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Rev. Raymond M. Jackson

We ended part 2 speaking of how God called us out of denominational church systems, and how we have to get all of those traditional ideas out of us before we are really in a place to supply our part to the body of Christ. Why is that so? Simply because the bride of Christ is a word bride. She cannot feed on those manmade traditions, once she

has tasted of pure revelation. She sees things in the Bible now that she could not see while out there in those systems. Brothers and Sisters: It is a miracle that we even survived in the darkness of those places. Looking back now, you can see that we were just like prisoners, held in captivity, and given a little bit of that stale food from time to time. No wonder we act like we do sometimes; we have something to shout about. Ignorance is no longer an excuse for not walking with God; for he has opened up the windows of heaven and showered us with the revelation of His blessed word. Therefore Ephesians 5:17 speaks directly to us, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." We do not have to wait for the Lord to anoint us to obey His word; once we have the revelation of it. For these epistles were written in order that true children of God might know how to live, how to walk, how to conduct ourselves, and how to look at each other, and see the grace of God at

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work. One thing is sure; It is not the will of God for Christians to bite and devour one another. The true love of God will cause us to love one another; even as he loves us, and we cannot walk in wisdom, redeeming the time, according to what Paul wrote to the Colossians, unless we have that love in us. Remember, you do not just automatically acquire these attributes of the Spirit of God because you attend church services regularly. As a matter of fact you can go to church all your life and still not have them unless you walk with God in the time between those services.

BE SOBER

Alright now, as we look at verse 18, I want to remind you that it has been used out of context more times than it has ever been used in the way Paul meant it. He was talking about being wise Christians and understanding what the will of the Lord is, for our lives. Then he said, “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.” Paul is definitely not referring to your initial experience of being filled with the Holy Ghost. If we will look at the contrast properly, we will see that he is pointing to something every Christian should do, in order to stay full of the spirit of God. A person who becomes intoxicated by

drinking too much natural wine does not get that way by just simply taking a big gulp of the stuff. Such a person spends some time somewhere consuming enough of it to make them drunk. One quick shot might cause me to go spinning down Main Street; but that is not the kind of illustration Paul is using. He is actually pointing to the fact that becoming drunk on natural wine requires one to spend some time building up to that point. Therefore when you look at the second part of verse 18, just apply the same principle to being filled with the spirit of God. Do you actually believe you can receive one initial filling of the Holy Ghost, and always be full of the spirit, without spending some time seeking God from day to day? God expects us to become just as addicted to the Holy Ghost, as the old alcoholic is to whatever he drinks. But let me say this, The fact that our initial filling of the Holy Ghost sometimes makes us act like we are drunk, does not mean that we have to come to church acting like we are drunk, in order for people to know we have something. I've known people that literally thought they had to stand on their head and spin around, so to speak if they had the Holy Ghost. Now there is nothing at all wrong with doing that; but it is not necessarily a sign that you are full of the Holy Ghost. The true sign of being full of the Holy Ghost is when there is less of you and more of Him. In other words, He has you, instead of you having Him. It is the same principle that applies to the

person who spends that much time at the bar, consuming alcoholic beverages. He reaches a point where he not only has the alcohol in him; but the alcohol in him has control of him. He will do things then, that he would never do without that alcohol in him; and a lot of the time; he will not even know he did them. Well this brings me to a place where I need to remind you of something else. When you are paralleling a natural condition with a spiritual condition; do not try to make every little detail fit; that is where a lot of people get into trouble with the parables Jesus spoke. A parable, (a natural illustration) is for the purpose of presenting a profile; and does not necessarily turn out the same in every little detail. Why am I saying this at this time? I do not want you to think I am teaching that the Holy Ghost in you will cause you to go around doing things and not even know you have done them. We do not limit God; He can do whatever it takes to fulfill His purpose. But the mere state of being full of the Holy Ghost, does not mean that we do not know what we are doing, when the Spirit is leading us to do it.

HOW TO WORSHIP GOD

Paul goes on, in verse 19 and begins to mention some things that go hand in

hand with being filled with the Spirit. After he says, "But be filled with the Spirit," he continues saying, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." This is an atmosphere created by godly people who are walking with God; and trying to please Him in all things, and under all conditions. This is the kind of atmosphere that makes cranky people very uncomfortable. One such fellow made the remark: I did not come here to hear a lot of singing; I came here to hear the word of God. People who know nothing at all about yielding themselves to the spirit of God, do not want to be found in the midst of a group of people who enjoy worshiping God both in the Spirit and in His word. Singing stimulates your spirit and puts you in an attitude of worship, and even if you are not a singer that could sing by yourself, you should still enjoy being in an atmosphere of worship and praise, if your own heart is right. Well the truth is, people who make remarks like that fellow made, only hear what they want to hear, when the word of God is being preached. Therefore what they choose to hear does them very little good, for they somehow feel that they are right and everyone else is wrong. Brothers and Sisters: If that kind of attitude is right, then there should be at least one verse of scripture in the Bible to justify it, and I have never found one. But let me go on, for there are a lot of people who live off of

these lively type of services, and that is all they want. They like to sing, shout and have a lot of commotion, but they care little for the preaching of the word of God. If this kind of people could not find what they are looking for, in a church somewhere, they would be out here in Rock and Roll; for their spirit requires that. Neither of these groups know how to submit themselves to the Spirit of God so He can help them find a balance between the two. Remember Jesus said in John 4:24, "God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." If we are going to worship God we MUST worship Him according to the scriptural formula given, in Spirit and in truth. God is pleased when His true children yield their hearts and their voices to Him in an atmosphere of worship; whether in church, or off somewhere alone. Just as the Bible declares that God inhabits the praises of Israel; He also inhabits, or dwells in the atmosphere created by His children singing and making melody in their own hearts. Worshiping in the spirit is more than just being entertained by someone else singing and playing music; it requires participation on our part; and it does not include fussing and complaining about too much music, the sermon being too long, and that sort of thing. That kind of attitude will turn the Holy Spirit away every time. He does not dwell in carnality. Verse 20 carries right on through with the same thought; as it says, "Giving thanks always for all things unto God

and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” In other words, These verses deal with our reaction and responsiveness in expressing ourselves to our creator; both as individuals, and also collectively, as a body of believers. Because of his grace and mercy we have something to sing and shout about, something the world simply cannot understand. Hallelujah! Our message is different than theirs.

DEALING WITH WAYS OF GODLINESS

As we read on, we will see that verse 21 begins to deal with perfection. You may think this is not important; but I assure you, every bit of it is dealing with what the true bride of Christ will be measuring up to, before she ever gets out of here in the rapture; so notice verse 21. “Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.” That means we should cultivate an attitude of surrender and cooperation with each other. Christians ought to always find an area of agreement, whereby they can work together toward a common goal. Saints: There is a reason for this kind of an admonition. Not necessarily because people just want to be hard to get along with; but because they see things in so many different ways. No we are not talking about doctrines of the scriptures; we are talking about

jobs in this life that have to be done, and the many different ideas on how they should be done. You can take 10 people and point them to a certain job that needs to be done, and if someone is not authorized to take the lead and direct the thing, you could have 10 different opinions on how the job should be done; and before it is all over; one will be tearing down what another has built up. You know yourselves that there are some people (in the church) that will not do one thing unless they can be the director of the whole operation. Sure that is a carnal attitude, but there is still plenty of it around. That is why I like that little song, “God’s Still Working On Me,” because we realize that we are not perfect yet, and our flesh is always getting in the way of what the inner man desires to do. We are on a journey; just like the children of Israel were when they came through the wilderness. The only difference is, theirs was a geographical journey, and their trials were in their flesh; while ours is a spiritual journey, and our trials are in the spirit. Nevertheless our flesh is affected just the same, and that causes us much trouble at times: so the admonition is, Submit yourselves one to another in the fear of God. I have asked the Lord to help me say some things in a wise way; as we deal with these scriptures, because the setting is not exactly the same now, as it was then. The people Paul wrote to were Christians; but just about every one of them had been converted right out of

paganism, and naturally there were some men that had more than one wife; and maybe some other men and women that just lived together, not even thinking of themselves as husband and wife. A merciful God saves people from all walks of life, and he then begins to work on them to clean up their lives; but it does not happen in one days time. It takes place over a period of time, as they have opportunity to sit under the preaching and teaching of an anointed ministry. Polygamy was a very predominant thing in those early years of Christianity; because they already had those wives when the grace of God reached down and got hold of them. IN other words, God would save a polygamist; but these were not the fellows he called into service; into leadership positions. Then let me say this. Men and women from those pagan backgrounds did not know one thing about morality, nor how to show proper respect for each other, so Paul wrote this to them, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." He was not writing that to the man and woman of the world: but to those whom God had called from the world, to mold into the image of his only begotten Son. In other words, The church universal, is to be a living image of Jesus Christ. It takes the whole body to fully portray all of His attributes; for no one person is endowed with the fullness of the spirit of the Father like He was. But the Church, as a body, with every member

of that body supplying their part in its function, truly does exemplify Jesus Christ. That is how He is seen by others, for He is not here personally to appear to anyone. But looking at verse 22 we would have to say, That was Paul's way of saying to those married women, Do not surrender yourselves to every man that comes along; but be true and submissive to your own husband. Their pagan background made it necessary that they be instructed in a lot of things that women of our day ought to know naturally, without being told. A lot of those women had been treated more like slaves than wives, and now that they were coming into a Christian environment where they would be shown some respect, Paul wanted them to know how to conduct themselves. Well does that mean that these scriptures are not for our day? Not at all. They are for anyone who needs to hear them in order to know how to conduct themselves. Our present society is awful close to returning to those pagan ways of our ancestors.

SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE

I often think of how the Bible pictures Abraham and Sarah, as they were journeying from their former land into Canaan and then on into Egypt. Even

way back then, God had a man and woman on earth that presented an image of what he meant for husbands and wives to be like. The Bible tells us that Sarah was subject to Abraham, and even called him lord. But she was not his slave. She was also treated with proper respect. You know what happens a lot of the time when men get saved, and then read in the Bible that their wife is supposed to be subject unto them; they immediately jump on that and begin to treat their wives worse than when they were still out in the world of sin. Some of them never seem to read past that one verse, to find out how Paul said that submission was to be regulated. There are some key words down through here, that put an altogether different meaning on these verses than what some people get out of them. In verse 22, the key words are, "As unto the Lord." That makes the submission a willing act on the part of the wife, and she is able to do that because of the proper respect shown her, by her husband. You will see all of that in the following verses. That is why I said, God help me to say something that will cause my brothers and sisters to grasp the reality of what these scriptures actually point to. These are not instructions we follow only on the days we feel good; that is what God expects every day, from those who are called to make up the bride of Jesus Christ. The way some people live, you cannot help but wonder if the grace of God has ever really touched their lives. They come

to church as regular as anyone else; but they fuss and argue all the way home. You could never make me believe God is glorified in the lives of people who conduct themselves like that. It is all because of selfishness, self-centeredness, and a lack of proper respect for each other, and for the Lord. Then those same people wonder why their children turn out like they do. They come crying to the preacher: We have tried to raise them right; we kept them in church, and taught them to read their Bibles; so where did we fail? Brothers and Sisters: The way you live and conduct yourselves between church service, says more to your children than all the words you could ever utter. They are looking for examples to follow and pattern their lives after; more than they are words of instruction. Especially so, as they get older. That old saying, Don't do as I do; do as I say, was not meant for Christians. Christian people are to live in such a way that it would be all right for others to do as they do. The apostle Paul said, Follow me, as I follow Christ. We will not be perfected by just simply copying someone else's life; but as Christians, each one of us should live in such a way as not to set a bad example before those who might look to us for exampleship. In other words, Some of you parents are in for a lot of heartache when your children just simply think; This is the way Dad and Mom did this and that, so that is how I will do it. It is just like those who say, My parents were Baptists, and their

parents were Baptists, and they were good people; so what is wrong with being a Baptist? Well the thing that is wrong, is that every individual person has to answer to God for their own selves, and God expects to be allowed to direct the lives of all whom he calls to be his sons and daughters. As I said, just simply copying someone else's life will not take the place of a personal walk with your Creator. But on the other hand, it is a wonderful thing to be raised in a Christian home where love for God abounds. I am not telling you that there will not be moments of misunderstanding when feelings may be hurt, but I am saying this, if your hearts are right, and your spirits can be touched by God, sooner or later you begin to feel an inner gnawing, and it will not leave until you have apologized to each other. An honest apology will clean the air between you; and will also set a good example for your children. Whether you think so or not, your children know when things are not right between you; and much of the time others know it too.

A WORD ABOUT HEADSHIP

We are not meaning to pick on wives, nor are we picking on husbands; we are just endeavoring to take an honest look at the scriptures that deal with our

conduct as Christians. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord," is not just a suggestion; it is a necessity, if there is to be any maturity in your lives. But Paul did not end it right there; he presented the whole picture of headship, right back to the Creator Himself. Why should wives submit to their husbands? Let us look at verse 23, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and He is the Savior of the body." A Christian man has to be taught by the Spirit of God, how to be a proper head to the little wife that submits herself to him. Any man that assumes the attitude of a dictator, is out of the scriptures; and therefore out of the will of God. Let us just go ahead and read these next two verses so we can tie this all together as it should be. "Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it." All of that taken together, lets us see that this is not a one sided situation. Each person has a part to play. In order for a man to expect this kind of submission from his wife, he himself must first be subject unto Christ which is his head. When Paul wrote his first epistle to the Corinthian believers, he also dealt with this thing of headship, saying, "But I would have you know , (11:3) that the head of every man is Christ: and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." Even Christ

Jesus, who said, (in Matt. 28:18) “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth,” still remained to be subject unto the great eternal Spirit, the Creator of heaven and earth and all things therein. He was subject unto His head, and willingly; without domineering force being used to make Him submissive. That is why He always confessed, I do nothing except what the Father shows me to do. He recognized His purpose; and knew that it was the will and purpose of the Father, that must be accomplished; therefore He willingly submitted His total being to the complete leadership and direction of the Father; knowing that He would never be led wrong. Well when you bring that down one notch, to the Christian man: you can be assured that the man who is totally submitted to Jesus Christ his head, will be a proper head to his own wife. Therefore a Christian woman with a Christian husband that is completely submitted to the leadership of his head, will not find it difficult to submit to her head; which is her husband. Now that does not rule out the fact that every Christian should be led by the Lord, whether man, woman or child. But it does establish an order of headship, whereby someone always has the responsibility of making decisions, and others are responsible to walk accordingly. That is what keeps out confusion and maintains order; but it only works when everyone recognizes their place; and willingly stays in that place. Any man who is domineering

and abusive to his wife, and still tries to hide behind these scriptures, is not subject to his head; for the Spirit of Jesus Christ would never lead a man to conduct himself like that. I am not trying to unchristianize anyone; I will never touch your life in that way. But as a servant of God, I am obligated to tell you that God did not, and will not authorize you to rule over your wife, and treat her like a slave. But at the same time, a Christian woman is not to allow this worldly, women’s liberation spirit to get on her, and cause her to rebel against her husband’s headship. This was written to Christians, and Christians are the only ones it will work for one hundred percent; so let us take heed, and realize that this is not just an option; it is an absolute necessity for the people of the true Church of the living God. Our heavenly Father is not going to let us just drift through life unmolded, and unrefined; He is going to work on us from here on out to the end, to mold us into the very image of his only begotten Son. We ought to arise every morning and say, God help me walk this day, in a way that will be well pleasing in your sight. If we will do that, and mean it, our lives will glorify God wherever we go.

WHAT LEADS TO SUBMISSION?

We come to church and sit here together, knowing that we are just mortal people saved by the grace of God; and believing in our hearts that we will one day be the bride of Christ. Now we are only his bride to be; but in the Millennium we will be his wife, and rule and reign with Him. Therefore I ask you: Do you see Christ as being a domineering husband? Can you visualize Him ever speaking unkind words to His wife, or forcing her to do something against her will? You say, of course not. He is loving, understanding, always ready to comfort and console, and never demanding, and He is the same yesterday, today, and forever, according to the scriptures. So no matter how weak and unlike Him we are, that is the image God has determined to mold each one of us into. Brothers and Sisters: There is a lot in this picture, and it all goes together. When the woman is to be submissive to her husband it is to be in a way that God will be glorified in it. There is no fear involved in this kind of submission; it is a love relationship. It is true that women can be subject unto their husbands out of fear; but I assure you, God is not glorified in that. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it." That is the key; a self sacrificing love like Christ had for us, when he willingly gave His life on that old cross. That kind of love merits respect and submission. Someone told me the other day, why Arab women

always walk in front of their husbands, going down a trail. It was so if a wild animal jumped out to attack them, it would get the woman, and the man could escape. Well that made me think of how you always see the Indian man portrayed, riding his pony, and his squaw on foot, trying to keep up. Some asked, Hey Chief! Why does your wife always walk? His answer was, Me not have other pony. That is how a lot of people see life. They have no respect or consideration for others. I will just take a moment to relate an experience my uncle out in Colorado had one time. In the fall of the year he went out to the reservation and brought back some of the Indians to help with the harvest. He had a large cabin that he just turned over to them to use while they were there. Well the wife of one of them was expectant with child; so one night there was a knock on the door of my uncle's cabin, and it was this particular Indian man. He said to my uncle, Wife having baby, you take to doctor? It was about 60 miles and all my uncle had was a two ton truck, but he told him he would take them. When they came out, ready to go, the man was taking another man along to keep him company, and another woman to look after his wife. They started to put the women in the back, and the two men were going to sit up front with my uncle. But he put a stop to that and put them in the back and the two women in the cab, and then he just hoped he could get them there before the new arrival appeared on the scene. I just use

this to show you how some women in the world are treated. Their husbands treat them just like something to be used rather than someone to love and care for; and that is not what God wants out of His redeemed family. A loving husband will always seek to comfort his wife, rather than mistreat her. I sure wouldn't want my wife to have to sleep somewhere that I would not want to sleep, nor eat something that I wouldn't eat. Neither would I want her to have less to wear for appearance's sake than what I feel that I myself should have. Some men like to spend a lot of money on themselves, to look nice; while they are willing for their wives to wear just any old thing she can find to wear. Well let me say it again, God is not glorified in that. God is not the one that inspires men to be like that. The devil tricks people into yielding themselves to selfishness, and greediness, and eventually into wrecking their lives. We are not picking on anyone; but simply trying, by the help of God, to reveal some areas of trouble, and help God's true children learn how to apply scriptural principles. When each of us learn how to be submissive to our heads, we will not have all the problems of life that so many people are faced with.

WHY WE NEED WASHING

Alright Paul is using this Christian husband and wife setting, actually to illustrate the relationship between Christ and the church, and to show that the church cannot have a proper relationship with Christ, until the individual members of that body learn how to treat each other. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; (Why?) That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." Have you ever stopped to realize that if Adam and Eve had never sinned, none of this would be necessary? We would all be clean just like they were in the day God created them, if it were not for that fallen nature we inherited by birth. Well what we need to see here, is that God is cleaning up an element of mankind, preparing them for the day when they can stand in the place with Him, that Adam and Eve stood in. Some people have never been wicked and evil like others are, but the best people in the world still have that fallen nature, and must be redeemed and cleaned up, by the washing of the word of God, before they can ever be acceptable to Him as a suitable bride for His only begotten Son. I know this terminology sounds strange to the unregenerate mind; but nevertheless, this is the terminology of the Bible, written by holy men of old who walked with God; so if we have any desire to walk with God, we first must gain a proper respect for His written word. You just simply do not have within your natural mind, a true

concept of what it takes to please God, until that mind has first been made new, through His recreating process. These scriptures have laid here for centuries without people having a clear revelation of the depths they must reach to in our innermost being, in order to produce in the end what God is after. Denominational people could not understand them fully, because God never had any intention of perfecting them. Perfection is something that many have talked about, but ideas and opinions about that perfection have been as numerous as the stars in the sky. I just have to thank God for allowing me to live here at the end time; for I truly believe that He has saved the best for last. Not that we are any more worthy than anyone else of any other age; for we are all just sinners saved by grace; but God is giving His best to us, that we in return may give our best back to Him; and the way we do that is by allowing Him to lead and direct our thoughts and actions constantly. Not just in church; but all the time. Do not ever allow the devil to deceive you into thinking your heavenly Father does not care how you look, act, and talk; for He does. He has given us of His Spirit, so that he can direct our lives from within, just like He did His only begotten Son Jesus; but we have to yield to Him like Jesus did, instead of yielding to the spirit of that nature we were born with. People of the world say cruel and abusive things to each other; but Christians should never do so. Instead of abusing

each other, we need to be saying, Lord, wash me, clothe me, and help me portray Christlikeness everywhere I go. Verse 27 says, "That He (Jesus) might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." That verse lets us know why we are being washed in the waters of the word of God. But then Paul goes right back to dealing with our attitudes and actions saying, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church." When you stop to think, that the man who had this beautiful revelation of the relationship between Christ and His Church, actually started out persecuting the Church, it should certainly let you know that there is nothing impossible with God. If He could take that staunch Pharisee that was out to destroy Christianity, and make him such an effective instrument in the spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ; then we should not have any trouble believing that He can mold us into the very image of His only begotten Son, if we will just let Him have His way in our lives. We sing that little chorus, "To be like Jesus," but do we really mean it? I only ask to be like Him. Is that really our desire? I know we would every one say, Yes I desire to be like Him; and mean it from the bottom of our hearts, but then we turn right around and do, or say something

that He would never do or say. Does that mean it is a hopeless situation? No. It just means that we still have some growing and maturing ahead of us. As I said earlier, When the little children sing, God's still working on me, to make me what I ought to be, we can sing it right along with them; no matter how old we may be.

