

## 2 Corinthians

### Chapter 1

3-Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of compassion and God of all comfort<sup>1</sup>.

20- For every promise of God in Him is a Yes and in Him Amen<sup>2</sup> to the glory of God by us.

21 But it is God who establishes us with you in Christ (The Anointed One) and has anointed us<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> God the Father is Himself the source of all comfort. One of the many outstanding features of the Father's personality is that He hates to see suffering - even as much as He hates sin, which is the cause of suffering. We will always find God compassionate towards us, no matter what we are going through. He will always be there to comfort and encourage us. In fact, the Greek word (paraklesis), translated in this passage 'comfort,' may equally be translated 'encouraged.' This Greek word comes from the same root that is used to describe the Holy Spirit, and may be translated 'Comforter/Helper' (John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7). We may consider that just as God is the Father of Jesus our redeemer, He is also the originator of compassion and comfort. When you come to God, it is comfort that you should expect, and comfort that you will receive. Of course your enemy, Satan, will do everything that he can to run interference with his discouragement; but God's saints both recognize the devices of Satan, and resist his influences steadfast in the faith. The Almighty is there to pour out His love on you; for no matter who you are, this is who He is: the Comforter (1 John 4:7-8; James 1:17; Isaiah 66:13). We will not find God sympathizing, but rather encouraging. He will show us how to take hold of His faith, power and authority to arise from any trouble and distress that we find ourselves in. Whatever situation you find yourself in, lift up your eyes and look unto the place where your help comes from. The maker of heaven and earth stands ready to save, and ready to defend you. If you look at your situation and then look to yourself or to man, you will be overwhelmed by fear and failure. Instead look unto God! As you do, He will fill you with courage; He will fill you with faith; and you will discover how faithful He is to all those who put their trust in Him (Jeremiah 17:7; Psalms 146:3,5; James 5:11). Let us bless God by praising Him for who He is, and for the compassion and comfort that He gives.

<sup>2</sup> When we look at the fundamental meaning of the Old Testament root word for faith (to which amen arises) we discover many wonderful things about the absolute certainty and security that God wants to provide for us. "This very important concept in biblical doctrine gives clear evidence of the biblical meaning of 'faith' in contradistinction to the many popular concepts of the term. At the heart of the meaning of the root is the idea of certainty" (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament). When the community of Israel heard the blessings and promises of God read allowed them were to respond with an Amen and through their Amen they made the blessing operative. In addition an Amen to any vow was a solemn oath to do what was pledged.

Faith carries with it the meaning of being established, faithful, sure, dependable and believing (Psalms 31:23; 1 Chronicles 17:23; Isaiah 7:9; Numbers 12:7; 1 Samuel 2:35; Nehemiah 9:8). This certainty and security rest upon God Himself and His promises (Deuteronomy 7:9; Psalms 89:28; 2Corinthians 1:20). Has not God called us to greatness to do all those things that go beyond all human ability in every dimension of our lives? Are we to settle for the security of our own strength and abilities? Are we to be measured like all those who are not willing to follow God into the realms of His covenant and of His divine purposes and be classified as those who have no faith (Deuteronomy 32:20). Those who keep the faith, who keep the truth are those who enter into the realms of God's mighty provision (Isaiah 26:2; John 17:17; Romans 10:17). Should we do anything less than believe God on the basis of His word and truth? Should we live any way other than continually believing God for the impossible (Matthew 17:20; Mark 11:24)?

<sup>3</sup> The anointing by definition is the empowerment of an individual with a special divine ability to accomplish extraordinary things. The anointing confers the glory and honor (kavod) of the Lord upon whoever is anointed. The anointing is usually given through a blessing. Abraham received a blessing directly from God that made him heir of the world (Genesis 12:2; 22:17; Romans 4:13). The blessing came upon Isaac and he sowed even in the time of famine and reaped a hundredfold and become a man of great wealth (Genesis 26:12-14). Jacob received a blessing from his father that resulted in an anointing

22 And He has sealed us and has given us the Spirit in our hearts which is His guarantee<sup>4</sup>

24 We cannot have control over your faith but are helpers of your joy for by faith you stand<sup>5</sup>.

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(empowerment) which brought him glory and honor both with man and God (Genesis 27:33; 32:28). The glory and honor that each man received was in proportion to the anointing that was received from the blessing that was given. Joshua could not lead Israel with the glory and majesty of God until Moses blessed him and gave to him some of the grace that he had received from God (Deuteronomy 34:9; Numbers 27:18-20). Saul could not be king until a "divine enabling," was imparted to Him by the Spirit of God (1 Samuel 10:1-12). Elisha did not have the ability to prophesy unto the gift of the double portion was released to him (2 Kings 2:9-14). Jesus was like any other man until the heavens were open and the Spirit of the Lord came upon Him without measure (Matthew 3:16; Luke 4:14; John 2:11; 3:34). The 120 could not represent the glory and majesty of the resurrection until they were endued with power from on high (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8; 2:33).

It is through the anointing that greatness is forged. This greatness that is in the anointing is for the sole purpose of bringing glory and honor to the Almighty God. The anointing that Joseph had brought him to the highest position of the rulership in the earth (Genesis 45:13). The anointing that God gave to David made him undefeatable in battle, the oracle of the word of God and the king that brought glory and honor to the nation of Israel. God anointed Solomon to be king and also gave him a special wisdom and understanding that was superior to all others. The anointing that he received not only resulted in riches and material wealth but in greatness of conduct and accomplishment.

