rest. Rest is one of the virtues and characteristics of the “divine nature.” When we are at rest in Christ, we will have peace which

passes all understanding when everything around us seems to be falling apart. We can be at rest in Christ at all times because we are faithfully trusting in Him and His precious promises.

THE SHEPHERDS

Many Christians are seeking to be “clothed and filled” with the “divine nature,” but they do not know how to get there. They desire to have the “favor of God” but seem to lack the understanding of how to obtain His favor. The enemy continually places obstacles in their way which keeps them from finding the peace and rest which comes from abiding in the grace and mercy of God.

There are many who try to please God but end up failing in their pursuit of righteousness. Many are failing to get the right teaching and training from shepherds who are hirelings and are not interested in the wellbeing of the people.

A good shepherd is willing to give his life for his sheep. He will protect and guard them from all negative outside influences. He will expose them to the “true riches” which are only found in the “divine nature of Christ.” He will lead them to feed in shady green pastures FILLED with godly wisdom, knowledge and understanding. Unfortunately, many shepherds are hirelings, and are not interested in feeding the sheep and protecting them from the wolves which are waiting in hiding to attack them.

The favor of God comes to those who are faithful. Favor comes to those who possess faith. “Divine favor” comes from the anointing of the Holy Spirit upon those who diligently seek to please the Lord and keep His commandments.

“Divine favor” does not overtake us until we have learned to be faithful and obedient to God. (Deuteronomy 28:2) God rewards the righteous. God rewards those who have been justified and cleansed by the Blood of Christ who continue to walk the paths He has ordained for them to walk down.

God will pursue us with His favor when we pursue Him with our undying love for Christ and His Word. We can be assured the favor and blessings of God will overtake us as we continue to work and serve Him with pure motives and attitudes. When the greatest desire of our heart is to “KNOW CHRIST AND THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION,” we will find “divine favor” with God.

Many Christians today are attending churches or fellowships led by shepherds who are failing to lead them into a deeper walk with Christ. They are not being taught how to be transformed into the “divine image” which gives them power over “all the works of the enemy.” The strategy of the enemy is to portray the ‘Nature of Christ’ in a way which is not appealing to people by offering them a substitute Christ.

When we have given our all to Christ, He gives His all to us. His “divine nature” is available to ALL

who will seek Him earnestly and diligently. When we seek Him with all our heart, we will find Him. (Jeremiah 29:13).

CHAPTER 18

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THE GOLDEN ALTAR OF INCENSE

You shall make an altar to burn incense on; you shall make it of acacia wood. A cubit shall be its length and a cubit its width—it shall be square—and two cubits shall be its height. Its horns shall be of one piece with it. And you shall overlay its top, its sides all around, and its horns with pure gold; and you shall make for it a molding of gold all around. Exodus, ch. 30, vs. 1-3.

The Golden Altar of Incense stood in the Temple directly behind the veil which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies where the Ark of the Covenant sat. Like the Ark of the Covenant, the Altar of Incense was made of wood which represented man. It was overlaid with “pure gold” which represented the “divine nature of Christ.” Read Exodus, Chapter 25, Verses 25-28 for more detail.

There were five aromatic spices which the Priests of the Temple would mix together to make incense. After mixing the incense they placed the mixture in a bowl which sat on the Altar of Incense. In

the scripture we find that the number “five” represents God’s favor. We will find the “favor of God” at the “Altar of Incense.” The mixture of the spices in the incense included frankincense and myrrh. Gold, myrrh and frankincense were the three gifts which the Wise Men brought to Christ a few years after His birth in Bethlehem.

Incense signifies and represents the prayers, adoration and worship of the saints. (Revelation 5:8 and 8:3-4). Gold, of course, represents the “divine nature of Christ” who is the Saviour of the World. The Wise Men came before Jesus with representations of His divine nature and the prayers, worship and adoration of the saints.

The Wise Men represent the wisdom of people coming before Christ as bearers of the “divine nature”. They entered into His presence with thanksgiving, adoration, worship, and gifts as signified by the gold, frankincense, and myrrh. We should ALWAYS approach God with our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving as we enter into His presence.

The Hebrew word for altar is “mizbeah” which means “to slaughter.” An altar was and is a place of sacrifice. The Latin word for altar is “alta” which means “high place.” Altars were usually built and set in high places. Many altars were used in pagan religions to sacrifice animals, and at times humans, as well as children, to false gods. The Mosaic Law required altars to be used to sacrifice animals to Jehovah as a sacrifice for their sins.

THE BRAZEN ALTAR

In reference to the Temple of Jehovah, there was another altar called the “Brazen Altar.” This altar was also made of wood which represented mankind, and was overlaid in bronze which represented “judgment of sin.” The Brazen Altar was filled with “coals of fire” which were used to burn the animal sacrifices in the Temple. The animals used in the sacrifices were to be without spot or blemish just as Christ, the Lamb of God, was without spot or blemish.

The animal sacrifices were placed on the fiery coals of the Brazen Alter where they were burned to ashes. Once a year the HIGH PRIEST would take the fiery coals and ashes from the Brazen Altar. He would enter through the veil into the Holy of Holies and place the coals on the Altar of Incense as a sin offering to Jehovah. Read Hebrews Chapters 9 and 10 for more information regarding the preparation of the sacrifice. These actions were all types and shadows of things which were to come.

When Christ was crucified on the cross at Calvary, the veil in the Temple was rent which signified the way of salvation and forgiveness of sins had been accomplished through the shedding of His Blood. The sacrifice of Christ at Calvary made it possible for us to praise, adore and worship God with pure hearts. As Christians we have been cleansed by the Blood of the Lamb who was sacrificed at Calvary for our sins. Jesus,

OUR High Priest, rent the veil which separated man from God through the blood of His sacrifice.

God's "divine purpose" for mankind was for them to be able to enter through the spiritual veil which separated them from God. The renting of the veil enables our hearts to become a Holy Place of worship. The Bible says, "we are the Temple" (Holy of Holies) of God. We become one with Christ by being clothed with the garments of His "divine nature" through the "Power of His Blood." In Christ we are able to put on the garment of praise and enter into the Holy Place to offer up sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise to our God.

Then another angel having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. And he was given much incense that He should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints ascended before God from the angel's hand. Revelation, ch. 8, vs. 3-4.

The Bible tells us "God inhabits the praises of His people." (Psalm 22:3). Our prayers, praises and worship reach God in the form of a "sweet smelling savor." "For we are to God the fragrance of Christ (through the divine nature) among those who are being

saved.” (2 Corinthians 2:15). Our praise is received and consumed by the Lord as a fragrance of love, worship, and adoration.

There is a direct correlation between the praise, adoration and worship of individuals and their dedication to the Lord and the will of God for their life. If we come before the Lord with sin in our life, our praise and worship will not be coming from a pure heart. Jesus said, “only the pure in heart” (the sincere) will see God. Sincerely confessing our sins before we enter into His gates with praise and thanksgiving will assure us our voices will be heard.

Many Christians struggle with sin in their lives which keeps them from being FILLED completely with the “divine nature.” This does not mean God does not love them or hear their prayers. However, it does mean that God’s favor and grace may be withheld from them at times because they are not living a life which is pleasing to Him.

Many Christians desire to worship God with a pure heart; however, they do not know how to get free from the sins which hinder and so easily beset them. Freedom to worship God with a pure heart for those who seek to be free comes from a contrite heart through prayer, fasting and deliverance.

Many Christians do not know how to find the pathway to freedom from sin. Therefore, they will continue to go down the path which leads to destruction unless they sincerely repent. Many are hindered in

their walk with Christ because they are not being fed the entire TRUTH of God's Word.

Christians who have impure attitudes and motives will not find it easy to worship God in spirit and truth. They will fail to worship God because they are not sincere about their relationship with Christ. Some Christians choose to follow Jesus closely, walking with Him hand in hand. Many others prefer to follow Him from a distance because they are constrained by their own selfish motives, attitudes, and desires.

When the priests took fire from any source other than the Brazen Altar and placed it on the Altar of Incense, the people and the priests were smitten with a plague and died. This was called "strange fire." The "strange fire" was considered profane.

Strange fire was an abomination to the Lord because the fire did not come from the source which He demanded. It came from a source which had not been set aside and deemed as Holy. In other words, the sacrifice did not represent the sacrifice of Christ, but a substitute sacrifice.

Many Christians have a problem with discerning between the "holy" and the "profane." Their "sacrifices of praise" do not come from a pure and sincere heart. Their sacrifices are equivalent to the "strange fire" which was placed on the Altar of Incense in the Temple. There are no shortcuts into the Holy of Holies. We can only enter into the Holy of Holies when we have pure motives and a heart which has been

cleansed by the Blood of Christ. If we try to enter into the Holy of Holies with sin in our life, we will OFFEND God and our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving will be rejected.

Until we put to death the “works of the flesh,” our attitudes and motives toward true praise and worship will not be pure. We must put aside everything in our life which exalts itself against the knowledge and wisdom of God. We must come before the Throne of Grace with a humble heart and with true praise, worship and adoration which can only come out of a sincere and pure heart.

*Lord I cry out to You; Make haste to me!
Give ear to my voice when I cry out to you.
Let my prayer be set before you as incense,
the lifting up of my hands as the evening
sacrifice. Psalm, 141, vs. 1-2.*

The sacrifice of goats, bulls and lambs are no longer acceptable to the Lord. They were only types and shadows of things which were to come. Today the Lord seeks our sacrifices of praise and adoration--the fruit of our lips giving honor to Him. (Hebrews 13:15). The Lord seeks the sacrifices of righteousness and trust. (Psalm 4:5).

The “Golden Altar” is the place within the heart where those who are filled with the “divine nature” worship God in spirit and truth. The “Golden Altar” is

the place where adoration, praise and true worship comes from the heart of those who are fully clothed with the “divine nature” of Christ. There is a “Golden Altar” in the heart of every believer whose soul is blessed and enriched by righteousness found in the “divine nature.” The “pure in heart” will earnestly desire to continually and faithfully offer up “sacrifices of praise” to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

CHAPTER 19

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THE DIVINE SOUL

I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are your works; and that my soul knows right well.

Psalm, 139, vs, 14.

The soul is the very essence of man. The English word “psyche” is derived from the Greek word “psuche” which means “soul.” The “psyche” is defined as the totality of the elements which make up or characterize the mind. These elements include our will, emotions, attitudes, and thoughts. These elements are all wonderfully entwined together in the soulish realm (our person).

The “divine soul” is the Ark in which the “divine nature of Christ” resides within the believer. It is the treasure chest which contains all the riches of the Christ-like character. It is the place where godly knowledge, wisdom and understanding is stored. The Ark of the Covenant was the place where the presence (Spirit) of God dwelt in the Holy of Holies. As Christians we are ALL “Arks of God’s Covenant.”

The “divine soul” is the place where we process godly knowledge, wisdom and understanding. “When

we walk in the Light as He is in the Light we will fellowship with one another and He purifies us from sin.” (1 John 1:7).

As Christians the Spirit of Christ dwells within the Holy place of our hearts. We are “born again” when the Spirit of Christ (presence) comes into our hearts and we become a new creation in Him. When we accept Christ as our Lord and Savior, His “divine nature” is implanted into the matrix (womb) of our spirit.

The Blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin and lays a foundation of divine precepts and principles within our hearts which are designed to help us rule and reign with Him in life. The “divine nature” empowers us to live a life free from sin. The “divine nature” gives us the power to become the sons and daughters of God. (John 1:12). The “divine nature” empowers us to become citizens of the Kingdom of God. The “divine nature” also gives us the faith to believe in miracles as we walk in the fullness of Christ.

The “divine soul” is the soul which has been changed or made new in the “image of Christ.” We have joy unspeakable because the nature of Christ has been imparted to us by His Spirit. When the “divine nature” dwells in us richly, all the fruit of the Spirit will also dwell within us richly.

We become overcomers when the Word of God dwells richly within our hearts. We become overcomers through the Blood of the Lamb and the “word of our

testimony.” When we testify to others about the saving knowledge of Christ, we are planting seeds of salvation into their hearts. We are also affirming our own faith as we share the gospel with others.

When we are sharing our testimony with others, we are illustrating our confidence in Christ. We are profoundly exhibiting and professing His ability to save the souls of sinners who are desperately in despair and bound for destruction. As Ambassadors of Christ we have been sent to the nations of this world to proclaim deliverance to the captives and the opening of the eyes of the spiritually blind. The “divine soul” is the ambassador or “divine representative” of the “person of Christ.”

THE DISCIPLINED SOUL

The “divine soul” is also a “disciplined soul.” Jesus calls people to be His disciples so they can learn the disciplines of the “divine nature” which includes the virtue of “self-control.” (Galatians 5:22-23). When men and women join the military they are sent to Boot Camp in order to learn discipline. The best soldiers are those who become well disciplined. Many of them continue to use their disciplinary training in life to help them in jobs they secure when and if they leave the Service.

It has been said that military personnel make the best Christians because they already have learned “discipline” in the Service. Although learning to be disciplined soldiers is admirable and can be useful to

Christians, it is not the same discipline we learn as “disciples” of Christ. I know many people who have been in the military but still lacked discipline after they left the military. Many of them were Christians in the military, and many others became Christians after leaving the military.

Military discipline is somewhat different than the disciplines taught in Christianity. Military discipline is, for the most part, based on “control.” For an Army “control” is the appropriate way to “discipline” troops. There is also an element of patriotism which helps soldiers to follow orders. However it is not always the underlying foundation of their discipline.

When Jesus picked the twelve men to be His disciples, He did not choose those who had been in the military. Israel did not have a standing army at the time Christ walked on the Earth. Even if Jesus would have chosen “military personnel” as his disciples, He would have had to “retrain them” in the “spiritual disciplines.” One good thing which the military teaches today is the “discipline of authority” and how authority works.

The training which the “disciples of Christ” received is somewhat different than the training which soldiers receive today in the military. For Christians the foundation of our discipline begins with “the fear of the Lord.” The fear of the Lord is not based upon control but upon the foundations of “wisdom and love.”

The Bible says, “whom the Lord loves He disciplines.” If we are not being disciplined by the Lord, we are illegitimate sons and daughters of God. (See Hebrews 12:5-7). Faith is a byproduct of love. The Bible tells us “faith is “energized by love.” (Galatians 5:6). We cannot have faith without love. Without faith, we cannot be followers or “disciples of Christ.” Without love, we cannot be followers or “disciples of Christ.”

God does not seek to control our lives but to place within us His love and the ability to overcome adversity by our faith in Christ and the finished works of Calvary. Many of the principles based on military discipline in battle are the same types of disciplines which we use in fighting the devil. However, they are carried out in different ways. We do not war with the flesh because the war we are fighting is not a carnal one but a spiritual one. Our warfare is not carnally subjective, but is based upon spiritual approaches and divine strategies.

As followers of Christ we have to lose “control” of our lives so God can mold and make us into a “standing Army” disciplined and ready to “fight the good fight of faith.” Our discipleship training is similar in many ways to military training, but in other ways it is entirely different. Even though we are Christian soldiers we cannot run a Church the same way an Army is run.

In the military soldiers are encouraged to “hate their enemies” and fight to protect and preserve their

fellow soldiers, their nation and their families at home. Although these attitudes are admirable and necessary at times, we cannot use these attitudes when dealing with the souls of people. In Christianity we are taught to “love our enemies.” In other words, “love” is the “discipline” each “Christian soldier” must learn to walk in above everything else.

The disciplines taught in the Word of God are not based on the ability of Christ to callously influence and control men and women of God to achieve Kingdom objectives. They come from the ability of a person to possess “self-control” by being clothed in the “divine nature of Christ.” Self-control is one of the greatest virtues of the “divine nature.”

I am not saying military discipline is not an admirable quality. For those who have learned and retained self-control in the military, the step to self-discipline in a spiritual sense can be an easy transition. However, I have seen Christian leaders who have used their military training to suppress and control their congregations through stealth and deception.

A TIME FOR WAR

“There is a time for war and a time for peace.” (Ecclesiastes 3:8). Sometimes we have to go to war so we can have peace. This is true in both a natural and spiritual sense.

Someone may ask “Can I love my enemy and still kill him?” I believe the answer to that question lies

in our priorities. Sometimes we have to separate our feelings from our priorities. Our priorities concerning our enemies and our loved ones can and should differ.

Does God expect us to stand aside when our enemies come to steal, kill and destroy our nation, homes and families? When we are invaded by our enemies should we lay down our weapons and let the enemy come in and take or destroy everything God has entrusted to us? If someone invades our homes do we invite them to “come in and do what they want and take what they want? I think not.

Peace is something we have to “occupy.” Sometimes peace has to be contended for both spiritually and naturally. Spiritual and natural discipline goes a long way in maintaining peace both naturally and spiritually. However, God has called us all to peace and we must do all we can to maintain peace with all men “as much as lies within us.” (Romans 12:18). Trusting in God will also go a long way when our enemies both natural and spiritual attempt to destroy us.

The principles of spiritual warfare are much like natural warfare. The weapons of OUR warfare are not carnal. However, we still face an enemy which is determined to destroy us with thoughts which exalt themselves against the “knowledge of God.” Many Christians are not living in freedom because they lack the knowledge and understanding of how to BECOME free in every area of their lives.

Christians are losing many battles but we know that in the end WE WIN. However, we should not be losing ANY battles or relinquishing ANY territory to the Devil. The Church has been given the power and authority to defeat their enemy, but many Christians are not trained how to use ALL the “spiritual weapons” they have at their disposal.

Many Christians do not have the “peace which passes all understanding” because they do not understand the principles of spiritual warfare. Teaching disciples the principles of spiritual warfare is needed for the Church to prosper in the power of the Holy Spirit. No weapon the enemy can form against us will prosper when we put our faith and trust in God and fight the good fight of faith.

Why would God’s people protect themselves from a natural enemy when he comes to steal, kill, and destroy, yet fail to protect themselves and their families from their spiritual enemies? One of the answers lies in the propensity for men and women of God to be easily deceived. Deception is one of the greatest weapons our spiritual enemies possess.

Fear and deception are the enemy’s greatest weapons. When Christians are fearful it is because they lack wisdom and understanding. When people lack wisdom and understanding they are easily deceived. Their hearts are not rooted and grounded in faith, thus they are tossed about by the storms of life which the enemy sends to steal their peace. However, when we become rooted and grounded in faith the “peace of God

which passes understanding” will ALWAYS guard our hearts and minds in Jesus. (Philippians 4:7).

CHAPTER 20

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SHEPHERDS AND SHEEPLE

Many pastors in churches today are using a military style tactics to intimidate, discipline and control their congregations. We call this practice “Shepherding.” This form of Shepherding was once called the “Discipleship Movement.” This movement began in the late 1970s and early 1980s and is still going on in many churches today.

The concept of Shepherding and the term “Discipleship Movement” sounds biblically correct, but it is far from biblical. The chain of command in the churches involved in the “Shepherding Movement” was patterned much like a military organization.

The leaders of the churches which were involved in the movement operated their churches under the disciplines of control rather than the discipline of love. The Shepherds did the “Shepherding” while the sheep became “sheeple.” The sheeple were monetarily and spiritually “fleeced and sheared.” The word “sheeple” is derived from the two words “sheep” and “people.” Sheeple are defined as “people who are docile, foolish and easily led astray.” That sounds a lot like many people in churches today.

God has called many to be shepherds over His flocks, but what these church leaders did was for their

own benefit, not the benefit of the sheep. A true shepherd “loves his sheep” and will give his life for the sheep if need be. (John 10:11). A hireling does not love the sheep. His reward is in what he gets “paid” for watching over and “fleecing” the sheep.

There were many spiritual and physical abuses which became features of the Shepherding Movement. We still see some of these abuses in churches and organizations today which were not involved in the Shepherding Movement of the past. Some churches and denominations have always followed the disciplines of “Shepherding.”

Many of the leaders who were involved in the Shepherding Movement repented of their transgressions and have become productive leaders in the body of Christ today. Sadly, others have not. There is still much abuse in many churches around the world today. Many church leaders who were NOT involved in the Shepherding Movement of the past control their congregations through fear and intimidation today.

There is progress being made in some churches concerning the “spirit of control”. However, there is still much work to be done in this area. Educating and informing believers of how a true church operates and exposing these believers to the true “divine nature” will go a long way in fixing the problems in many churches today.

FINDING MORE OF CHRIST

Because they are not taught many Christians fail to realize there is more available to them than what they are receiving in their dry church services. Christ came to set people free from dead religion and pious, so-called religious leaders. Christians will never find peace and rest for their weary souls until they are set free from dead religion.

Religion without the true freedom found in the “divine nature” tends to bring people more sorrow and heartache than they had before they became Christians. A religion without Christ is just a “form of godliness” which leads to eternal damnation rather than to eternal life. Many churches that were once endowed with “power from on high” have become apostate. We cannot expect to be a HOLY Church unless we have been transformed into the “image of Christ.”

Religious expression without the demonstration of the power of God working in people’s lives is merely “religious oppression.” We cannot be effective witnesses of Christ to others if we are bound by the same oppressing spirits and sins which they are bound by. We will be unable to set others free if we are not free ourselves. When the blind lead the blind, they will both fall into a ditch.

Many Christians are reluctant to step out and share their faith with others because of fear of rejection or persecution. They find it hard to express their true feelings regarding their relationship with Christ, thus they “hide Him within their heart.” True freedom from the fear of sharing Christ with others will be eliminated

when the “divine nature” takes preeminence in their lives.

When we are FILLED with Christ, we will BECOME Christ-like. We will not be fearful of man, but God. The Bible tells us the “fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” (Psalm 11:10). When we are FILLED with Christ, we will be FILLED with the “wisdom of Christ.” When we possess the fullness of the “divine nature,” we will have access to all His “divine attributes” which will empower us to become effective instruments and witnesses of His “divine power.”

DIVINELY CONNECTED

When we are “divinely connected” to Christ through the power of His “divine nature,” He will connect us with those He has chosen for us to work with. God will place us with the people He has ordained that we associate with in order for us to accomplish the work He has assigned to us.

There is a place of blessing for all Christians which God will lead us to in order to help meet the needs of those around us. It is a place where we will FIT IN with others who are like minded so the plan and purpose of God can be fulfilled in the Church. The “place of blessing” is the place where His “divine purpose” for our life will be realized and completed. That “place of blessing” for us may be changed from time to time in order for God’s plan and purpose to be fulfilled in our life.