WE MUST WALK IN THE SPIRIT

Alright, many have said that the book of Joshua runs a parallel with the book of Ephesians; and others have said, How is that so? Well it is the objective in both, that makes it so. In the third chapter, the children of Israel are camped on the banks of the Jordan river, in sight of the promised land. All they have to do is cross over and take possession; for God has already given the land to them. This is just like every other promise in the Bible; there is a condition to meet, before actually receiving that which has been promised. The Jordan River symbolized death, in this case, for to cross over was death to the old life, and the beginning of a new life. Egypt and the wilderness journey would all be left behind. Therefore in chapter 3, verse 5, Joshua said to the people, "Sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you." There are many verses we could read; but the point is, the people were

commanded to sanctify themselves in preparation for the battle that lay ahead of them. They needed to be sure they were ready to go over and fight for their inheritance. They had already gone through 40 years of being redeemed from bondage, where they faced many trials and tests. So it was time for them to put the old life behind them, and start life anew. This is why we must understand: It is one thing to remember 30 years ago when we first got saved; but we need to keep our salvation experience up to date and give respect to God for all the trials and tests He has led us through, to get us where we are today. We cannot live 30 years in the past and move on with God both at the same time. In other words, Perfection is not something you can lay hold on by dropping a coin in a slot machine somewhere, and have it pour out like coins from a slot machine. It is something God works in us through many trials and tests. We have to fight for it. The enemy of your soul will not just hang back and let you reach perfection without some serious battles along the way. It is true some people have the idea; I am saved and filled with the Holy Ghost; so I don't need to do anything else; but brother let me tell you, That is only where you start. That is your starting point in this army of the Lord, and from that point on you have a lot to learn. Living in the spirit and walking in the Spirit can only be realized as we face issues and problems that cause us to resort to the leadership of the Holy Ghost, to guide

us through them. In the 5th chapter of Galatians Paul wrote this, (verses 25-26) "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." Certainly as children of God, we desire both to live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, but we do not accomplish that by just haphazardly drifting through life pampering our flesh. Before we can walk in the spirit, we have to get our flesh under subjection; or it will run ahead of God every time. Fleshly zeal will cause people to run 90 miles an hour, trying to do something for God, and all the time they are desirous of vain glory, for they spend the rest of their time bragging about what they have done for God; and making it appear that God's whole plan of redemption would fail if it were not for what they have done, and still plan to do. On the other hand, the true body of Christ, that has learned to walk in the spirit, will work for God as a body of people, and no individual will seek personal glory, or credit, for what is accomplished. I have said many times, We have not yet seen the body of Christ in action; as it will be seen before the end. Remember, the body of Christ (not every individual) is to have in operation, every attribute Jesus Himself displayed, when He walked on earth. Therefore we realize that what we have seen so far, is just little fragmentary examples of what the body of Christ will one day be like, when the whole body is truly living

and walking in the Spirit. Some have said, oh I walk in the Spirit every day. Well that is what we are growing toward; but I do not find Christians yielding to the leadership of the Holy Ghost one hundred percent of the time. There is still that tendency present, to work it out ourselves before we call upon the Lord to help us, too much of the time. Now brothers and sisters, I am not talking about driving nails, changing tires and things like that. These are natural abilities that we have, and God does not expect us to ask him how to do them. But we face other situations every day, where we need to depend upon the leadership of the Spirit of God, rather than just going at it in a fleshly way. In the natural, the children of Israel typed this completely. When they would take it upon themselves to go out and engage in battle with their enemies, without first getting a directive from the Lord, they would always return defeated. But when they realized how frail and weak they were, and yet trusted in God to lead them into battle and fight for them, they would gain the victory. The way God would do things, sometimes looked very foolish to the natural mind; but one thing is sure, when the battle was won, those Israelites could not boast about what they had done; they had to glorify the God that had fought for them. Their greatest victories looked impossible to them from the standpoint of natural reasoning; but when they fully trusted in God, and followed his battle plan,

they could not lose; for God is not a loser. It is the same way with us; there are always two ways to look at every problem: the natural way, and the spiritual way. Now the apostle Paul said the carnal mind is always contrary to the mind of God; therefore to be led by the Spirit, that carnal mind has to be brought under subjection, and yield to the Spirit.

LET GOD DIRECT WHAT YOU DO FOR HIM

When the children of Israel stood there on the banks of the Jordan River that day, and Joshua said to them, “Sanctify yourselves,” he did not mean for them to go through some kind of a ritual; nor was he referring to pouring some kind of ointment over themselves; what he was really saying was, God has given you that land; but you have to go over and fight for it; so determine within yourselves whether you are ready to go over or not. When he said, “Tomorrow, the Lord will do wonders among you,” that really meant, This is the time to go; if you want the Lord to fight for you. In other words, Prepare yourselves for this journey, whereby the Lord has already promised to give you victory over your enemies. In chapter one, God had already told Joshua, “Every place (on the other side of the Jordan) that the sole of your foot

shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses, “(meaning of course, to the children of Israel) so now it was time for them to go over and take possession. Do you think if they had said, We would rather wait until next week, until we rest up a little more, the results would have been the same? No. When the Lord says, Move, you have to move, if you want His help. After saying, Sanctify yourselves, Joshua said to them, “Come hither, and hear the words of the Lord your God. (Ch. 3, verses 9-10) And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.” That was the people who were in possession of the land God had promised to the children of Israel, and He was the one that was going to drive them out; but they every one had to follow His battle plan. Now that is what makes the difference in our situations of life. The outcome depends on whether we follow God’s plan or not. When they crossed over the Jordan, they were dead to everything on the other side. There was no turning back. They now had to go forth and take possession of what God had promised them, and if you will read the account of it, you will learn that it was not done in a day’s time. As the Lord directed, they took one city at a time, and they knew that without the help of God, the task

would have been more than they could handle. It is the same way with us, as we little by little, found our place in the body of Christ. The body of Christ is not run like Washington, D.C., with a lot of people lobbying, trying to trade something for something else. No. God has designed the whole thing and there is a certain place for each one of us to fit into, and we have to allow the Holy Ghost to direct us, in order to find that certain place. What causes trouble is when we get over anxious and try to make our own place. If God has determined that you should be a toe in the body, you will never glorify Him trying to be some more recognized member of the body. In the denominational systems, you could do whatever you felt like doing, and no one stopped you. They liked people with a lot of get-up-and-go. But in the body of Christ, that get-up-and-go attitude can actually get in God's way. It is not how much we do that God looks at, but whether he has directed us to do what we are doing. In other words, we just simply cannot go through life doing what looks right to the natural mind, and call that walking in the Spirit. Neither can we go around with our eyes closed, expecting God to keep us from falling over something and breaking our neck. That is not what Paul was talking about when he said, "Let us also walk in the Spirit." I used to look at it about like that when I first received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. I had the idea that if I was not staggering around like a drunk man,

there was something wrong. But as time passed and I grew a little, I began to realize that this was childish, just like a 4 year old child, still pulling on a milk bottle. There is nothing wrong with being drunk on the Spirit of God; but that is for a time and a place; and that is not what constitutes walking in the Spirit. Furthermore when that anointing has accomplished in you what it is supposed to, you will begin to look at things differently; and seek to glorify God in the things you do and say, rather than just receive a blessing yourself.

TRUE UNITY DEPENDS ON MANY THINGS

Brothers and Sisters: I realize that I am covering a lot of different things in this message, and you may not agree with the way we are skipping around from place to place; but these are all things that affect us in our daily walk with God, and we need to get them all in the proper perspective, so we can supply our part to the body as it moves toward perfection. As for this assembly, there is probably not another congregation anywhere that Satan would enjoy tearing up, more than he would this one. Why? Because we have stood for what we believe to be the right doctrines of the word of God, while others that should been standing with

us were running to and fro sowing discord. The devil hates people who are steadfast in what they believe, and especially so, when the Lord is using them to help get others out of confusion, and established in the word. As I have said, the first step toward perfection is to come out of denominational systems. But then comes the job of getting those systems out of you. All of those man-made doctrines have to be purged out by a true revelation of the word of God, before we can sit together without fussing and arguing over doctrines; but we still have enough flesh hanging on, for the devil to work with in other areas, so we need to keep our guard up. That is why I have devoted so much time calling your attention to the many other areas he works in, other than our doctrinal beliefs. It is God's purpose to mold us into vessels that are completely surrendered to Him in every area of life, so that He can have a completely united family. Therefore if Satan cannot get you confused over Bible doctrines, he will try his best to get you to look at other things in a selfish way; and many times he succeeds. That is why tares are still able to sit among us. A tare will only go so far when it comes to yielding to God and walking in unity, and the first thing you know, they are gone. But the true child of God will say, Lord, I want to walk with you, regardless of the cost to my flesh. Instead of yielding to God, a tare will find fault and create a disturbance, trying to get someone else

to agree with him, and if he cannot get anyone over on his side, he will soon be gone. Some of you have sat here year after year, convention after convention, and you have seen a lot of people come here and a lot of them have heard things preached here that they just simply could not accept, so they went away, never to darken our doors again. That does not necessarily mean that we never hear anything else from them; for some of them have gone away speaking evil of us, trying to turn others against what we teach here. Some of you have not always understood everything the first time it was presented to you; but you have always trusted me, and that has made me even more determined to hold a tight line on what comes across this pulpit.

GOD WILL VINDICATE **TRUTH**

I am not in the habit of calling names. I usually find that speaking against the wrong is all that is necessary; in order for the true children of God to keep on a straight course. But ever so often it becomes necessary to call names; just like the apostle Paul did, concerning certain ones that had gone contrary to the right way. Richard Gan, from Singapore, forced me to have to call his name; because of the way he

conducted himself when he came here. I detected that he had a little bit different idea on some certain things; but wanting to give God a chance to teach him, I determined to respect him and say nothing about what I felt. But as time went on, it became obvious that he was working behind the scene, trying to feel out certain individuals that he felt might listen to him. For one thing he had this, what he called a revelation, that Noah was a pure seed, and only his wife was the impure seed. Well as long as he did not have this in print I did not think too much about it; but once he put it in print and started sending it out to many of the same people who receive the Contender, I started to get letters, "Bro. Jackson: How do we look at this? Then when I made a tape and sent it to him, reminding him that he was teaching contrary to what we have published, his reply was, God gave me this revelation; so I have to preach it. Well knowing that a true revelation from God will always stand up when put to the test by the written scriptures, this made me very uneasy; because any person with a true revelation could easily shoot this thing full of holes. This is why, in our July 1986 article, "Exploring Eden," part 1, starting in column 5, page 6, I made sure we included a little formula that could help any sincere person whose eyes were open. But for the benefit of anyone who did not read that, I want to re-state it at this time. If Noah was a pure seed, then his father and mother

had to be pure seed also. (Are you listening?) Noah was Lamech's oldest son. But after Noah was born, Lamech lived another 595 years, and begat SONS and DAUGHTERS. That means that all those brothers and sisters were pure seed also. (Are you following me?) That much ought to be as clear as a bell, so now we look at Genesis 6:8-9, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. (When the whole age of mankind had given themselves over to wickedness and perversion) These are the generations of Noah: NOAH WAS A JUST MAN AND PERFECT in his generations, and Noah walked with God." Do not miss this point. Noah was a JUST man and PERFECT in his generations, and he walked with God. If Noah was a pure seed, and had that kind of relationship with his God, then he (knowing the will of God concerning these mixed marriages) would have taken one of his pure seed sister's for a wife, just like Seth and those other sons of God did. In other words, They either took a sister, a niece, or someone other than Cain's descendants. That is what kept the sons of God line pure, for the first so many generations, until the time chapter 6 speaks of, when Seth's descendants started taking wives from Cain's descendants. But the point is, If Noah was considered righteous because he was a pure seed, then he would have taken a wife of pure seed also. But we know he did not, for their three sons proved that. Furthermore if all of Lamech's children were pure

seed, why did they perish in the flood? The flood was to destroy the wicked; not the righteous. Well Noah never begat any daughters; so his sons had to look elsewhere for their wives. But after the flood, sons and daughters were born to Shem, Ham, and Japheth, or there never would have been anyone to fulfill the commission given to them. God said to them after the flood, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Well those three brothers all had the same father and mother, but when you look at the mixture of humanity the world over, that all came from them: you know for sure that there was a mixup somewhere back up the line. But what I want you to see is that even though Noah was of a mixed seed himself, he still had enough of that sons of God nature about him, to cause him to seek God; and we see also that God will respond to any soul that truly reaches out to Him. The fact that He offered Cain a chance ought to prove that; so where is the problem? The problem is that some people feel like they can just go around teaching anything that comes to their mind, whether it lines up with the scriptures or not. Therefore when Richard Gan left here, he went to Pennsylvania where he had been in contact with some men, and discussed these things with them. Well the very next week, one of them wrote to me saying, Bro. Jackson: We need prayer. There is a conflict over what you teach, and what Richard Gan from Singapore teaches. How can this be, if both of you

are apostles? Well first let me remind all of you that I have never said Richard Gan is an apostle. If he is saying that, then it is up to God Himself to prove it. However the man who wrote the letter said, I have examined this; and from what I see in the Bible, I am more prone to agree with what you teach. I still did not write back to him; I just sort of felt like I should not be too hasty. Then last week I received a letter from one of those men there in prison, and he told me he took both teachings before the Lord, along with the Bible, and God showed him that what we teach here, is right.

OUR TRIALS ARE COMMON TO MAN

Brothers and Sisters: You can know all about certain things that are taught, so that you can quote every word of it, and your spirit still not be in control of your flesh. People have different motives for what they say and do, and I may not always know for sure what a man's motive is; but I am thankful to God that he has enabled me to recognize error when it is taught, and that he enables me to deal with it, without a free-for-all brawl, where a lot of people get hurt. We have had many situations through the years where some people have said, Jackson

can be wrong; you know. Others have said, Just how long will he allow thus and so, to go on? But I have learned to wait long enough to give God a chance to work in every situation, before I jump in there, and try to get everything straightened out. If God has to allow a situation from time to time, to work on my flesh and cause me to lose sleep, then I trust Him enough to believe He knows what He is doing, and that He will allow nothing to get completely out of control. If you let any of these things get in your way, then you are the one that is not going to grow, nor go forward, for I am still learning, and I am still growing. If you think the Church is in a mess, take another look; it may be you that is in a mess. As for me, I have already made up my mind; I would not let a thousand trouble-makers stop me from going on with God. The main thing to remember, is that you are not going through anything that others have not gone through, at one time or the other. When I first started going to the tabernacle where Bro. Branham preached, I saw people come in there, and I thought How can they sit there, looking like they do? Some of them looked like they had been pulled out of a garbage can. Then I began to realize, Some of those poor souls were hearing the gospel for the very first time, and it was not my place to scrutinize them, and shoot at them, for except for the grace of God, I could be in a worse shape. I determined right then and there, That little man has something

that is going to change the life of Raymond Jackson, and I am not going to allow anything to put daylight between me and him, not even 10,000 devils. I meant that. There were times I could have allowed pride to stand in my way; but my soul's welfare was too important to allow pride to stand in the way of receiving what I needed. (I will have to use some illustrations in order for you to understand why I am saying some of these things.) As I said earlier, Do not ever allow pride to keep you from saying, Brother: I am sorry, when you realize you have done something wrong, or when you even think maybe you did wrong.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

Shortly after the Lord filled me with the Holy Ghost and anointed me a couple of times to speak in tongues: I felt that anointing one Sunday night; when Bro. Neville finished preaching. There was no doubt in my mind that the anointing was there; but when I spoke in tongues, there was no interpretation, and that made me feel really bad, because being young in the faith, I just simply could not understand why there was no interpretation. When the service was over, a certain brother came up behind me crying, and said, Bro. Junie: I had the interpretation when you spoke in

tongues; but I was afraid to speak out. There were some deacons there, that could not have cared less whether there were gifts of the Spirit in operation or not, so I understood why the brother was afraid to speak. But I said to him, Let's go talk to Bro. Neville, so we went together, and explained to him what had happened, and asked him if we were out of order. If he felt that we were out of order, I wanted to take responsibility for it. But Bro. Neville just let it ride like that. A few months went by, and Bro. Branham was preaching one Saturday night, when at the end of his message, I felt that anointing to speak in tongues again. I was in the back of the building, and there was a lot of rejoicing up front, so when I spoke it was never heard, and there was no interpretation. Naturally that made me feel bad, and I wondered about it: but I firmly believe that when you feel that your motive was right and that maybe you were just misunderstood, you owe it to yourself to get your spirit cleared of that feeling. Therefore the first opportunity I had, I took Bro. Branham and Bro. Neville into the prayer room, and told them exactly what had happened. Bro. Branham just said, Bro. Junie, I didn't hear a thing. Then he said to Bro. Neville, See there, that is the way things happen many times when we have young babes coming along in the Spirit. It seems like the devil just creates blanket situations to hurt them. He then said, Bro. Junie: don't worry about that, I understand. Then along

came church order, and that brought more pressure and problems. I felt that church order as such, had no place in Faith Assembly, so I made it very clear, put it in writing, and also put it on tape and sent a copy to Bro. Branham's home in Arizona. That first year after church order was put in, it just seemed like everything I did, somebody would jump on it and chew it to pieces. I could have taken offense, got all riled up and let out a verbal return, but I realized that was not God's way to get things done. Bro. Branham was in Birmingham, Alabama, in a meeting, so I said, He has already received my tape, so I am going to Birmingham to see him, and let him tell me whether I am right, or wrong, in my feelings about church order. If he had said, Bro. Jackson: You had better go home and do thus and so, I would have done what he said. But when O got the chance to talk to him: I did not have to say very much before he said, Bro. Junie: I know what is going on; I didn't mean for it to be used like they are using it. Even yesterday, Sis. Banks Woods came down here to see me, all torn up about something. While the deacons were taking every other mother and her baby to the nursery, if the baby cried, that was all right. But when they took her daughter-in-law to the nursery for the same reason, that was too much for her. She took off to find Bro. Branham and tell him all about it. Yes I am calling names, and some of you may not agree with that; but look where

Banks Woods is today, back out there in a trinity church. Anyhow when they got there, Bro. Branham already knew all about what had happened, and why they were there. He said, I never intended for it to be used that way; but that is just how people are. But Bro. Junie: Don't pay any attention to what people are saying about you: for you know why I did what I did. Just go on back and pastor your church the way you feel God is leading you. By the time I got home, the word was being circulated that he really chewed me out. If I had not known it already, I would have known then, you just simply cannot pay attention to what a lot of jealous people say about you, when in your spirit you feel that you are following the leading of the Lord. There are a lot of people out here, even professing to be in this message of truth, that do not have the slightest idea about how to live for God. All they know how to do is find fault and try to prevent someone else that truly is living for the Lord. A person who knows nothing about living in the Spirit, will live in trouble most of the time. Being full of envy and jealousy can lead to nothing more than trouble with God. But being full of the Spirit of God leads to joy and peace of mind, even in the midst of all the confusion others cause.