Many Christians move from church to church looking for that “perfect fit,” but never seem to find it. The “perfect fit” is not always what we think it may be. Many people become offended in their “place of blessing.” When offended they will leave the church and run to and fro looking somewhere else where they think they will FIT IN. Unfortunately, they fail to “fit in” every place they go because they are out of the will of God. Running from church to church can become a never ending cycle. Christians will never find their place of blessing unless they stay and grow where God has planted them.

When we are “divinely connected” with Christ, we will become “divinely perfected.” Our “divine connection” will lead us to “divine perfection.” When we work together with those who God has chosen for us to work with, we will find His “divine purpose” for our life. We will also find freedom from depression and oppression as we weather the storms of offence and rejection.

We must remember that part of discipleship training is learning to stand “strong in battle” during ALL the attacks of the enemy. Many times those attacks will come through those who are nearest and dearest to us. Offence is a trap of the enemy which he uses to discourage us from continuing the battle for our souls and the “peace” which the “divine nature” is able to instill within us.

CHAPTER 21

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THE WINDOWS OF THE SOUL

The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be filled with darkness. Therefore, if the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness. Matthew, ch. 6, vs. 22-23.

Our eyes are gateways of the soul. It has been said that the eyes are the windows of the soul. Many modern day scientists and psychologists are now believing the idea that the eyes mirror the soul. The concept that the eyes mirror the soul is not new. This concept was written in the Bible thousands of years ago. Unknowingly to them, people in the fields of psychology and science are now proving the Bible to be true.

The eyes are said to be the “windows of the soul.” The eyes give entrance of light to the soul which allows people to see objects and images around them. The eyes send the images as signals to the mind or the soul where information is received, evaluated, processed, and stored.

Jesus told us the lamp (light) of the body is the eye. In the Bible “light” speaks of understanding. Jesus is the personification of the LIFE of God. Jesus is the LIGHT of the world. In Him was Life, and that Life was (is) the LIGHT of men. When the Light of Christ shines into darkness it dispels ALL darkness.

The soul without Christ is able to receive the truth when the LIGHT of Christ dispels the darkness within their soul. (John 1:1-5). Jesus is also TRUTH and LIFE. It is the “truth” which sets us free and transforms us into the “divine image” of Christ through the LIGHT of understanding.

When the light of understanding enters into the soul, we call it “divine revelation.” The knowledge of Christ is revealed to us through the “Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation.” (Ephesians 1:17). We become born again when we understand and believe Jesus IS the Son of God and He died on the cross for our sins. When we receive and accept Him into our heart as our Lord and Savior, we are born again of His Spirit. It is THE Light of Christ that enters into the soul which has been filled with darkness and illuminates the soul with the truth--Christ.

Jesus said “If the LIGHT which is in you is not the true light,” your whole body will be filled with darkness. Only the “True Light” can reveal Christ to people and bring spiritual understanding and eternal Life into their souls.

The Bible says “IF we walk in the Light even as He is in the Light, we will have fellowship with one another. (1 John 1:7). When we acknowledge the truth--Christ enlightens the eyes of our understanding and we will walk together in fellowship with Him as well as other believers. If we are not continually walking together with one another in love, it is because our light is dim and we are not FILLED with the fullness of Christ.

THE SPIRITUALLY BLIND

*And He spoke a parable unto them:
“Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not
both fall into the ditch?” Luke, ch. 6, vs. 39.*

People without Christ are spiritually blind. They do not possess the LIGHT of Christ which enables them to “see” and understand the TRUTH. Without the Light of Christ people are destined to live in darkness for eternity. When we find Christ as our Lord and Savior we obtain spiritual understanding. If we confess the TRUTH, truth will set us free from spiritual darkness, blindness, insensitivity, and ignorance.

The LIGHT of Christ enlightens the hearts and minds of those who put on the character of Christ. However, many Christians continue to remain partially blind because they lack knowledge and understanding in some areas of their lives. Pursuing the “divine nature” is not a priority in their lives, thus they

languish subjectively in the language of hypocrisy and doctrines of hyper--faithism.

Hypocrisy is caused by pride and spiritual blindness. Jesus called the Pharisees “blind guides.” If the blind lead the blind, they will all fall into a ditch. (John 15:14). Jesus declared the Scribes and Pharisees were full of hypocrisy. He warned the people to “beware of the leaven” of the Pharisees which always leads people down the pathway to spiritual death and destruction.

Today there are many Christian leaders who are or are becoming spiritually blind. They are leading others into spiritual ditches through false doctrines they preach. Only those with “spiritual insight” can pull the spiritually blind out of the ditches they fall into by leading them to the truth. Many Christian leaders today are leading people down the broad path which leads to death and destruction when they should be leading them down the narrow path which leads to eternal life.

There are many Christian leaders who could be considered “legally blind,” spiritually speaking, because they FOCUS more on the LAW than they do the word of the prophets and the person of Jesus Christ. They too will continue to lead their congregations into spiritual ditches until and unless they start preaching the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

THE LUST OF THE EYE

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in them. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father, but is of the world. 1 John, ch. 2, vs. 15-16.

The “lust of the eye” is a strong inordinate desire to possess those things which are “visually appealing.” It is an unnatural appetite to consume with thoughts and feelings things which are sensual and perverted.

When the Serpent tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden, she SAW that the fruit on the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was “good for food.” It was pleasant to her EYES, and a tree desirable to make one wise. (Genesis 3:6). You could say the “forbidden fruit” looked spiritually appetizing to her. Unfortunately, the fruit on the tree was filled with “deadly spiritual poison” which plunged her and Adam into a spiritual downward spiral the moment they ate the “forbidden fruit.” Unfortunately, all mankind was doomed and followed in their “footsteps.”

When controlled and manipulated by the visual aspect of the sensual images we see, we become like Adam and Eve and partake of the “forbidden fruit.” The lust of the eye is directly connected to and in partnership with the “lust of the flesh.” The “lust of the

eyes” have a profound and deadly impact on our soul if and when we allow our eyes and our flesh to control us.

The scripture says King David SAW Bathsheba taking a bath and lusted for her. David’s inordinate desire for her led him down a long pathway of sin, death and destruction which caused much pain, sorrow, and grief, not only to him but to many others around him. Fortunately for David, he repented of his sins and God forgave him. Unfortunately, David and many others suffered because of his sin.

If we sin it will not only have a negative impact on our own life but also on the lives of those around us, especially those who love us most. The consequence of sin is always death. When we ask God to forgive us, He is always faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We receive the “gift of forgiveness” when and if we sincerely repent of our sins and change our ways.

The “lust of the eyes” will produce ungodly carnal thoughts in the mind which can be difficult to be delivered from. Our minds are like computers, they can take pictures of the images we see and store them in the databanks or hard drives of our minds. We can “log on” to our physical computers and look at the images any time we may desire.

Many Christians today are hooked on pornography. Someone conducted a secret poll at a large Pentecostal Church seeking to find out how many male congregants were hooked on pornography.

Astonishingly, seventy-five percent of the men in that congregation admitted they were hooked on pornography. I am sure this is not just an isolated case of men in churches who are hooked on pornography. Unfortunately, many women are also hooked on pornography. That is a sad indictment on Christians today. Fortunately, God is a God of love and mercy and is willing and more than able to help all who desire to be delivered from their afflictions and addictions.

Many Christians keep their focus on the perverted lifestyles of worldly people. The lifestyles of the “rich and famous” are forever before them. Our lifestyles, motives, and attitudes will determine which God or gods we serve. Many become more attracted to the things of this world than the riches of God’s love, grace and mercy. People who focus on sin will eventually find sin continually knocking on their door. Sooner or later they will weaken and open the door. Sin will enter in and dominate their lives.

THE LAW OF ATTRACTION

The “Law of Attraction” says whatever we are attracted to and pursue the most will eventually determine our destiny. For the religious leaders in Israel it was, and continues to be, the Mosaic Law. Many religious leaders in Israel, ambitiously pursued the “Law of Righteousness,” but never obtained righteousness because the Law without Christ is imperfect. (Romans 9:31-33).

Regarding the Law, the Bible tells us the “letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” (2 Corinthians 3:6). When we focus on and pursue things which do not produce LIFE in us we are destined to be judged by those same things we are focusing on.

In the Garden of Eden Eve took her focus off of the Tree of Life and placed it onto the forbidden fruit on the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil represented the Law of Sin and Death. Those who continually focus on things which produce death instead of LIFE will certainly die in their sins.

The Law could never make one righteous because no one could ever KEEP the Law. Those who are “bound by the Law” are subject to serve the “Letter of the Law” rather than the “Spirit of the Law.” People will continue to remain bound by the Law until and unless they recognize Christ as their Lord and Savior.

The Law of Attraction controls the hearts and minds of all who seek profane and ungodly ideas, ideals, suppositions and perverted lifestyles. The “lust of the eye” and the “lust of the flesh” will always seek to be filled with those things which war against the soul.

Many Christians do not understand how Satan uses the “lust of the flesh” and the “lust of the eye” in order to manipulate and control their minds. There is only one way to be free from the oppressive thoughts and desires to lust after spiritually seductive images. These images bring shame, and eventually destruction,

to the soulish man. The Apostle Paul said we MUST cast down all imaginations (soulish thoughts and images) which exalt themselves against the Knowledge of God.

When we cast down and rid ourselves of all the images which are contrary to the “divine nature,” we must replace them with godly thoughts, desires, and images. That is why it is so important for us to study our Bibles, pray on a daily basis, and fast. God loves all people. However, He hates the sin which separates them from His grace and mercy.

There is help available for those who are hooked on pornography or other vices if people sincerely desire help. Help also comes from seeking Christ and following Him daily. Only Christ can deliver us from the snares and entrapments of the enemy. Only Christ can free people from the grasp of sin and debauchery. For those who desire freedom from sin--freedom is available through Christ Jesus.

No matter how far people have fallen into sin, help is available for them if and when they truly desire change. It is never too late to seek help from those who you love and trust. When we believe we can work things out on our own and fail to seek help from others, we may never find the help we need.

The Bible tells us not to love the world or the things which are in the world. The scripture tells us “If we love the things which are in the world, the love of God does not dwell within us.” The “lust of the eye”

and the “lust of the flesh” will dominate the soul which loves the world more than Christ. The Bible tells us to “purge ourselves of these things” so we can be “vessels of honor.” When we purge ourselves of all unrighteousness, we will become vessels which the Master can use to share the truth of His Word with others.

The Lord will open the eyes of our understanding when we seek to be FILLED with wisdom and truth. He opens the eyes of our understanding to give us hope for the future and to show us how we can be changed into the “divine image of Christ.” This blessing is available to every believer who seeks the treasures of “godly wisdom and understanding.” (Ephesians 1:18).

THE LIGHT OF THE EYES REJOICES THE HEART, AND A GOOD REPORT MAKES THE BONES HEALTHY. Proverbs 15:30.

CHAPTER 22

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THE DOORS OF THE SOUL

The ear that hears reproof of life will abide among the wise. He who disdains instruction despises his own soul, but he who heeds reproof gets understanding. Proverbs, ch. 15, vs. 31-32

We saw in Chapter 18 that our eyes are gateways and windows of the soul. In this chapter we will see that our EARS are also gateways to the soul. Like our eyes, our ears also receive information which is transferred to, processed, and stored in our minds.

If we desire to be transformed into the image of Christ, we must set our affections on those things that are above where our life is hidden in Christ. (Colossians 3:1-2 and 3:3). If we are going to be filled with the fullness of Christ, we MUST keep our affections set on Him and Him only. Our desire to be clothed with the “hidden treasures” which are found in the “divine nature” can only be realized when we diligently seek Him with our whole heart.

Hearing plays an important part in our lives. What we hear will become part of our vocabulary depending on what knowledge, thoughts, and ideas we

accept or reject. What we receive and believe plays an important role in how we conduct ourselves privately and around others.

We will seek the wisdom of God if we desire to be wise. We will seek to hear the “voice of wisdom” which leads us into all truth. Hearing gives us the ability to receive, perceive, and interpret sounds around us. Words enter into our “gateway ears” then into the databanks of our minds, where they are stored for future use or recall.

The purpose of God’s Word is to lead us “into all truth” so we can become “kingdom minded.” To be “kingdom minded” is life. To be “carnally minded” is death. The carnal mind cannot receive the things of God because it is enmity with God. If we do not believe or receive the truth when we HEAR the truth, we cannot and will not be set free from the bondage of carnal mindedness.

What we hear, perceive and interpret as “truth” will determine our ability to either walk in freedom or in bondage. The truth sets people free while carnal minded thoughts keep them enslaved and in subjugation to Satan.

The words which we speak will either lift us up or bring us down. The words we speak to others are able to do the same. Our words have the power to bless or curse. Jesus said, “By your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.” (Matthew 12:37). Words can humble us or lift us up in

pride. Words can and will affect the way we think, act and react. Some words can heal the spirit. Other words can wound the spirit.

Studies have shown that musical sounds can affect and change the moods and attitudes of people. Some music makes people feel “happy and glad.” Some music, on the other hand, makes people feel “sorrowful and sad.” Words are the same way. Words can be creative and words can be destructive. The “Word of Life” produces Life. The Word of Truth” produces truth in those who believe and receive it.

The “divine soul” is impervious to the thoughts and desires which rule the carnal mind. The “divine soul” has been raised in the likeness of the “divine nature of Christ.” It is rooted and grounded in faith and truth, and will not accept a substitute.

The “divine soul” has put on the mind, motives and attitudes of Christ and will not become prey to the wiles and schemes of the devil. When we set our hearts and minds on things above, we will be strengthened by truth and righteousness. Righteousness and truth always prevails and triumphs over impiety and the indiscretions of sin and immorality. The “divine soul” is clothed in the truth and righteousness of the “divine nature of Christ.”

If they stumble and fall, the righteous have a God who is always there to pick them up and help them continue on their journey through life. The unrighteous have no one to pick them up when they fall into

grievous sins because they do not have a covenant with the Father.

HEARING AND ADHERING

Everything that enters into our “gateway ears” can affect our lives. Some things we hear may be helpful and useful. On the other hand, other things we hear will not be helpful, but harmful and detrimental to us. What we “hear” and “adhere” to will help forge our destiny.

The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.

Proverbs, ch. 18, vs. 15.

Those who seek a “divine destiny” will seek godly knowledge which will help them secure a successful future. Those who are wise will seek the “knowledge of God.” The Bible tells us to “grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 3:18). When we grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, we are “growing up” into His “divine nature.” We grow in the grace and knowledge of God by believing and receiving “the voice of truth.”

The carnal mind cannot accept the truth because it is unable to process the truth. The “divine mind” is wise and accepts truth with joy and thanksgiving. The wise see trouble ahead and prepares for the future. The fool is blind and cannot see the dangers which lie ahead. A wise man seeks the truth and strives to keep the

commandments and precepts of God. A fool hears and adheres to what he wants to hear. A fool hates the truth because it exposes his guilt and sin.

ATHEISTIC THEISM

The fool says in his heart there is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who do good. Psalm, 14, vs. 1.

Atheism is the belief that there is no God. Theism is the belief there is a God. I once heard someone say, “It takes more faith to believe there is NO God than it takes to believe there IS a God.” Many are struggling with these same two concepts today.

Atheism is considered to be a philosophy. A philosophy is defined as “the study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality and existence.” That tells me a true atheist has researched and studied the philosophy of atheism and has come to the conclusion that God does not exist. A true atheistic philosopher cannot call himself a philosopher unless he has researched and studied the disciplines of atheism.

I have heard many stories about “atheists” who started out to disprove the existence of God but instead found Christ as their Lord and Savior. The very thing they set out to disprove they found to “be true.”

People who call themselves atheist are not really atheists. They just do not wish to retain God in their knowledge. Men who call themselves atheists “suppress” the truth because they hate God and the concept of righteousness. (Read Romans 1:18-32).

Several years ago I heard a story about a man who owned a Trucking Company. Before he would hire anyone he always gave them a lie detector test. One of the questions which was asked of the potential employee was the question “Do you believe in God?” To believe in God was not a requirement for a person to be hired, but just one of the questions which was always asked during the test. When every potential employee who did not believe in God stated so, the lie detector machine showed they were not being truthful.

The heavens declare the glory of God. And the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night utters knowledge. Psalm, 19, vs. 1-2.

Even the heavens (sky above) testify of the glory of God. Creation itself proves there is a greater power than we can see with our natural eyes. Nature by design proves somebody had to design and create everything in this universe. Where there is design there must be a designer.

For many atheists their intellect is their higher power. Their intellect sits on the throne of their heart

and rules and reigns in the place of the true God. In professing to be wise, they become fools. The will of man who is not born again sits and rules and reigns in the darkness of his empty, godless, inanimate spirit. Unrighteous men who hate God will never admit there is a God. They do not have the capacity to know or understand the truth when they hear it. They continue to follow the path which leads them to destruction and eternal death.

KNOWING HIS VOICE

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of my hand. John, ch. 10, vs. 27-28.

Jesus said, “His sheep know His voice” and they will follow Him. The voice of Jesus is the “Voice of the Spirit of Truth.” Jesus will never lead us in the wrong direction or down the wrong pathway of life. Sheep will always follow the voice of their shepherd. The sheep are familiar with the shepherd’s voice because they have heard him speak many times. They know and trust that the shepherd will protect them and lead them to greener pastures.

Unlike sheep, some Christians have “selective hearing. They only hear what they want to hear and do what is most convenient for them. “Hearing” and

“following” the voice of the Shepherd is important if we wish to be clothed with the “divine nature.”

The Great Shepherd will always lead us into greener pastures where we can eat from the “Tree of Life” and drink from the “River of Life.” The Great Shepherd will always lead us to the River of Life where we can drink freely of the waters of Salvation. Those who are clothed with the “divine nature” will follow the Great Shepherd wherever He leads them.

**THE EAR THAT HEARS THE REPROOF OF LIFE
WILL ABIDE AMONG THE WISE. Proverbs 15:31.**

CHAPTER 23

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THE VOICE OF THE SOUL

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. Luke, ch. 6, vs. 45.

Like the eyes and the ears, the mouth is a gateway of the soul. The mouth is the “voice of the soul.” Unlike the eyes and ears, the mouth does not receive and process images and information. The mouth expresses and communicates thoughts and information it has received and stored in its databanks based on our will, motives, attitudes, and emotions.

A good man will bring forth (speaks out) the “good treasures” he has taken time to store in his heart. The treasures in the heart of a good man are the ones found in the “divine nature of Christ.” A good man is filled with righteousness, grace, mercy, and peace. An evil man will possess “evil thoughts” which are designed to “steal, kill, and destroy.” The heart of an evil man is FILLED with sin, idolatry, heresy and debauchery, among other things.

Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life. Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and put perverse lips far from you. Proverbs, ch. 4, vs. 23-24.

The Bible tells us to “guard our hearts (spirit) with all diligence for out of our heart flows the issues, or forces, of life.” (Proverbs 4:23). As Christians, we are admonished to guard ALL our “spiritual gateways.” What we receive and store through the gateways of our eyes and ears will eventually find its way out the gateway of our mouth. Our desires, attitudes, will, emotions and motives rule our hearts, thus many of our thoughts will proceed out of our mouth through the words we speak.

Our words are derived from thoughts which reside in our soulish realm. Jesus said, “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” Whatever our hearts meditate and dwell on abundantly will find its way out of our mouths commensurately. Unfortunately, for many the thoughts and desires of their hearts are evil and demonically engendered.

Today immorality is found in many churches because Christ is not the head of the church, but a symbolic token. When Christ is the head of a church, the church will be sanctified and set apart from the rest of the world. It will be a “Holy Church” spiritually endowed with the “voice of Christ” crying out to lost, lonely, neglected and forgotten souls.

Holiness is the mark of a church which is set aside for the service of the Master. You will recognize those who are following Christ by the things they are saying and the things they are doing in relation to their love for Christ. You will know those who are righteous by the “fruit they bear.” You will know they are Christ-like because of their Christ-like love, attitudes, and motives toward others.

When we become filled with the “divine nature of Christ,” we will become Christ-like. Every Christian should desire to be CHRIST-LIKE. If we do not have a desire to mirror the “image of Christ” to others, we cannot be “disciples of Christ.” If we are not disciples of Christ, we will never learn and adhere to the disciplines of Christ.

IN HIS IMAGE

And God said, “let us make man in our image, according to our likeness, let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him: male and female He created them. Genesis, ch. 1, vs. 26-27.

God created man in His image. He created man to LOOK much like Himself physically--in 'bodily form.' God created man to BE much like Him spiritually. After God created Adam, He "breathed into him His breath (Spirit of Life), and man became a living soul. (Genesis 2:7).

God created man to be a spirit being as well as a human being. After God created Adam He blessed him and enriched him with "His Spirit." It was always God's plan for man to be "spiritually minded." Unfortunately, sin entered into the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve sinned and ate the forbidden fruit. Subsequently, the souls of men by nature became corrupt, sinful and immoral.

Natural man rejects the things of God. The carnal mind is enmity with God and cannot process or understand godly precepts or principles. The concept of "spiritual truth" is illusive, illusionary, and incomprehensible to the carnal mind.

The Bible says, "the heart of natural man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." (Jeremiah 17:9). "As in water face reveals face, so a man's heart reveals the man." (Proverbs 18:19). A man without Christ does not know God and is incapable of having godly thoughts or making godly decisions.

Natural man without Christ cannot understand or receive the things of God for they are foolishness to Him. The Bible says, "A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul." (Proverbs 18:7).

Natural man can only speak of those things which he knows and understands. His thoughts are in conflict with and opposes spiritual truth, thus his words become his downfall and destruction.

THE THOUGHTS OF THE HEART

But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.

Matthew, ch. 15, vs. 18-20.

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The disposition of the heart will reflect the character of a man when he speaks. The thoughts which are preeminent in a man's soul will rule his speech and behavior. James said "the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and is set on fire of hell." (James 3:6).

Natural man does not have the ability to control his own tongue. The Bible says, "Whatever a man thinks in his heart so is he." (Proverbs 23:7). Whatever evil thoughts and desires which are in an evil man's

heart will eventually proceed out of his mouth and defile him. We all become byproducts of the desires and intents of our heart. Our “soul man” affects everything we do and say.

THE VOICE OF CHRIST

We become the “voice of Christ” to others when we become born again. We have been recreated in the image of Christ to go forth and proclaim the gospel of Christ to a lost and dying world. We become the “voice of Christ” to those who are alienated from the truth.

In Christ our soul has been redeemed from the curse of the Law, and now we can proclaim “liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound in chains of darkness.” (Isaiah 61:1). In Christ, the words we speak by the Spirit become Spirit and Life to give understanding to those who live in darkness. We become the voice of Christ “crying out in the Wilderness” to those who are in need of a Savior and deliverer.