SPIRITUAL **PRESCRIPTIONS**

Some of you may think it is strange, but by the help of God, I intend to take some of these scriptures that I know is a true scriptural prescription, to help make a spiritually healthy Christian out of every one of us, and dwell on them, until they become a reality to us. They are here; but they have been hidden somehow, from our understanding. We seem not to realize that they apply to us. They are there to help us grow past where we are; therefore as long as we just jump over them, and do not realize that they fit our very situation, our growth is at a standstill, and when your spiritual growth comes to a standstill, some little old carnal statement can make us spiritually sick. Do not bother to say, But Bro. Jackson: You just do not know what I have been through, that has caused me to react as I have, or I will be quick to tell you this, No I do not know what you have been through; but I know what you are going to have to go through if you do not get hold of yourself. It is not me, planning something; but God's word lets me know that He is going to pull us through a very small hole, and strip us of everything that does not exemplify Christlikeness. Romans 13:14 says, "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof," and a lot of

you think that pertains only to smoking, drinking, cursing, and being unfaithful to your mate. But when I see some of the things that have irked some of you and turned you upside down, it lets me know that you are still jumping over a lot of scriptures that you need to take heed to. That is why I said earlier in this message, if you want your fellowship with your Creator to be healthy: you had better take heed to His word. And keep it healthy with your brothers and sisters of the faith. Otherwise you spread a spiritual disease. Some people boast of being set free in Jesus Christ, and that is true; we have. But in Galatians 5:13, the apostle Paul wrote, "For, brethren, ye have been called into liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." That does not mean that we have to accept the Catholics, the Baptists, and all of what is called Christianity, and try to have spiritual fellowship with them. No. God would not call you to come out of that mess of confusion, and then expect you to turn right around and try to work with it. But if you have accepted His call to come to this liberty in Christ Jesus: then He expects you to live and walk by the rules of that liberty. No it is not a list of do's and do not's which would put us back under law; it is a law of love that makes us more and more like our Creator all the time. Some of the things people blame the devil for are actually tests, designed by the Lord, to break down our self will and cause us to yield fully

to the Spirit of God. Therefore if we just stubbornly press on through, blaming the devil without examining ourselves, I am afraid there are some things coming down the road that will literally crush us. Remember, It is more important to have the favor of God than it is to make a big impression on other people. Being humble is not a disgrace, it is an attribute of God and it applies to every phase of our Christian lives. As I said earlier, a lot of what I know, I learned the hard way. I have told this before; but I want to tell it again for the sake of illustration.

THINGS LEARNED BY EXPERIENCE

Shortly after we began going to the Branham Tabernacle regularly, we took our children and went up to Bro. Branham's house for a visit with them one evening. When we arrived, he and Sis. Branham were just getting ready to go out to a restaurant to eat. We at first refused the invitation to go along with them, but they insisted that we go, and about that time, Banks Woods walked over and he was invited to go along also, so we all went. Now you know how sometimes young Christians like to try to make an impression on certain other Christians, and I was no different. It is a good thing when our lives do make a good impression on

others; if it is done without a deliberate attempt to make it so; but God does not want us putting on a show for that purpose, like I am about to describe to you. When we arrived at the restaurant, Sis. Branham and my wife and children sat in one booth, and right over from it, Bro. Branham and Bro. Woods sat on one seat, and I sat opposite them. Naturally as I look back, I can see that I acted like a silly fool; but at the time I thought, I want this great man of God to know I love the Lord; and I want him to know that I have my children under subjection. So every time one of them moved, I was ready to say, Be still; and every time Bro. Branham would bring up a subject I was so eager to make an impression on him, I would say, Oh I believe that too. I didn't have any manners at all; but I thought, I am really having a good time, and I am really getting an opportunity to let this great man of God see how much I love the Lord. Well the next day my father-in-law and I were hauling wood; and all morning long my chest was just simply swelled with excitement. I could not help but think, Boy I have really made an impression on that great man of God. Then about 2:30 in the afternoon when we pulled into the wood shed with a load of wood, my father-in-law went to the house to get a drink of water, and while I was standing there, feeling like everything was really going my way, I heard an audible voice say, Why don't you just shut up? Look what you have done!

Will you never learn! I first looked to see if my father-in-law had returned, but I didn't really need to wonder where that voice came from. Brothers and Sisters: It is just like Solomon said, There is a time to talk; and a time to keep quiet and listen. You do not always have to run your mouth 90 miles and hour to let people know what kind of person you are; for spiritual people can know you better by just watching your life. It is like the old saying, Many times your actions speak so loud, people cannot hear a word you say. Saints: Do not be offended, this is good advice! I had to learn the hard way; but you have a chance to learn this lesson here and now; without God having to use extreme measures on you. The reason a lot of people have no wisdom is because it runs out as fast as God puts it in them; just like a water bucket with a hole in it. God gives all of us an opportunity to gain some wisdom as we go through life, if we will just shut off the spigot and not let it run out; and if we are ever going to grow spiritually, this is a necessity. Now some people do get offended when you talk like this to them, but remember, It is God that is working on this carnal flesh, not Raymond Jackson. He will keep working on us until the day Jesus comes for us; for no matter how old you are, there will still be a few things for you to learn, until that day comes. I tell you though, There is nothing sweeter than an assembly of people that have dedicated themselves to walking in the Spirit,

and seeing one another for what the grace of God has wrought in their lives; instead of whether they are living by your list of convictions; for no matter where you go, you are likely to see some brother or sister doing something that you would not do. To that, I just have to say this, If what they are doing is wrong in the eyes of God, when you grow enough that it is no longer an annoyance to you, God will lay His hand of correction on them. It will not necessarily be handled your way; but you will have to praise God for taking care of it. Now naturally I am not talking about obvious sin and immorality, when I say these things. I am talking about things of the flesh, that may or may not be sin, depending on how God has dealt with each individual. We should always remember first of all, that there are 30 fold Christians, 60 fold Christians, and 100 fold Christians, and these will never change from one level to the other, neither up, nor down. Therefore that in itself would mean that some could do certain things that others could not do. Then you have to allow for what the devil will do, trying to create a disturbance. He may throw more rocks at the 100 fold Christian than he will at the 60 fold Christian. But if he does, it will serve a purpose of God. Do you know why? Because you cannot bear more than 100 fold, but God knows that even the 100 fold can always bear a better quality of fruit, as his perfection process does its work in them. Likewise with the 60

and the 30. They will not bear more fruit; but what they do bear will be of a better quality, as they take on spiritual growth.

DECIDING FOR TRUTH

Now I wonder if it is possible that any of you would think the 30 fold Christian is one denomination, the 60 fold another, and the 100 fold another? If any of you have ever had a thought like that, let me assure you, that all of these are the same belief and fellowship, but their total revelation, and their abilities are not the same. This is what the 30, 60, and 100 fold applies to. But, Saints: do not take it upon yourselves to try and label each other with one of these; for only God knows us well enough to do that. Our number one priority should be to walk in the Spirit with every fiber of our being; knowing that time is short and true children of God have no time to play around. Each one of you will have to decide for yourselves, whether you really desire to let the Lord have His will in your lives, and if you do desire that, then you have to stop demanding your rights in every situation and give God a chance to work. People have said, Bro. Jackson will give in to this; Bro. Jackson will give in to that; and so forth, so let me say this, I will listen to any story; and I will accept any

reasonable story, until such time that the Lord shows me different. Furthermore if I watch a situation six months and do nothing about it; it does not necessarily mean that I do not want to. I try not to touch anything until I first give God a chance to put a picture in my mind and show me what He wants done. It is not my desire to hurt anyone; you are all my brothers and sisters, if the grace of God has redeemed you; so I want to help you if I can. Let me make one thing clear though, if you give me a brand new Cadillac today, and tomorrow you need to be corrected, that Cadillac is not going to make one bit of difference; for we are not playing politics around here. I never want anyone to even think a thing like that. Naturally I cannot help what some carnal minded person may think; but I can do my utmost not to give them any justifiable reason to look at me like that. One thing that is heavy upon my heart though, is how people see the assembly as a whole when they come here year after year for the convention. I know they have seen us as a body of people believing the apostolic doctrines of the scriptures, but I desire to have them see us as a totally unified body in every area of our fellowship; so that when the devil throws rocks, instead of scattering, we will all run together, and be even closer. When people are knit together like that, the devil cannot stop them. That is what it means, compacted together; and that is when every member supplies to the

body that which they have the ability to supply. What is the purpose of that? For the edifying of itself in love; that there be a full flowing of the love of God in the body. If we can just stop looking at self, and begin to see the whole body of Christ instead, our goals and our motives will be completely different from what they are. When we cultivate within our lives a true desire to see the whole body benefitted, then we can truly yield ourselves to the Holy Ghost the way God desires to have it. Then we will be just as thrilled to see Him bless someone else, as we will be when he blesses us. Some Christians live as though the Holy ghost was given to them just to comfort and teach them for their own personal welfare; therefore let me remind you once again, that everything Jesus did was for the benefit of the entire foreknown family of God; which in this grace age is referred to as the Church. Maybe there has been too much emphasis placed on this thing of our personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and not enough on the fact that as a true child of God, we are (as individuals) only members of a great body, and not complete in ourselves. It is our personal relationship with the Savior that places us in this wonderful body; but once we are sealed in the body, we should lose our individuality, and learn to function as a part (PART) of the great BODY of redeemed children of God. How do we do that? Only by the leadership of the Holy Ghost. Remember, we are in a

warfare, just like the children of Israel were, when they crossed over Jordan and started to take possession of all that God had promised them, therefore we need to take heed to the type. As long as they followed the plan of God they were victorious, their enemies could not stand before them. But what happened to them after God gave them that great victory at Jericho? They got to feeling like they were somebody to be reckoned with, and tried to take the city of Ai according to their own judgment, without waiting for the Lord's instructions, and they suffered defeat and disillusionment. That victory at Jericho made them feel so good, they thought, We will really let these Amorites know we are not to be fooled around with. Well you know what happened, if not, you can read it in the 7th chapter of Joshua. It just lets us know that we cannot run ahead of God and enjoy the benefit of His leadership both at the same time. We have a Comforter; but He will not comfort you very much when you are running the road of life contrary to the will of God, interested only in self. Spiritual babies do that, but if you are a true child of God, you are called to fulfill a certain function in the universal body of believers, and eventually those childish traits will have to go. That is why God has to allow situations to arise that will break down our resistance to His total leadership, and that is why also that the apostle Paul wrote, "And we know (Romans 8:28) that all things work

together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Whatever He has to do to our flesh, to break our selfish will and cause us to grow up spiritually, will eventually work for good to all who are true children of His. That is why when things start going wrong and we seem to be cut off in every direction, we need to take time to examine ourselves and determine whether God Himself is after something in our lives. When you first receive the Holy Ghost, God will let you act like a small child with a new toy for a while; but there always comes the day when He expects you to get serious about living a life that really portrays what you have within you. He expects you to allow His Spirit within you, not only to be your guide and Comforter, but also your teacher; and when He is teaching you something, He expects you to listen, and then walk accordingly, ever aware that He is to have first place in your life.