When we are clothed with the “divine nature,” our words will be “seeds” of Light and Life to give understanding to those who are spiritually blind. When we are clothed with the “divine nature,” we will glorify God with the fruit of our lips as we sing praises which honor and glorify Him. Out of the abundance of our hearts we will proclaim the goodness, grace, and mercy of God to all those who have need of change in their lives.

In Christ, the “voice of our spirit” will bring forth righteousness, joy, mercy and grace. The words which we speak will honor God and lead others to victory in Christ. Out of our mouths will proceed glad tidings, the voice of triumph, faith, peace, and love. Out of our innermost being will flow “rivers of living water.” (John 7:38).

We have access to God through the voice of our “soul gates.” The words we speak give us access to God. Because we acknowledge the truth our voices are heard in Heaven. When we pray according to the Word of God and offer thanksgiving and praise to Him, our lips are bearing the fruit of righteousness. The Bible says we are to “enter into HIS gates with thanksgiving and into HIS courts with praise.” (Psalm 100:4). As a sweet smelling savor, the voice of our “redeemed souls” will bring sacrifices of praise into the throne room of God. (2 Corinthians 2:15).

CHAPTER 24

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THE IMAGE OF CHRIST

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed into the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many nations. Romans, ch. 8, vs. 29.

We saw in Chapter 10 that God's purpose for creating man was to create a family in which He could place His Spirit. God is Life and the Creator of life. Because He is Life, it is His nature and disposition to create life.

It was God's plan and purpose for mankind to be conformed into the "image of Christ." However, many reject the plan and purpose of God for their lives. In Christ we have the power to become the "sons and daughters of God" through the power of the Blood of Jesus which He shed at Calvary.

Many people misinterpret the meaning of "biblical predestination." Biblical predestination has nothing to do with choosing certain individuals to inherit the promises of God. The Bible says that God does not want anyone to perish, but for all to repent of their sins. (2 Peter 3:9).

The concept of Biblical predestination alludes to the Church as a whole rather than the predestination of certain individuals. It is the destiny of the Church to be “conformed into the image of Christ.” God’s plan and purpose for the Church was for the Church to be Christ-like and bring many souls into His family through the propagation of the Gospel. God created man in His own image so we would conform to His “divine image.”

When we are FILLED with the “divine nature” Christ will be the central focus of our lives and our very existence. When we become changed into His image by being filled with His fullness, we will become Christ-like.

Christ was the “seed” which came to Earth to create a new family for God through the sacrifice of His Life on Calvary. We become sons and daughters of God created in the image of Christ though the Blood of Jesus.

RADICAL CHRISTIANITY

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for

righteousness for they shall be filled. Matthew, ch. 5, vs. 3-6.

Jesus giving His discourse on the Sermon on the Mount brought forth new revolutionary ideas to the people of Israel. There were many others from Jerusalem and the surrounding areas who came to hear Jesus that day. Although “His doctrines” were hardly revolutionary in nature, they were not common doctrines which the people were accustomed to hearing from the religious leaders of that day.

Jesus was considered to be a radical and an extremist among the Scribes and Pharisees in that day because His doctrines failed to line up with what they had been teaching the people. The teachings of Jesus brought a new expression and interpretation of religious thoughts which were contrary to most of the things the Pharisees were teaching.

Jesus did not consider Himself to be a radical but a reformer. He came to Earth to “restore” mankind to their former position in the Kingdom of God. He came to “seek and save those which were lost” so they could be transformed into His image. Jesus had not started a new religion, but in essence had come to fulfill the Law and the Prophets. His message was not a message about religious ideology, but about “truth and life.”

To the religious leaders of the day Jesus was considered to be a countercultural revolutionary. Jesus

came to change the disposition of the hearts and souls of men and women so they could be free from the burden of sin and religious traditions.

The “beatitudes” may have been revolutionary new ideas to the people, but they were not new to Jesus. The “beatitudes” which Jesus was teaching the people to possess were His own “attitudes.” Jesus was teaching the people about the “divine nature” and how godly men and women were supposed to live and function in the Kingdom of God.

God is looking for extremists today. He is looking for people who are radical and extreme in their desire to follow Christ wherever He may lead them. God is looking for those who have a “holy fire shut up in their bones” who desire to share that fire with others. He is looking for people who are willing without hesitation to take the “power of the gospel” to a lost and dying world.

For too long the Church has languished and deteriorated into a Church without power. Many churches today portray a form of godliness, but the power which is supposed to be the essence of the Church is nowhere to be seen. Without the “divine nature of Christ,” we are not a true church but a conglomeration of people with their own thoughts and ideas of what church is supposed to be like.

A powerless church is a church without Christ. It is a church where the Holy Spirit cannot be found. A church without power is a church where men and

women rely on dead religious works to get them to heaven. They deny the power of God because they are not interested in picking up their cross daily to follow Christ. They deny the power of God because they are more interested in social issues than they are in serving God and keeping His commandments.

The call to radical Christianity is the call to be sold out to Christ and the cause of Christ. As Christians our focus for today should not be Heaven, but to establish the Kingdom of God here on Earth. Jesus told us to pray “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.” (Matthew 6:10). As Christians we have received eternal life which promises us a home in Heaven when we die. Our main focus should not be on Heaven, but proclaiming the gospel of the Kingdom while we are here on earth.

Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Hebrews, ch. 1, vs. 3.

Jesus, by nature, was/is the express image of God. He came to “die on the cross” to set people free from their sins and impart a new nature within them. That nature was the express image of God. **IN THE BEGINNING** God created man in His image. We were

created to be sons and daughters of God bearing His physical and spiritual likeness. God created mankind to be inhabited by the His Spirit.

Jesus came to set people free by imparting His “divine nature” to them. He died on a cross at Calvary so the treasures found in His “divine nature” could be imparted to us. Christ died on Calvary so the carnal motives and attitudes of the uncircumcised heart could be exchanged for the same divine motives and attitudes which inhabit and govern “His divine nature.”

God created mankind to be inhabited by His Spirit. Those whom the Holy Spirit does not inhabit do not possess eternal life. As Christians we have been created in the “image of Christ” so we can be Christ-like and perform the works He did. Being created in the “likeness of Christ,” we should be fulfilling His commandment to walk in love. Unfortunately, many Christians are walking in the flesh and failing to obey the commandment to “walk in love.”

If we are not walking in love, we will be easily deceived into fulfilling the “lusts of the flesh.” The Bible says, “To walk in His ways and to love and serve the Lord with all your heart and all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes He has given us for OUR good.” (Deuteronomy 10:12-13).

Because we are created in the “image of Christ,” we become more than conquerors through the “power of His Blood.” Being created in the “image of Christ,” we have the power to “become the sons and daughters

of God.” Because we are created in the “image of Christ,” we have the propensity to become FILLED with of His “love, grace, and mercy.” Being created in the “image of Christ,” we have the power and ability to fulfill His “plan and purpose for our lives.” The “divine purpose” for being created in “His image” is so we can become partakers of His “divine nature.”

CHAPTER 25

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RENEWING THE MIND

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God. Romans, ch. 12, vs. 2.

The mind is where we store and process information and knowledge we receive. It is also known as the “soul.” Before we came to know Christ as our Lord and Savior, our knowledge and understanding of God and His Word was imperfect and unfruitful. We were unable to process any knowledge of truth because the Spirit of Truth did not live within us.

Jesus is the personification of Truth. In order for us to process spiritual information, we must be renewed in the “spirit of our minds.” (Ephesians 4:22). To be “renewed in the spirit of our minds” means our spiritual desires, motives and attitudes must be changed.

Our desires, motives and attitudes must be Christ centered and Christ empowered. When we put on fullness of the “divine nature,” we will become “spiritually minded.” We will become Christ-like in all

of our endeavors to serve God. We cannot and will not be able to bring reproach upon the name of Christ because we will be walking in the Spirit. The Spirit of Truth will lead and guide us into ALL truth which is able to transform us into the “image of Christ.

Before coming to the knowledge of the truth, our minds were conformed and in bondage to the things of this world because of our carnal minds. The Bible tells us “that to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” (Romans 8:6). The carnal mind is enmity with God.

As Christians, if find we do not have peace and if life seems to be throwing us a lot of curve balls, it is probably because we may be somewhat carnally minded in some ways. The carnal mind will always lead people down the pathway of confusion and degradation.

True LIFE and peace does not exist outside of the “divine nature of Christ.” Christ is our rest, our peace, our righteousness, and our Life. For mankind eternal life exists only in Christ, and without Christ, the “abundant life” does not exist.

The Bible says the carnal mind is the enemy of God. (Romans 8:7). Those who walk in the flesh cannot please God because the flesh is contrary and wars against the Spirit of God. As long as our minds are carnally rooted and grounded in the vain imaginations of the flesh, our thoughts will remain in opposition to the plan, will and purpose of God for our life. The Bible tells us to be renewed in the “spirit of

our minds.” The carnal mind cannot receive the things of God because it does not understand or know how to process spiritual knowledge and information.

BEING SPIRITUALLY MINDED

The devil takes a terrible toll on Christians who have not been “renewed” in the spirit of the mind. The mind of the believer will not be established in truth, righteousness, and peace if they do not understand the principles which govern the “mind of Christ.” The motives and attitudes of those who are “spiritually minded” will always be in harmony with Christ.

The mind of the believer which has not been fully renewed in the “spirit of the mind” will continue to remain bound in spiritual darkness in some areas of their lives. Until the Light of the Word of God intervenes and prevails over all chambers of the mind, darkness will play havoc in the believer’s life. The devil comes to steal, kill and destroy, and will steal our peace if we are not rooted and grounded in faith.

As Christians we “have the mind of Christ.” (1 Corinthians 2:16). When we received Christ as our Lord and Savior, we also received the “mind of Christ.” We have the potential to become “spiritually minded” because the mind of Christ now dwells within our hearts. Unfortunately, if we do not become renewed in the “spirit of our minds,” our understanding of spiritual matters will remain unfruitful. The potential to fall into temptation and sin will continue to remain with people until their thoughts become Christ centered and they

become completely “transformed into the image of Christ.”

THE SPIRIT OF REVELATION

Our spiritual mind is renewed through the process of “revelation.” We become united with Christ through the power of “revelation knowledge.” The Living Word (Jesus) brings “new life” to our spirit when we accept Christ and become born again as we acknowledge and accept Christ as our Lord and Savior. As we study God’s Word and seek His presence, we will become enlightened, renewed, and refreshed in the “spirit of our minds.”

The word “revelation” comes from a Greek word which means “an unveiling or uncovering.” The Apostle Paul prayed for the Church at Ephesus to receive the “Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation” in the knowledge of Christ. We are changed from glory to glory through the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation as the “divine nature of Christ” is revealed in us. We are transformed into the “image of Christ” as we seek to be FILLED with Christ.

Revelation Knowledge is more than just facts and information. It is Holy Spirit breathed and received by those who diligently seek to be filled with the “divine nature.” Revelation Knowledge is a tangible force which comes into our spirit, soul, and mind in order to replace all the inequities and impurities which are found in the carnal mind. Our understanding of God’s Word comes by the Spirit of Revelation. The

ability to understand the Word of God and how we can walk in the “power of His resurrection” is revealed to us by the Spirit of Revelation.

The Spirit of Revelation gives us the wisdom which empowers us to interpret the Word of God accurately with clarity and understanding. Godly understanding and wisdom always comes through the process of “revelation.” The “Spirit of Revelation” will always lead and guide us into all truth.

CARNAL MINDSETS

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Romans, ch. 8, vs. 5-6.

Christians will continue to remain carnally minded if they fail to renew their minds to the truth. Carnal Christianity is a problem in many churches. Carnal mindsets always war against the Spirit of God. People can be born again, but the carnal mindsets which ruled their lives before they became saved will continue to plague them until they become renewed in the “spirit of their minds.”

We reverse the curse of being carnally minded when we become transformed into the “divine image of

Christ.” We transform our thoughts and change our motives and attitudes by submitting to the authority of God’s Word as we earnestly seek to be clothed in the “divine nature.”

But we all with unveiled face, beholding as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians, ch. 3, vs. 18.

Being transformed into the image of Christ is a continuous and ongoing process. It is a process which involves pursuing the “divine nature” until we are **FILLED** with His Spirit. However, we must do more than just be “filled” with His Spirit. There must be an overflow of His Spirit out of our innermost being so we can reach those around us. When we become **FILLED** with His “divine nature,” we will desire to reach out to others so they too can be **FILLED** with the Spirit.

The Bible tells us to “study to show ourselves approved of God, a worker who will not be ashamed, by rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15). Studying the Bible, meditating on the Word of God, and seeking to continuously dwell in His presence will transform the believer into the image of Christ.

The veil which separates the carnal mind from the “spiritual mind” is removed when we continuously seek to be clothed with the “divine nature of Christ.”

When we focus on Christ, and Christ alone, we will be changed from glory to glory. We will change carnal mindsets and become spiritually minded as we pursue the “divine nature” into the realm of Christ--awareness. Our spiritual eyes will be open to see the Glory of God being manifested wherever we go and in everything we do and say.

NEW BEGINNINGS

When we are born again we become new creations in Christ. New Life is then imparted to us by the Spirit of Christ. (Romans 8:9). We are changed from death unto life the moment we receive Christ as our Lord and Savior. We are freed from the bondage of the Law of Sin and Death because we have been infused with the “divine nature of Christ.” However, just because we have been born again does not mean we are instantly FILLED with His “divine nature.” Our minds must be transformed to think like Christ. When we become Christ-like we will walk in the fullness of the “new creation” which has been given to us through His “divine nature.”

Until we are renewed in the “spirit of the mind,” the carnal mind will continue to dictate and direct our lives. If we do not change the way we think we will remain carnally minded. If we are going to walk in the “freedom of Christ, we must “cast down all thoughts, desires and images which exalt themselves against the knowledge of God.” When we have cast down all thoughts which exalt themselves against the knowledge

of God, we must replace them. They must be replaced with thoughts, desires, motives, and attitudes which govern the “divine nature” which has been imparted to us by Christ.

When we become born again, it is our responsibility to pursue the “things of God.” We need the “things of God” in order for us to become faithful and productive citizens of the Kingdom of God. We are not called to become socially active, but spiritually proactive members of the Kingdom. Many churches today are filled with so called Christians who are socially active but have failed to put on the “divine nature of Christ.” The only thing which they will succeed at is becoming social activists in a world which is in need of “spiritual deliverance and direction.”

People with socialistic tendencies “tend” to be more socially and politically focused than spiritually and heavenly focused. There is nothing wrong with being “political activists” if God has called us to be “politically active.” However, politics should not be our main focus. True Christian politicians will confess their main focus is Christ and His plan and purpose for their lives. Whatever we are called to accomplish on this Earth, we must never lose our focus on Christ and His heavenly purpose in what we do.

As Christians OUR opinions are irrelevant. The Word of God is not up for a vote. God says what He means and means what He says. Our political affiliations should always be bipartisan. ALL

Christians should be voting the same way using scripture and not reason as their conscience.

God is not the “author of confusion.” He will not have one person vote one way and someone else another way. When political and social ideologies clash in the Church it is because someone is not listening to God, but are being led by their own selfish desires, motives, and attitudes. “How can two walk together in unity if they are not in agreement?” Division among His people is never acceptable in the eyes of God.

THE RENEWED MIND

The “renewed mind” will take us to places in Christ which we never dreamed or imagined were possible. The renewed mind will set us free from the carnal mindsets which once ruled our hearts and minds. It will take us on a journey of faith which says “with God all things are possible.”

When the carnal mind has been replaced with the “divine nature of Christ,” we will see the world and people differently. We will be able to see through the eyes of Christ rather than the eyes of the carnal minded. We will be transformed into the “express image of Christ” which will enable us to serve God without hesitation and fulfill His plan and purpose for each of our lives.

If our minds have not been transformed and established in truth and righteousness, the plan and purpose of God for our lives will be elusive. We will be

unable to understand how the Kingdom of God is suppose to affect and change our lives in order to become “vessels of honor.” When we understand how the Kingdom of God in us influences those around us and those we come in contact with, we will desire to be FILLED with the “divine nature of Christ.”

CHAPTER 26

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THE DIVINE AUTHOR AND FINISHER

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. Hebrews, ch. 12, vs. 2-3.

Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith. He is the WORD which became flesh and dwelt among men. (John 1:4). He is the “alpha” and the “omega.” He is the “beginning” and the “end.” (Revelation 22:13). Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets. (Matthew 5:17). Jesus is the Bread of Life. He is a well of Living Water which springs up into eternal life. Jesus is the Lamb of God who was sacrificed to redeem mankind from their sins. Without Christ men will remain dead in their trespasses and sins.

We could go on and on talking about who Jesus is and the things He accomplished. Above everything, Jesus is the King of Kings and the Lord of our lives. As Christians we were bought with a price, the Life and Blood of Jesus, and we belong to Him. Christ is our Lord. He is also our Savior and Redeemer. Without Christ we are nothing. Without Christ we have no real purpose in life. Without Christ we are left without godly understanding and wisdom. Without Christ our lives will be in vain.

For Christians Jesus is everything. He is our light, our rest, our peace, our friend, our hope, our advocate, our brother, and our wisdom. Jesus is the “Rock of our Salvation” and the Way, the Truth and Life.

Jesus is the reason for living when everything in life seems to fail. Without Christ life would not be worth living. Jesus has given us everything we need in order to live abundantly through faith in His Word. In Christ we have everything we need. In Christ we live and move and have our being.

PARTAKING OF THE DIVINE NATURE

As His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that

through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 2 Peter, ch. 1, vs. 3-4

Through God's "divine power" He has given us all things which pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Christ. God has given us many great and precious promises in His Word. We become partakers of the "divine nature of Christ" through these promises.

Peter went on to tell us to be diligent about adding to our faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. Peter said if these things abound in us we will never be barren nor unfruitful in the "knowledge of Christ. (2 Peter 1:5-8).

If we are clothed in the "divine nature" of Christ, we will possess all the things we need which pertain to "life and godliness." Christ purged us from our sins and the lusts which pervade the carnal spirit of mankind when we accepted Him as Lord and Savior.

Many Christians have preconceived ideas concerning the "divine nature of Christ." Many do not understand the value of all God has given to us in Christ. They fail to surrender their all to Christ in order that Christ can give His all to them. Many Christians fail to walk in the fullness of Christ because

they lack understanding and the truth concerning the “divine nature” and its purpose and value for our lives.

When we are lacking the fullness of Christ, we will be lacking godly wisdom as well as the FULLNESS of His “divine power.” When we lack the fullness of Christ, we will lack spiritual understanding and discernment as well as good judgment. Therefore, we will be unable to stand in faith against the power of the enemy when he comes to attack. When we lack the fullness of Christ, our worship and reasonable service to God is hindered.

When we are filled with the “divine nature,” we will stand victorious over all the works of the enemy. When we have completely died to self, the plan and purpose of God will prevail in our lives and we will be able to defeat the enemy in every area of our lives. When our will has been completely merged with the will of Christ, we will be able to do the “works of Christ.” (John 14:12). When we are filled with the “divine nature,” we will be able to complete the task God has placed before us.

LIVING BELOW OUR POTENTIAL

When I was a young Associate Pastor at a church in Maryville, Tennessee, a visiting minister preached a message entitled “Living Below our Potential.” I never forgot that message and the impact which it had on me. Many Christians do not realize how much potential they possess through the power of Christ residing within them.

ALL Christians have the potential to do the “works of Christ.” We have been given the “power” to tread upon serpents and scorpions. We ALL have the potential to set captives free from the grasp of demonic depression and oppression. What we do with the power and ability God has given us is what defines us as powerful Christians or as Christians who lack faith and spiritual understanding.

Christians today have the same potential to heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out demons and perform all the works which Christ did here on Earth. By faith we are given the power to “tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the works of the enemy.” (Luke 10:19).

We HAVE been given the authority to “rule and reign” with Christ in this life. Christians who walk in the Spirit have more power than the devil, however, many of them DO NOT KNOW THAT. Many Christians have been taught a watered down gospel full of devilish fables as the devil himself absconds the truth and turns it into lies. (Read Romans 1:18-32). Satan is constantly and continually trying to destroy the souls of men and women through manipulation and control.

Deception is one of our greatest enemies. Deception can and will impede and hinder our God given potential if we do not possess godly wisdom and understanding. The enemy convinces Christians they cannot perform the works of Christ because they DO NOT have the faith to do them. They do not believe Christ who said “The works I do you will also do.” Many choose to believe the enemy who comes to steal

their spiritual focus and faith through the power of deception. Deception keeps Christians from realizing their full potential in Christ. We MUST believe we are able do what Jesus said we can do.

It was the power of deception which kept the Children of Israel from entering into the PROMISED LAND. God GAVE them a promise, but they BELIEVED the report of the fearful, faithless spies who came back with a negative report instead of the “good,” faith-filled report of Joshua and Caleb. Many of their carcasses fell in Wilderness because of their unbelief.

Deception keeps God’s people from reaching their full potential in Christ. Deception keeps people from being FILLED with the fullness of the “divine nature.” Deception rules and reigns in the hearts and minds of men and women who are afraid to step out in faith and proclaim victory over “all the works of the enemy.”

LIFTING UP A STANDARD

So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun; when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him. Isaiah, ch. 59, vs. 19.

A “standard” is a flag or emblem which is lifted up on a pole representing certain principles or ideals

such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Standards are symbols of unity and dignity. A standard can also be a rallying point during chaos in battle. A standard is also a rallying point for citizens of a country who are unified together in their quest for solidarity and freedom.

Christ is our STANDARD. His “divine nature” represents the standards by which we are to live as Christians. We should lift up Christ daily as we rally around the “standards” found in the “divine nature.” We will become Christ--like in nature when we are FILLED with His FULLNESS.

Jesus said “If I be lifted up from the earth I will draw all men unto me.” (John 12:32). We must conform to the standards of the Christ-like nature if we are going to be like Christ. Jesus said, “We cannot be His disciples unless we deny ourselves, pick up our cross daily, and follow after Him.” (Luke 9:23). We are not worthy to be called His if we are not willing to lay down our life for Christ.

Like a standard in battle, the cross became a rallying place for people lost in their sins. The cross of Christ is a place where people who find themselves engulfed in turmoil and chaos can find hope. The cross of Christ is a place where men and women rally together and become unified in their quest for spiritual freedom; a place where all can see Christ lifted up as their Savior and Deliverer. The cross is a place where pain, suffering, and godly sorrow meet the love, grace and mercy of God.