WHO JESUS DIED FOR

Now let us go back to the 5th chapter of Ephesians for a closer look at the remaining verses there. IN these verses we have been looking at, it is obvious that Paul was laying out the framework of what the Christian life is really built around. He shows what the body of

Christ is composed of, and how we as members in particular are expected to fulfill our part, in order that Jesus may be seen through His Church. Just as Jehovah was seen through Jesus His only begotten Son, Jesus is to be seen through the Church that He purchased with His own blood. He gave Himself for it: (Why?) "That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." That is what Paul wrote in verse 26, after saying, "Husbands, love your wives; and wives be in subjection to your own husbands," and so forth. Who was he writing to? Well the letter was addressed to the saints in Ephesus, and to the FAITHFUL in Christ Jesus, so I would have to believe that what we read here, is for the universal body of Christ throughout every age, as it deals with conduct, attitude, exampleship and obedience. Jesus did not die for the Baptist church; not the Methodist church, nor any other denominational system. What He died for was all those predestinated sons and daughters of God, who, if they were in one of those systems here at the end of the age, would come out of it and follow His word. The Church did not start out as a denomination, and it will not be a denomination in the end; so do not think of any of those systems of religion, when we speak of the Church. Alright what is Jesus going to do with the living element of the Church one day soon, after every spot, wrinkle and blemish is removed from her? Paul tells us in 1st Thessalonians, that we

will all be caught up together with the resurrected saints that have gone by way of the grace, to meet the Lord in the air. Then he said, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. We ought to be looking forward to that day with anticipation; but far too many Christians are living as though they have no such hope. Why do I say that? Because they still have their eyes focused on things of the world; more than upon the Lord. The end result in all of this washing process, is that "He (Jesus) may present the Church to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." It is to be holy, and without blemish. Paul takes that little space to speak of the kind of relationship Jesus has with the Church He gave himself on the cross to redeem. Then he drops right back to what he was on before that; saying, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself." Now why should Paul say a thing like that? I do not want to say anything that would detract from the present day reality of how God expects us to heed these scriptures; but Paul's original reason for saying this, was because the Ephesian assembly was made up partly of Gentiles fresh out of paganism, and a lot of those marriages were not based upon the kind of relationship we think of, when we think of marriage. Many of those marriages were made by an agreement with the parents of the young woman, and she never laid eyes on her husband to be, until he came to

take her away, so the love element was missing. But when the gospel came to those families, do you not think it would have had some effect on their feelings for each other? You know it would; but the gospel that brought them into the kingdom of God did not just automatically teach them how to live together as a happy husband and wife. They had to be taught by those men of God, before they could really know how to please God in their marriage relationships. Marriages can be made with contracts; but contracts do not grow like a true love relationship will. True love will bond a husband and wife together. That is something a contract could never do. But regardless of the former lack of love in a marriage, when those husbands and wives come to God, there are certain guidelines laid out in the scriptures for them to follow, which if they ignore, they can never please God. Nevertheless when Paul said, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies," he said a mouth full. You have never seen a man go around pinching his own body, nor beating it. If you did, you would say, that man is crazy. Well according to the Bible, your wife is part of you. God ordained that in the very beginning. That is one thing Jesus reminded the Pharisees, of, when they tempted Him concerning divorce. In Matthew 19:4-6, He said to them, Have ye not read, that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a

man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." We are living in a day when you would hardly know that is in the Bible, for Gentiles are drifting right back to customs their pagan ancestors observed two thousand years ago, before they received the gospel. Many of those who got married this week, will be broken up before another week passes, simply because God has been left out of the picture.

THE IDEAL MARRIAGE **RELATIONSHIP**

Brothers and Sisters: I realize that we are not going to say anything that will change world trends; for Satan is the God of the world in general; but surely the bride of Jesus Christ should want to take heed to the word of God in this hour of time. I am not picking on any certain ones, but if you are believing that you are a part of the Church Paul was writing to, and your life is more prone to be guided by worldly styles and worldly trends, you know it, and God knows it, and He is knocking on your door. Every deviation from the word of God has side affects; just like a lot of the medicines people take, and

those side affects can sure cause us a lot of problems. But there is one thing sure, If we will take the prescription God's word prescribes for us, there will be no side affects, no adverse side affects. Anyhow as Paul speaks of the relationship between Christ and His Church, and compares it to the kind of relationship between Christian married couples, he said, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church: (Notice the connection now.) For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband." Almost two thousand years have come and gone, since the New Testament was written, and this gospel has made it's way around the world; and changed the general trend of many people. But here in the end of the age we are witnessing a reverse effect; for unregenerate mankind seems to have lost all respect for anything Christianity has ever stood for, and the devil is running rampant once again. That faithful, loyal image, of a young man and a young woman getting married and journeying down the road of life

together until death parts them, is almost a thing of the past. Many of those marriages do not last more than a few weeks. Some last a few months, and some a few years, but the point is, the whole image of married life has changed; and it is all because they have been raised in homes that had no Christian influence, taught in schools that have tried to eliminate every mention of God, and thrust out into a society of humanity that is ruled by selfishness and greed. There is very little left to even build a marriage relationship upon, for as Paul shows us here, marriage is something that should be based upon a genuine love for each other that would cause each partner to be as concerned about the other one as they are for their own selves. That is why Paul compared the ideal marriage relationship to that of Christ and His Church. He loved the Church enough to die for it, so He is certainly not going to abuse it and cast it aside. Instead, He nourishes and cherishes it, and makes sure it has everything it needs. Actually this kind of marriage relationship was even exemplified in the Old Testament, before the gospel of Jesus Christ ever came, by men and women who walked with God. Abraham and Sarah had such a marriage, according to the scriptures.

PEOPLE TRY TO HELP GOD

Let us just look at Abraham and Sarah for a few minutes. The Bible tells us that Abraham was a Syrian; but he was of a higher caliber than the average Chaldean of his day. Therefore I believe God saw something in him that could be transferred into fleshly generations to come, even when Abraham and Sarah were both well up in years. He was about 75 years old and his wife about 65 when God spoke to him saying, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee, and I will make of thee a great nation;" and at that time they had no children, and had little hope of ever having any. Nevertheless I do not see Abraham as the kind of man that would ride the camel and have his wife walking; like you have seen portrayed of that part of the world. Neither do I see him as a man that was constantly saying, Sarah, go do this, Sarah, go do that. There are a lot of men in the world that treat their wives like that, and they may think it is supposed to be that way; but I assure you, they did not get that kind of picture from the Lord. There may be times in life when this is necessary; but it is not to be a general way of everyday life. Well God showed Abraham the land of Canaan and said, "Unto thy seed will I give this land."

Years passed and Abraham still had no seed to inherit the land; so one day he said to the Lord, I am childless and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus. He was thinking from the standpoint of who his heirs would be, and that is when God spoke to him again and said, "This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir." It was at that time that He told him his seed would be as the stars of heaven for number; and in Genesis 15:6, it says, "And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness." Naturally Abraham had been telling his wife those things God had said to him, and she no doubt believed God would perform it even as He had said; but she knew she was barren and had no hopes of ever having any children of her own, so she got the idea that she could give Abraham children through her handmaid Hagar. That sort of thing was a custom back then; but please remember, it was Sarah's idea; Abraham did not suggest it. However he did according to his wife's suggestion; and Hagar became expectant with child; but notice how the story goes after that. When Hagar knew she was that way, she began to show off in front of Sarah. Instead of humbling herself and saying to Sarah, Madam, I will be glad when the child is born, so we can enjoy it together, she took a proud, selfish spirit; and Sarah could see that she was actually despised in Hagar's eyes, so she confronted Abraham with the whole

thing. He did nothing about it himself; but said to Sarah, She is your maid; deal with her as you see fit. Well when Sarah got after her, she fled into the wilderness to hide. She could not hide from the Lord though, so the angel of the Lord appeared to her and instructed her to return to her mistress and submit to her. Hagar did according to the word of the Lord, and when her time was full, she bare Abraham a son, and they named him Ishmael, as the Lord had instructed. Now Abraham had a seed of his own; and he thought for sure that this was the one through whom the promise of God would be consummated. But when he was about a hundred years old and his wife about ninety, God spoke to him again, and told him that he would give him a son by Sarah, and that he should be named Isaac, and that through Isaac, (not Ishmael) His covenant would be established, an everlasting covenant that would be in effect down through every generation.

WINNING YOUR MATE TO THE LORD WITHOUT PREACHING

Brothers and Sisters: It is not difficult to imagine the affect it had on their neighbors when this ninety-year-old woman became pregnant with child. Anyhow you are all familiar with the

story. Isaac was born, named according to the word of the Lord; and now Abraham finally had the son through whom the promise of God would be effective. When time came for Isaac to be weaned; Abraham made a great feast to celebrate the occasion; and during that time, Sarah looked up and saw Ishmael mocking him. Again she approached Abraham; but this time she conducted herself in a way that has caused some to say, She got out of her place. She said to him, Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son Isaac. This was hard for Abraham to do; for he loved Ishmael, so while he was thinking it all over, wondering how he was going to handle it, the Lord spoke to him. This is the verse that lets us see whether Sarah was out of her place or not, Gen. 21:12. “And God said to Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; (notice now) in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, HEARKEN UNTO HER VOICE: for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.” God told him at that time, that of Ishmael He would also make a nation, because he was his seed. But we have to see in this that even when two people are truly walking together in life, there may be times when the wife will have the great insight into a situation. The Bible in no way indicates that from then on Sarah was the boss. Other scriptures cause me to know that she was subject to her husband just like the apostle Paul

taught that a woman should be. Now if some brother finds himself in a situation where the word of God does not prevail, because of the fact that he is married to a woman that is not a Christian, just remember this, The formula given by the apostle Peter works both ways. What I am referring to is 1st Peter 3:1-2, so let us read it. "Likewise ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear." That means that going to church and hearing a sermon, the unbelieving mate can be won to the Lord by the true Christian conduct and attitude of the believer, which ever it may be. Now when a young man, or a young woman that is already a Christian seeks a mate, it is important that you let God do the match-making; for He will not unequally yoke you up with something you can never walk together with for the rest of your life. That is why a lot of Christians are having trouble with their marriages, they themselves compromised in the very beginning, thinking it would all work out later. Sometimes it does; but usually it does not. I have heard young women say, No he is not a Christian; but I feel that once we are married he will go to church with me, and eventually give his heart to God. Do not count on that. There have been more times that it has gone the other way. The unbeliever would eventually get the believer out

of church. But now let us look at the kind of situation that I believe Peter was dealing with here. Let's just say, Here is a young couple out here in the world looking for joy and happiness, but knowing nothing at all about Jesus Christ. They have sought happiness in many ways, but never found anything that would last very long at a time. It was more like a see-saw, always up and down. That kind of life will eventually take a toll on you and you will get to the place where you feel that everything you try is vain, and that if something doesn't change soon you will burst into pieces. A lot of people in the world have traveled that road, and a lot of them are still on it. But for the sake of illustration, let us say that somehow the grace of God reaches down to, we will say, the young woman, and she begins to experience the real joy and happiness that she has always longed for. All of a sudden, there is a future. There is something to live for in this life; and hope for the life beyond. In other words, a whole new world opens up to her, but yet there is her husband, still miserable, always fussing about something, never having any real joy, and no motivation for the future. What should she do? You know what a lot of women have done; they would start nagging and accusing: you need to go to church with me; all you ever do is fuss and argue. I can't do anything to please you until you get right with God. That is just the opposite of what Peter says the Christian mate should do. In other

words, Be subject unto your own husband, except in something you know is sinful. Instead of smarting off and telling him how bad he is, and what he needs, that woman who desires to walk by the word of God will say instead, Yes honey, that is all right, I forgive you. If he flares up, she stays calm. She sees him as God sees him, and realizes that he needs more than just a smart answer. Her attitude and her words are expressed with kindness, and concern for his wishes. She lives true to God, herself, knowing that she cannot force him to turn to God; and sooner or later, that genuine Christian conduct makes an impression on him. He knew you before, and knew how miserable you were, and now he sees that you have something that makes life meaningful to you, and little by little his rebellion subsides, and he begins to desire what you have. That is what Peter meant by winning him without the word. When his stubborn will is broken and true repentance strikes hi, he will still have to obey the word of God to obtain salvation, just like everyone else; but until then, do not try to force the word of God on him.