If we are not seeking the “divine nature,” and the “divine nature” is not the desire of our hearts, we are missing out on the greatest treasures which exist. If a person is interested in finding gold, he must take the initiative to seek and dig for it “where” it can be found. Gold will never jump out of a gold mine and say, “Here I am take me!”

There is a “gold mine” in every believer’s heart where the “divine nature” is hidden. God is looking for people who will devote themselves to diligently seek for the treasures He has planted within their hearts. If we desire to be FILLED with the “divine nature,” we must pursue the doctrines, principles and concepts which will help us attain that which most Christians believe is unattainable.

There were many who travelled to the gold fields in California who did not have the staying power it took to “find the gold they were seeking.” Many became discouraged and went home penniless. Many sought gold in “all the wrong places.” If we are going to find the true riches found only in the “divine nature of Christ,” we must be determined and fervent in our search.

If we desire to be filled with the “divine nature,” we must seek to be FILLED with the “person of Christ” who dwells richly in our hearts. When our heart overflows with the riches of the “divine nature,” we will have found the “hope of glory” all men should be seeking. When we seek Him with our whole heart, we SHALL find Him. (Jeremiah 29:13).

CHAPTER 27

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THE NEW GOLD RUSH

For it is God who commanded light to shine out of darkness who has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. 2 Corinthians, ch. 4, vs. 6-7.

The LIGHT of the “knowledge” of the glory of Jesus Christ is the treasure which dwells within our hearts (earthen vessels). Light speaks of understanding. As Christians we understand that the glory of God dwells within us richly because we have become vessels of the “divine nature of Christ.”

We saw in Chapter 23 that many Christians are living far below the potential they have been given in Christ Jesus. This is because the “Spirit of Deception” has entered into the hearts of Christian leaders and shepherds who are more interested in making “sheeple,” than making “disciples.” Granted, there are many shepherds who do care about their congregations. However, there are many more shepherds who are

totally unaware themselves of HOW to or desire to “make disciples” of their congregations.

Every congregation should be FILLED with people who are FILLED with the “divine nature of Christ.” As Christians, our “earthen vessels” are ordained to be “vessels of honor” which are sanctified, prepared, and “set apart” for the Master’s use. (2 Timothy 2:21). If we are not allowing the Master to use us we cannot be called “vessels of honor.”

There is a NEW GOLD RUSH coming. It will be a rush for the true treasures which are found in only the “divine nature of Christ.” When Christians come to the realization of how much more is available to them than what they have been led to believe, there will be a RUSH for the TRUE GOLD which is found only in the “divine nature.”

THE GOLDEN FLEECE

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

The people who FLOCKED to the Gold Fields of California in the Nineteenth Century were known as the “Forty-Niners” because the greatest influx of people

went there during the year 1849. These gold miners were also known as “Argonauts.” The term “Argonauts” was a term used in the Greek Fable about the “Golden Fleece.”

The fable of the Golden Fleece has many similarities to Bible references regarding Jesus, kingship and authority. Although similar to Bible teachings, the story is just a fable and not to be used in teaching Bible truths. It can, however, be used to warn Christians about “fables” which are being taught in many churches today.

In Greek Mythology the Golden Fleece was a story about the golden hair of a “winged ram.” The fleece was a symbol of authority and kingship. According to the fable, Jason, who is the rightful king and heir to the Throne of Greece, sets out on a quest with his “Argonauts” to find and capture the “Golden Fleece.” His men are named “Argonauts” after their ship “Argo” which was named after the Constellation “Argo.” The fable has many similarities to stories in the Bible, including a “serpent” which guards the “Golden Fleece.”

Today many Christians are being “fleeced” by Church leaders who preach cunning fables that deceive Christians and lead people into a false sense of morality and security. They teach that everything is lawful to Christians because Christ paid the penalty for their sins. They do not possess true kingship and authority, but rely on the cunning and craftiness of false teachers to tell them what they desire to hear. (2 Peter 1:16).

The Bible tells us we are “kings and priests” unto God which have been set aside for the “work of the ministry” as we rule and reign with Christ here on Earth. (Revelation 5:10). Kingship and authority have been given to the Church, but they come through a lifestyle of submission, humility, and holiness. The “divine nature” is received by using “divine diligence” in pursuing the “fullness of Christ.”

Many people who “flocked” to California during the “Gold Rush” were fleeced by crooked entrepreneurs and salesmen who charged exorbitant prices for tools, food, pack mules and other supplies which they needed in their search for gold. Many of the supplies they bought were substandard which did not hold up well in the “fields” where they worked. Today many “entrepreneurial” Church Leaders continue to fleece their congregations (sheep) teaching them cunning fables which leave them with nothing more than a form of godliness void of power.

PANNING FOR GOLD

“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” John, ch. 7, vs. 37-38.

Panning for gold in rivers and streams is one way which miners searched for gold. Many “gold nuggets” were found in streams and rivers in the gold

fields of California. The best place to find gold in rivers and streams is to search in a place where gold has previously been found. Panning for gold, of course, is much easier than digging for gold or trying to extract it from a gold mine.

Gold nuggets are commonly found in streams and riverbeds near gold mines. These deposits of gold are called “placer gold.” When people are panning for gold, they are panning for “placer gold.” Placer gold is gold which has been removed from its original location and “placed” in an area by wind, water, gravity or some other natural force.

If we are going to search diligently for the true riches (the divine nature) we must look in the “only place” the gold (placer gold) can be found. The true riches are “placed” or found only in “Living Water (Christ).”

The “divine gold (nature of Christ)” is found in LIVING WATER. “Living Water” speaks of the Holy Spirit. When we are FILLED with the “divine nature,” we will be filled to overflowing with “Living Water.” “Living Water” will flow out of our inner most being to give a drink to those around us who are spiritually thirsty and dry.

Through Christ (the Word), the Church is sanctified and cleansed by the washing of the “Water of the Word.” The Church becomes a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle through the “washing of the water by the Word.” (Ephesians 5:25-27). The “divine

nature of Christ” is found in the “River of God” which flows from the Throne of His Mercy and Grace.

Jesus said those who “hungered and thirsted for righteousness would be FILLED with His righteousness.” Not many Christians today are hungering and thirsting for righteousness. That is why so many Christians are not FILLED with His righteousness today. Every Christian should desire to be FILLED with the righteousness of God.

The Lord is always faithful to give “Living Water” to those who are spiritually thirsty. Not many people today have a thirst for “Living Water,” thus they will die in their sins. The scripture tells us that if we drink of the “Living Water,” we will never thirst again. In the believer “Living Water” becomes a fountain which springs up into eternal life. (John 4:14).

RUSHING FOR THE GOLD

Several years ago I was attending a Ministers meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. There were approximately 50 Pastors, Evangelists and other Church Leaders from the Atlanta area who were in attendance at the meeting. The keynote speaker at the meeting was a Minister who was giving a report regarding a great Outpouring of Revival he was currently involved in which had recently broken out in Florida.

The Minister asked the ministers who were attending the meeting if they wanted the same anointing which was being poured out in Florida. Suddenly,

every preacher in the building RUSHED to the Altar. I had never seen a hunger and thirst for more of Jesus among ministers in my life.

When people truly hunger and thirst for more of Jesus, they will do anything and everything they can to be FILLED with His Spirit. A “rush for the gold” is a rush for the “divine nature of Christ.”

Over the years I have preached in many churches. In some churches when I gave an altar call, many people would rush to the Altar and ask for prayer. In other churches not many, if any, would come forward to receive a touch from God. Only those who truly hunger and thirst for righteousness will become FILLED with Christ.

GOLD DUST

And they shall make an ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits shall be its length, a cubit a half shall be its width, a cubit and a half its height. And you shall overlay it with gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and shall make on it a molding of gold all around. Exodus, ch. 25, vs. 10-11.

The Ark of the Covenant was a type and shadow of man. The Ark was made of wood which is prophetic of man. The Ark was overlaid in gold which was

prophetic of the “divine nature of Christ.” Everything which was made of wood in the Temple was overlaid with gold as a representation of man being FILLED with the “divine nature of Christ.” The Bible tells us we are the “Temple of the Holy Spirit.”

Gold dust is fine particles of gold which has been created naturally or by machinery. Gold dust in its natural form is usually found in rivers and streams in the same way gold nuggets are discovered. It is found by “panning for gold.” Searching for gold nuggets or gold dust is still done the same way today as it was during the “Gold Rush” days.

For many years “gold dust” has been appearing or falling on people in many church services and meetings where the Holy Spirit is being “poured out.” For some this is a controversial phenomenon, and the concept is rejected by many Christian leaders. I have found that over the years many Christians are critical of things they have never seen, experienced and/or do not understand. For some, ignorance can become a breeding ground for fear, contempt, lies, and accusation.

My wife and I have both seen the gold dust fall upon people in meetings and even in our home. A Pastor friend of mine gathered some “gold dust” from a Revival Meeting several years ago and continues to carry it in a small plastic pouch in his Bible today.

A couple of years ago I and some other ministers were praying on top of a mountain in North Carolina.

As we came down off the mountain I looked down at my feet and saw “gold dust” covering my shoes and the bottom part of my pant legs. I showed the gold dust to the other ministers who had been praying with me on the mountain. One of the ministers with us told me that gold dust had occasionally fallen on others upon the mountain as they prayed.

One of the ministers in the group asked me what the gold dust meant. I told the ministers “gold” was prophetic of the “divine nature of Christ.” During our prayer time on the mountain we had been visited by the Holy Spirit, and He had left His “calling card.” Gold dust is one of the “calling cards” the Holy Spirit will leave at times in meetings.

All the “gold dust” I have seen fall from “heavenly places” fell upon people (wood) and not objects. As Christians we are the Temple of the Holy Spirit and “ARKS or bearers of His Covenant.” “Gold dust” can be found many times where the River of God is allowed to flow freely in meetings where two or more are gathered together in the Name of Jesus.

Jesus said, “wherever two or more are gathered together in My Name I will be in their midst.” (Matthew 18:20). When Jesus is in our midst, many times He will leave a special “calling card.” His calling card may be a “word of prophecy,” a “divine healing,” “gold dust” or something else with His “NAME” upon it. (Matthew 18:20). The Lord takes pleasure in leaving His “calling card” when and where people are anxious to hear from Him.

The “New Gold Rush” is a rush to find the true riches which are hidden in Christ and can and will only be found in “His divine nature.” The “New Gold” is the righteousness of Christ which is available to “whosoever will come, let him come and drink of the water of life freely.” (Revelation 22:17). The “New Gold” is found only in Christ Jesus and in the River which flows from the Throne of God. (Revelation 22:1).

CHAPTER 28

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FILING A CLAIM

By which have been given to us exceeding great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the “divine nature,” having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 2 Peter, ch. 1, vs. 4.

We become partakers of the “divine nature” by believing and receiving the “great and precious promises” of God. In other words, “we must lay claim to the promises of God” in order for the “divine nature” to dwell habitually and consistently within us.

A “claim” is defined as a “demand or request for something considered as one’s due.” Laying claim to the promises of God insures us we will possess all we need to fulfill the plan and purpose of God for our lives. All the promises of God are “Yes and in Him Amen.” (2 Corinthians 1:20). In other words, we can be confident that God will watch over His Word to fulfill the promises He has made to us. God is glorified when we believe and receive His “great and precious promises.”

THE PRUDENT MAN RULE

*The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge,
and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.*

Proverbs, ch. 18, vs. 16.

A “prudent man” is one who prepares for the future. He makes sure all his “bases are covered.” If any problems do arise, he will be able to handle any unforeseen challenges which may come. Because he has anticipated and made provision for problems beforehand, he will always be prepared for trouble.

When a miner found gold, he would “file a claim” as evidence the property which he found the gold on belonged to him. He followed what is called the “Prudent Man Rule.” The “rule” required the miner to demonstrate his ability to invest his efforts and time to work his “valuable mining claim.” He also had to prove he had the “legal rights” to file the claim in the first place.

There were many claim jumpers around during the California Gold Rush days. The ownership of mines had to be recorded and claims to mines could only be proven by “title deeds” to gold mining properties. This was known as “proprietorship rights.” A miner was considered a “prudent man” when he proved his ability to work the mine or property and that he was the one who held proprietorship rights to the property. Without a “title deed” to a gold mining operation, it would be impossible for a miner to prove that the property belonged to him and that he had the rights of proprietorship.

As “Prudent Christians” we have been given “proprietorship rights” to all the “promises of God.” We hold the “title deed” to these promises through faith in the shed Blood of Jesus Christ. We are joint heirs with Christ. As joint heirs with Christ we have been given access to everything Christ owns and everything He is. We have access to all the virtues of His “divine nature” because His Spirit dwells within us. (Romans 8:16-17).

In Christ we have been given dominion over Satan and ALL the works of darkness. We are heavenly and hegemonically empowered to destroy the works of the enemy by and through the power of the Holy Spirit. We have “proprietorship rights” in the Kingdom of God and “rule and reign” with Christ Jesus “in this life.” (Romans 5:17).

If we are “Prudent Christians” we will be prepared when the enemy comes in like a flood to destroy and devour our spiritual houses. The “Prudent Man Rule” guarantees we are strong in the Lord, and the power of His might rests upon us wherever and whenever we are in need. We have filed a claim on the “promises of God” and are FREE to search the “gold mine” of His Word for the greatest treasures which exist.

Our claims as joint heirs with Jesus Christ have been filed with the Courts in Heaven. We are free to go prospecting anywhere in the Kingdom of God for the “golden treasures” found in the “divine nature of Christ.” Our desire for the “true riches” will lead us to

the place where we can and will be FILLED with the fullness of the “divine nature of Christ.” We have the “rights” to the divine nature because we possess the Spirit of Christ and He is dwelling richly within us by faith.

BUY THE TRUTH

Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding. Proverbs, ch. 23, vs. 23

We saw in Chapter 6 that Jesus admonished the Laodiceans to “buy gold” which had been refined (tried and tested) in the fire. Solomon admonishes us in the above scripture to “buy truth, wisdom, instruction and understanding.” Both Jesus and Solomon were speaking of the “divine nature.” Truth, wisdom, godly instruction and understanding are virtues which are found only in the “divine nature of Christ.”

The “New Gold Rush” is a “Rush for Truth.” What can be more important than the TRUTH. Jesus is the TRUTH. Jesus is the Truth, the Life and the Way. Jesus is the WAY to Truth AND the WAY to LIFE. Without TRUTH (Jesus), eternal life does not exist for mankind. If people do not possess the “divine nature of Christ,” they are bound for eternal darkness, death and destruction.

Jesus is our WISDOM. (1 Corinthians 1:30).
With the impartation of the “divine nature” we are able

to receive “divine wisdom, instruction and understanding.” The “divine nature of Christ” gives us personal access to the “grace of God” as well as all things which pertain to “life and godliness.” When we have found Christ we will have found “Wisdom.” When we have found Christ we will have found “the Truth.” When we have found Christ we have found the “Way” to “ETERNAL LIFE.”

When we are buying or “purchasing something,” we are making an exchange. We are trading something we have for something we need or desire. Jesus comes to exchange “His beauty” for our ashes, and the “oil of joy” for our mourning so we may be called “trees of righteousness.” (Isaiah 61:3).

Once we have purchased the truth, we should never desire to sell or exchange it for anything else. If we desire to exchange truth for anything else in existence, we are not being wise or prudent. If we desire anything other than the truth, we will find ourselves languishing in a life filled with disappointment, delusion and denial.

We cannot be filled with righteousness if we do not “know the truth.” It is truth which sets us free. It is “truth” which sets us apart from the rest of the world. It is the “truth” which sanctifies us so we can become the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. When we buy the “truth,” we have bought the greatest treasure anyone can find. If we have not been to the cross and exchanged our sins for the beauty of His Holiness, we have not found the “Pathway of Life.”

CHAPTER 29

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GOLDEN NUGGETS

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Joshua, ch. 1, vs. 7.

The Bible tells us to “meditate” on God’s Word day and night. The Hebrew word “meditate (hagah)” means to “speak out and/or absorb with thought.” The above scripture speaking of meditation uses the word “mouth,” and I assume what the Lord is saying is to “meditate on His Word in the heart and speak His Word out loud.”

The Bible says when we meditate on His Word day and night and are faithful to observe everything He tells us in His Word, we will prosper. The Bible tells us the Word is like a seed which is planted in our heart (spirit). Natural seeds will become fruit bearing plants and trees if they are continually watered and receive plenty of sunlight (Son Light). When flora fully matures, they will bear life bearing seeds and life

sustaining fruit. This same process works in the “life” of the believer. (Read Ephesians 5:25-27).

There are many benefits which come to us as we daily meditate on God’s Word. Meditating daily on the Word of God builds our faith and increases our understanding of scripture. Meditating on the Word of God causes godly fruit to abound within us. Meditating on the Word of God will cause us to prosper in all we do. Meditating on the Word of God will cause us to become “filled” with the “divine nature of Christ.”

The Bible says “speaking the truth in love edifies (builds us up).” (Ephesians 4:15). The NIV translation of the Bible says it like this: “Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every aspect the mature body of Him who is the Head, that is Christ.” When we love the “truth” and continually meditate on the Word of God which is the truth, we are building strongholds of faith, power, and love.

FOCUSING OUTLOUD

When I was in elementary school I had a problem in Reading Class. I knew how to read, but I had a problem focusing on what I was reading. To fix my problem, the teacher took me out of the classroom and placed me in a room by myself for 30 minutes each day. I was told to sit and read out loud the book I was given for half an hour each day. After I did this for three or four days, my problem with “focus” was cured.

Reading the book out loud helped train me to become and stay focused on what I was reading. In the Book of Joshua we are told to stay focused and “meditate” on the Word of God continually. As Christians we need to know what the Word of God says, as well as have a good understanding of what the Word means. When our focus is on the Word of God and we continually meditate on the Word, we will “make our way prosperous.”

The Church needs to have a new perception of the purpose and power found in the “divine nature of Christ.” We need to have a greater understanding of what Jesus made available to us as He was crucified on the cross, buried in a tomb, and raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit.

Many Christians are missing the heavenly treasures found only IN CHRIST. When we pursue Christ with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, we will find ALL the riches Heaven has made available to us as we continue our journey here on Earth.

When we are walking with the Lord in the LIGHT of His Word we will be partaking of the “divine nature” of Christ. When we are walking consistently with Christ at our side, we are walking in the fullness of His Spirit. When we are faithfully and consistently “following Christ,” it is because Christ is living inside us faithfully and consistently guiding and directing our steps.

MEDITATING CONSISTENTLY

The Bible has much to say about “meditation” and how important meditation is for believers. Many Christians believe meditation is something New Agers, Gurus and Yoga enthusiasts invented. However, the Bible is specific about instructions on how and why we as Christians should meditate on the Word of God. Meditation which is not biblically inspired is a tool Satan uses to deceive people and keep them under his control and subjugation.

When we are meditating consistently on the Word of God, we are building up strongholds of faith in our hearts and minds. Those strongholds help us to stand victoriously against the attacks and schemes of the enemy. Those strongholds will also repel the thoughts and desires of the “old man” which has been crucified with Christ. Our desires will no longer be dictated by the “old man” but by the “divine nature” which dwells richly within us.

If we are not walking consistently in the “fullness of Christ, the “old man” will find cause to be resurrected and the “new man” will lose focus. We must put to death the “works of the flesh” so the “new man” can walk constantly and consistently in the power of the “Living Word--Jesus.” When we have put to death the “works of the flesh,” the “divine nature” will empower us to fulfill the glorious plan and purpose God has for our life.

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are just, whatever things are

pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. Philippians, ch. 4, vs. 8.

The following scriptures are “golden nuggets” I dug up in the Word of God which will help us grow and prosper in Christ as we meditate on them daily. Every Christian has, or should have, their favorite scriptures which they meditate on daily. You may want to add some of these scriptures to your daily meditation list. Some of these scriptures are about meditating. One of the keys to meditating successfully is to make the scriptures personal to you as you meditate on them.

May God bless you and cause you to prosper in Christ as you pursue His “divine nature” by praying, studying, and meditating daily on His Word.



SCRIPTURES ON MEDITATION

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.
Psalm 1, vs. 2.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my Redeemer. Psalm 19, vs. 14.

When I remember you on my bed, I meditate on you in the night watches. Because you have been my help, therefore in the shadow of your wings I will rejoice. Psalm 66, vs. 6-7.

I call to remembrance my song in the night; I meditate within my heart, and my spirit makes diligent search. Psalm 77, vs. 6.

I will meditate on your precepts, and contemplate your ways. I will delight myself in your statutes; I will not forget your word. Psalm 119, vs. 15-16.

Make me understand the way of your precepts; so shall I meditate on your wondrous works. Psalm 119, vs. 27.

I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty, and on your wonderful works. Psalm 145 vs. 5.

Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, and the Lord listened and heard them, so a book of remembrance was written before Him. For all those who fear the Lord and who meditate on His name. Malachi, ch. 3, vs. 16.

Do not neglect the gift that is in you given you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of hands of the presbytery. Meditate on these things; give

yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident in all. 1 Timothy, ch. 4, vs. 14-15.

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OTHER SCRIPTURES TO MEDITATE ON

As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. Psalm 45, vs. 1.

O God, You are my God; early will I seek you; my soul thirsts for you: my flesh longs for you in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. Psalm 63, vs. 1.

My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise you with joyful lips. Psalm 63, vs. 5.

For He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness. Psalm 107, vs. 9.

Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Psalm 103, vs. 1.

He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who keeps understanding will find good. Proverbs, ch. 19, vs. 8.

My son eat honey because it is good, and the honeycomb which is sweet to the taste; so shall the knowledge of wisdom be to your soul; if you have found it, there is a prospect. And your hope will not be cut off. Proverbs, ch. 24, vs. 13-14.

Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Matthew, ch. 6, vs. 33.

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to His riches and grace. Ephesians, ch. 1, vs. 7.

Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord and the power of His might. Ephesians, ch. 6, vs. 10.

And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Philippians, ch. 4, vs 19.

There is therefore no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. Romans, ch, 8, vs. 1.

Who himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed. 1 Peter, 2, vs. 24.

For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels nor principalities no powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans, ch. 8, vs. 38-39.

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And we know that if He hears us, whatever we ask, we

**know that we have the petitions that we ask of Him.
1John, ch. 5, vs. 14-15.**

If you do not know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, or if you are not sure you have been saved--please pray this prayer and ask Jesus to come into your heart.

Father I pray to you in the name of your Son Jesus. I admit that I am a sinner and that Jesus died on the Cross for my sins. I believe you raised Him from the dead. I know it was for me He died. I am sorry for all the sins I committed. Please come into my heart right now. I also ask you to fill me with the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

Signature and date:

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