**LIVING A CONSERVATIVE
AND SIMPLE LIFE**

Peter had some other things to say to the woman who truly desires to walk in the will of God, so let us read some more of this 3rd chapter. Speaking of winning a lost husband through proper conduct and a godly fear, Peter went on to say this, (verse 3) “Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel.” I get letter from all parts of the world asking, Is it wrong for a Christian woman to plait her hair? Some Pentecostal preachers harp on that kind of thing constantly. It is all in the way they read this scripture. They completely miss the point Peter is making. Peter is speaking of a consistent image, that is conservative enough you will not stand out like a sore thumb. You do not present an image of godliness and Christian contentment when you are always changing your appearance from one extreme to the other, so that people never know what to expect when they see you. Peter was not saying that it is wrong for a woman to plait her hair, and so forth, but rather, after having said, Win your husband by the godly life you live, he was merely pointing out that it is not this outward adorning of the flesh that presents a godly image, but that which comes forth from the heart. If you feel that plating is a convenient way for you to fix your hair, then choose a style that is becoming to you and stick with it. Do not change your image from day to day like these women of the world are

always doing. If you will just stop and ask yourself, Why do women want to look different every time they go out? You cannot help but realize that a Christian woman ought not do that. Trying to be the center of attention is not a Christian attribute. You know how some women are, they will cut their hair off short, and maybe have a dozen different wigs to wear, red ones, blue ones, blonde ones, and you name it. That is a worldly attribute to try to get attention. Well in ancient times they did not have the wigs, so they fixed it one way one day, and some other way the next, always changing their looks and presenting a different image, and that is what Peter was talking about. No woman will ever win her lost husband to the Lord just simply by dressing up her flesh, it takes more than that. But that does not meant hat in it all, she should not choose a becoming way to fix her hair, and so forth. But whatever she chooses should be conservative and consistent, and make a good appearance, and if plaiting fits into that, there is nothing at all wrong with it. A lot of Pentecostal preachers would like to hang me up by my heels for saying that, but I could not care less what they think, for they are as blind as a bat anyway, or they would not interpret those scriptures like they do. They completely miss the whole point the scripture is dealing with. It is the same way with wearing anything made of gold. The Nazarene people would not wear anything made of gold for

anything in the world, and do you know why? They say the Bible says not to. They see gold in that verse; and the Pentecostal see hair, and they each say, It is wrong. That is their interpretation of that one verse, simply because they fail to apply it with verses 1, 2 and 4. If you look at verse 3, and say, it is wrong for a woman to plait her hair, or, It is wrong to wear gold, do you know what you are going to force the last part of that same verse to say? It is wrong to put on apparel. Well if it is wrong to put on apparel, that means you have to go naked. Is that the way you want to read that verse? I think not. The world is not stripping off because they read what Peter wrote there. Even they would have enough common sense to know that was not what Peter was saying. Now let me say this, If you think my illustrations and ways of expressing things are silly, then you show me a better way. But if you do not have a better way, then leave me alone, for I believe those who want to know the truth, can find it, and understand it through these simple explanations. Most of the trouble people have in their Christian lives is a result of getting a wrong interpretation of the scriptures. That causes them to try to work everything out in the flesh, instead of from the inner man, which is what God is looking at. Outward adornment is important because it should be an expression of what that true person is, and desires to portray, but there is more involved than just the way we look to the natural eye of

someone else, when we start talking about a godly appearance. But the picture Peter was portraying is of a godly woman that has learned how to dress herself, and how to present herself in attitude and speech; so that every time you see her, no matter where she is, you see a woman dressed neat but conservative, with a hair style that portrays a woman professing godliness, and an attitude that will not put you on edge, and make you wish you had not even seen her. I have actually met up with some people out in public, away from church, that I was embarrassed for; because of the way they looked. Brothers and Sisters: It ought not be that way. Furthermore the pastor should not have to go around checking up on you to see how you present yourself; the Spirit of Christ in you should be all you need to keep you presenting yourself in a godly way. Now we have used the woman in what we have tried to get you to see; but you be assured, God is just as concerned about the way Christian men present themselves. Following worldly styles and fads is what we do before becoming Christians; but the grace of God in our lives is supposed to deliver us from all of that. Do not travel around the world though, and try to push your American image off on people of other countries, it will not work, because conditions demand different lifestyles and different styles of outward attire. So Peter says in other words, Don't be trying to make an impression on people with excessive

outward attire. (Verse 4) "But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." In other words, If that inner man of the heart is dressed properly it will reflect a godly image on the outside also. You do not put the Lord Jesus on your arm, on your finger, nor on your neck; you put Him in your heart, so to speak, and that in itself gives you what it takes to have a meek and quiet spirit, which he says is in the sight of God of great price. "For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement." Being in subjection to your husband means that you show proper respect for him, not only in public, but at all times. If you feel that you have to say something to him, do not make a fool of yourself and say it in public. You wait until you can say it to him in private. That goes for the men also. If you say things to each other in public that is humiliating, God will see to it that you are humiliated also; for that is how the unregenerate world lives, and we are to be a separated people, that portray a different image. But it is just like the scripture says in referring to the wife as a help mate. That is what a good wife is. You heard the brother

testifying here tonight how his wife helped him when the medicine he was taking got him in a shape where he needed that kind of help. That is why I said what I did earlier; some of these prescription drugs have adverse affects that are worse than the condition you are being treated for. Anyhow the point is, God gave Eve to Adam to be his help mate; not his slave, but at the same time, the man is the head of the family, and every Christian woman needs to be conscious of that fact, lest she step out of the will of God. But you husbands take note of verse 7, for you are not left out of Peter's admonition. "Likewise ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." Some people are always wondering why their prayers are never answered. Well, here is one reason; they never get their spirits in line with the will of God. They go to church, they read the Bible, they dress themselves properly, but they are always fussing and bickering, never able to come into a unity of purpose. God could not answer their prayers, without going contrary to what one of them wants. We are heirs together of this grace that God has bestowed upon our lives; therefore in order to see our prayers answered, we have to get our values in line with the will of God. When our attitudes and motives are right, and we come before the throne of grace in unity and oneness of purpose,

there is nothing to hinder our prayers. God can answer prayer under those conditions, because the prayer will not be of a selfish nature. God will see that every child of His has what they need; but He has never said that He would give us everything we might want in life. Furthermore He sees our genuine needs different than the way we see them. We may feel that we need everything that anyone else has; but God knows that our spiritual condition is the most important thing, and many times He just sort of holds back material things from us until we get our values straightened out. Food, shelter, and something to cover our nakedness are the essentials of life and everything else we acquire can be looked upon as an extra benefit. Christians in one part of the world will have different needs than Christians of another part, and when we go beyond the basic needs of life, those things are regulated by how God sees our ability to handle them and still walk with Him. You can go out here and in one way or another, lay hold on everything your eye may lust for; but if that sort of thing has first place in your life, you are not walking with God. You are not walking in the Spirit.

REVIEWING THIS **MESSAGE**

As we look at this spiritual walk with God, we have to realize that as individuals we are all different. What is simple and easy for some, may very well be the hardest thing some others have ever been faced with, so we need to allow for that, when we have an urge to judge someone else; because they are not exactly like we would like for them to be. Remember, there will always be the 30, 60 and 100 fold Christians, and they will not graduate from one category to another, so God looks at every individual according to the ability they have, and He wants us to do likewise. No. We are not to go around assigning anyone to a certain category; God is the one that takes care of that. We are just to live our own lives according to the word of God found here in the Bible, and not try to measure ourselves by any other brother or sister. When you look for a pattern, or example to compare yourself to, look to Jesus. If your life has been redeemed from destruction, it is so you can pattern your life after His. We cannot force the world to, but that should be our goal; for the Bible declares that we are to be made into His image. Everything God does in our lives is to ultimately make us conformable to the image of His only begotten Son who was perfect in all His ways, and that sought nothing but to please the Father. We are coming to the close of this message, which I had no idea would be this lengthy when we started; so I would like to go back into the 4th chapter of Ephesians, the

chapter we started in, and review those points there, that actually inspired this message in the first place. In verse 11 we see the type of ministry that God has set in the church for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body; and verse 13 tells us how long that will remain that way, so let us read it. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." That was not written to denominational church systems which are man made; it was written to true sons and daughters of God who have no higher purpose in life than to please Him. The ministry of verse 11 is the only ministry that will ever see the true body of Christ as God sees it. They will have a revelation of the plan and purpose of God, and their preaching and teaching will be by the leadership of the Spirit, to fulfill their part in that perfecting process. Denominational preachers will never see the church as a nucleus of people who all have the same revelation the world over, and that are knit together by the true unity of the Spirit of God and the bonds of a love relationship that supercedes all of their creeds and rituals. Through the World Council of Churches, they are working to bring about a unity of what they call, "THE CHURCH," but theirs is a false unity. For in order to achieve unity, they have to set aside every Bible doctrine that has ever been an issue of difference between them, and

just say, we don't need doctrines; we just need to love one another; because doctrines divide. Brothers and Sisters: You will never find a statement like that in the Bible; that is just their false interpretation of the scriptures as a whole, that causes them to come to such a conclusion. The true body of Christ will believe and adhere to every doctrine of the scriptures, and still have a unity that the devil cannot destroy; because they will have a true revelation of those doctrines. They will know when they apply, and how to apply them, and they will rejoice and give praise to the God who has revealed them, instead of fussing and arguing over them. People who believe in a trinity can never come into the UNITY OF THE FAITH; because they do not have the faith Paul was referring to when he wrote that. The faith Paul was referring to was built upon a true revelation of who Jesus Christ was; (and still is) that He was the Son of God the great eternal Spirit that created all things, and that he (Jesus) was the ONLY PERSON of the Godhead. God has never been three persons, and He never will be. Those Trinitarians read right over John 4:23-24, where Jesus said, "But the hour cometh, AND NOW IS, when the TRUE worshipers shall worship the Father in SPIRIT and in TRUTH: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. (Notice now) GOD IS A SPIRIT: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." The Trinitarians are not the only ones that misinterpret the scriptures

though; for oneness Pentecost does not have a true revelation of the oneness of God, therefore they have the same spirit on them, that motivates all of denominational religion, and that spirit causes them to fuss and argue; and it causes them to be against people like us who believe and preach a true revelation.

SOME PEOPLE RESIST A TRUE REVELATION

I received a tract from a man up here in the northern part of Indiana the other day, and also a letter. They used to be in fellowship with us, and were very aware of all the extremism associated with the following of Bro. Branham because of using quotes from his sermons without having a revelation of what was being set forth. But when we published the message dealing with the oneness of God, using revealed scriptures instead of traditional quotations that 20th century oneness preachers have put together, we evidently crossed over their line of tolerance. This tract contains a quotation that Bro. Branham used, which comes from oneness Pentecost; wherein he stated, Jehovah of the Old Testament was Jesus in the New Testament. True saints of God that have a revelation of how to apply that statement can say Amen to it of course;

because there is a certain sense in which that is true. But the way oneness Pentecost uses it, comes short of a true revelation of the Godhead. That is the reason they are called "Jesus only," they leave no room for the three offices of God. They refuse to use terminology that includes Father and Son, afraid it will destroy their concept of Colossians 2:9, which says, "For in Him (Jesus) dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." We believe that verse; and it in no way destroys our revelation. He was a man, without even the ability to perform a miracle for the first 30 years of His life. It was only after that great eternal Spirit which is God, entered into Him there at the Jordan River, when John baptized Him, that He became both God and man. I grant you He was perfect before that; but He was not God. After the incarnation He was still not God from the technical standpoint, but God was in Him. Therefore God did truly walk among mankind in human flesh for 3 ½ years; but that human flesh was not God; it was still that of the Son of God. The way oneness Pentecost believe the Godhead, they cannot even use 1st Corinthians 15:24, where Paul speaks of how Jesus (the Son) will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, after redemption is completed, for the eternal age; for they believe Jesus is the Father. Well we have thoroughly explained this in other messages, so I will go no further with it at this time. The man asked us in a nice way not to

bother sending the Contender to them any more; and certainly we do not intend to force it upon people who do not want it. We are publishing it to help those who are searching for truth; not just so people who want to hold to their old denominational traditions can have something to fuss about. Saints I am so thankful for truth. If God had not opened our eyes to truth, we would still be sitting out there in some religious system, just as blind as they are today. They do not know they are blind; but we know they are. There is no way God could perfect them; for it is not this human flesh that is being perfected; it is the inner man, the hidden man of the heart, as Peter referred to it; and he can only be perfected in a pure revelation. The reason we need all these admonitions from the various writers of the scriptures is because this flesh will never be perfected. The inner man which is being perfected must exercise dominion over the flesh, lest the flesh follow the trends of the world. That is what this message is all about; to make known the difference between godly trends and worldly trends, and make known the will and purpose of God in our lives according to the scriptures. True children of God cannot continue on in these traditional religious trends in this late hour of time. Just as Jesus had to grow physically into a certain statue before deity came into the picture, so must we reach a certain statural growth spiritually, before we can reflect a true image of Him. He

grew up in life by the same process every other human has; because He was human. He took on a certain stature in wisdom, knowledge and attitude, and when He was about 30 years old deity met Him at the river because it was time for Him to step fully into what He was ordained to do. The Jehovah of the Old Testament entered into and took possession of His only begotten son, and only after that could Jesus say, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." That did not do away with the Father; nor did it make Jesus the Father; it just simply made the Father and the Son a perfect unity. That is why from that moment on an image of Jehovah was established through Him; and truly men saw God in Him; but in all of His deeds He distinguished between the Father and the Son saying, I only do what the father shows me to do. Martha the sister of Lazarus expressed it correctly as she spoke to Jesus about her dead brother. She said. "Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." If you have a proper revelation of the Godhead, you do not have to try to make Jesus the man, anything other than the Son of God. That is why every attribute of God that was manifested through Him, can also be manifested through God's redeemed sons and daughters without making them anything more than they are. None of us, in this present state of life will ever possess the fullness of the Spirit of God that Jesus had in Him;

but the church, the true body of redeemed believer, as a collective body, has that fullness in her, and from the standpoint of the body as a whole, she does the same works Jesus did.

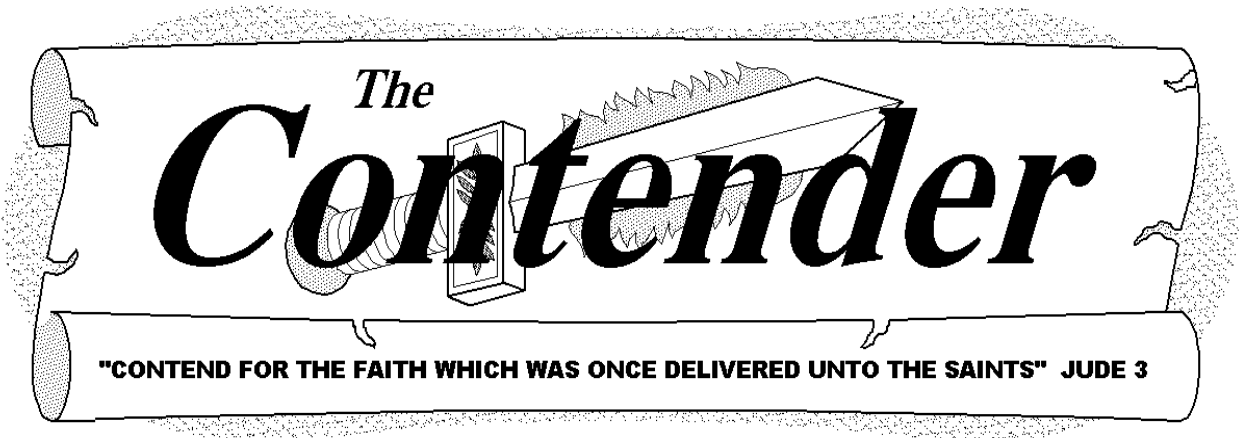
UNBELIEF IS **UNPARDONABLE**

All right now, we are again looking at these verses in Ephesians 4, before we close the message, just to be sure we have not missed the whole point. Why is it necessary for us to come to this unity of faith and take on the knowledge of the Son of God, and take on that stature? Verse 1 says, "That we henceforth (from now on) be no more children, (as children) tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." The devil is a liar and a deceiver, and he has many ambassadors out here in religion, to do his dirty work for him. It's not the drunks down in the neighborhood saloon that are deceiving people. Nor the prostitutes and perverts that roam the streets. It is preachers professing to be speaking in the name of the Lord, that are deceiving multitudes, taking their dollars, and sending them on down the road to destruction. Whenever you hear a preacher stand and say a certain doctrine of the Bible is out of the pit of hell, beware of that preacher. No matter how hard he may

preach against sin, if he says a thing like that, he is committing a sin that is in the eyes of God greater than them all. God can deal with people who will believe His word, no matter how deep in sin they may be: but the man that looks at the word of God, and because he has no revelation of it says, That doctrine is out of the pit of hell, is making the word of God of no effect in his life. Unbelief concerning the word of God is the only unpardonable sin, so such a man stands on dangerous ground, and if you follow him, you also will be on dangerous ground. As you look back through church history, you see that the Baptist held to eternal security, and the Methodists would say, That doctrine is out of the pit. The Methodist taught sanctification, and the Baptists would say the same thing about that doctrine. The Presbyterians taught predestination, and the others said likewise about their doctrine; and the sad thing is, None of them actually had a clear revelation of the doctrine they taught; they just knew it was in the Bible. Well the true believer of this hour sees all of those doctrines in the Bible, has a revelation of their reality, and embraces every one of them, even though they may or may not be able themselves to explain them in detail. You do not have to be able to explain everything in order to have a revelation of its reality, and its place in the true body of Christ. The important thing is to have a right attitude, and not to be deceived by false teachers. The Spirit of God builds your revelation in you at

whatever pace you are able to receive it, and through that revelation you are able to supply your part to the body, and more so, as your revelation increases. Verse 15 gives us the key to proper spiritual growth, so let us read it once more. “But speaking the truth in love, (SPEAKING THE T-R-U-T-H in L-O-V-E) May grow up into Him (Christ) in all things, which is the head, even Christ. From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, (Remember, it is all from Him) according to the effectual working in the measure (our individual measure) of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” Isn’t that a beautiful picture? From Him, we receive that measure which we are able to contribute to the universal body; and as we contribute it we are blessed, and because of our contribution, others are blessed and edified, and statural growth is attained from every contribution that is made. It is a love relationship; and the whole body is edified, just like the whole body suffers when there is a problem. Let me say this now; and I will close, You can only supply to someone else as God enables you to do so, for everything must go according to God’s foreordained plan and purpose, therefore fleshly zeal and carnal efforts have no place in it. Let us yield ourselves to God, and be led by His Spirit, as He brings this whole redemption plan to a climax and

prepares to come for those that are His. Do not worry about trying to get the tares out of the way; God has vessels appointed to accomplish that. Our total concern should be to supply our part to the total function of the body, and God Himself will see to all the rest. The Church is made up of individuals that must function as a unit, in order to exemplify Christ. So as we put on Christ, that is what it is all about. If chastening is necessary, welcome it, being thankful that God loves you enough to chasten you. If we are going to be compacted together; it means, God has to be allowed to work on the rough edges in the area of our flesh. God bless every one of you. Amen.



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