The anointing that God gives and the glory that it brings is all found in the presence of God. God descends into that which is consecrated just as He did in the Tent of Meeting or on the Mount where Moses stood before the Lord (Leviticus 9: 23-24; Ex 19:16). As He came down and inhabited the temple that Solomon built, He also inhabits those who are consecrated by the blood of Jesus and the Holy Spirit today (1 Kings 8:10; 1 John 3:24; 1 Corinthians 3:16). As many as will receive His blessing have been anointed to be sons of God (John 1:12; 17:21; 1 John 3:1; Romans 8:29-30). We have been given the honor to share in the same anointing of Jesus as heirs and co-inheritors (Romans 8:17; Galatians 3:29). The Anointed One who is Jesus the Savior has given to us the same glory that the Father gave to Him because we received the same anointing. Father conferred all of this greatness upon us when He blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies and anointed us together with the Anointed One. Therefore, arise and shine for your Light has come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you (Isaiah 61:1; 1 Peter 2:9; John 1:4).

<sup>4</sup> The guarantee and proof of our salvation is the Holy Spirit that God has given to us (Romans 5:5; Romans 8:9; Galatians 4:6). The Holy Spirit is not only our guarantee and our witness, but also the seal of God upon our lives (Romans 8:16). A seal serves as a legal protection and a guarantee of ownership; it certifies something as being genuine and official (John 3:33). Circumcision at one time was both a proof and a seal, but now that proof and seal is the Holy Spirit (Romans 4:11; Ephesians 1:13; Ephesians 4:30). The seal of the Holy Spirit both marks us and distinguishes us from all others. It is through this work of grace that we are protected and kept by the power of God until that day (1 Peter 1:5). The seal of the Holy Spirit is the guarantee that we are God's purchased possession! (1 Corinthians 6:20; Ephesians 1:14).

God who has given us the first installment, or payment (Gr-arrabon) of the Spirit, demands that we yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit. Once a person receives the covenant pledge, they are obligated to fulfill the responsibilities of the contract; and then full payment will be rendered. We have been born of God and given His Holy Spirit to walk in holiness (John 15:1-16; Romans 6:9-22). If we refuse to walk in the Spirit, then we are refusing to follow through on the commitment that we made when we were given the first installment, or downpayment from God (Romans 8:4; Romans 8:13-14; Romans 8:16; Galatians 5:16,18; Galatians 5:25; 2 Corinthians 3:3). God demands that we give ourselves to the fruits of the Spirit. He demands that we make our calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:4-10). The foundation of God and the witness of the Spirit also have a seal: everyone who names the name of Christ must depart from iniquity (2 Timothy 2:19; Luke 13:27; Galatians 6:7-8).

<sup>5</sup> It is essential that God's people realize that they must allow faith to grow and be strengthened in their lives (2 Thessalonians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 10:15; Philippians 1:25). Every dimension of the life in the Spirit is to mature and increase; but this growth will be stunted unless we learn a dependence upon God, and not ministers. If the anointing, the love of God, or any other expression of the Holy Spirit is going to increase - then we must learn how to yield to the Holy Spirit, and be confident that the grace of God will flow to us

## Chapter 3

- 1- Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? We do not need as others letters of recommendation to you or recommendations from you.
- 2- You are our epistles written on our hearts known and read by all men
- 3- You reveal that you are epistles of Christ prepared by us written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God not on tablets of stone but on the tablets of a fleshly heart<sup>6</sup>.
- 4-
  
- 6- Who also has made us qualified ministers of the new covenant not of a legal code but spiritual for a legal code kills but the Spirit makes one living<sup>7</sup>.

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and through us to meet whatever need we may encounter. If we are constantly turning to someone else who has matured in the Spirit to do the work for us, then we will remain dependent upon the anointing they have received. We cannot allow our confidence to be misdirected and attempt to ride on another person's faith; in fact, God will not allow it. We are all in need of being helped by those that God has placed in the church, but the goal must always be kept in sight: and that is to help each individual mature into the fullness of the ministry of Jesus (Ephesians 4:11-13). With our every move we are to teach others total dependency on God, and not on us. We are to model the things of the Spirit and be examples of faith, love, and confidence; but it is always for the purpose of helping others step into that same relationship.

As we learn a dependency upon the Holy Spirit and as we give ourselves to praying in the Spirit, we will be strengthened in our faith (Jude 1:20). As we walk through fiery trials holding fast to the authority we have been given, we will be strengthened - and through that find an authority that we did not have before (1 Peter 1:7; 4:12). Remember, faith is far more than a set of beliefs; it is the means by which we move mountains and see the impossible things of the kingdom of God manifested in the earth (Galatians 3:5; Matthew 17:20). There are times when we shout to the mountains and it does not seem that they are moving, but faith is moving; and it is increasing as we refuse to bend or bow to the opposing circumstances.

Joy and confidence are key components and partners of faith. Through the Holy Spirit we learn to abound in confidence, and one of the responsibilities of ministers is to assist in keeping the believers full of joy (Romans 15:13; 1 John 1:4; 1 Peter 1:8; John 15:11; Philippians 1:25; Nehemiah 8:10). The men and women of God who are blessed to help others cannot be another person's faith: they cannot control or rule over another person's faith; they can only minister the word and the Spirit, then it is up to each person to decide if they will participate. A preacher of the word can say, "Go shout to the mountain until it moves;" but it is up to the individual to obey and not grow weary. Simply put, those who have grown the most did not have a pastor to call all the time. They did not have someone else to believe God for them that the finances would come in or that the sickness would go out. They stepped up and believed what they had been taught from the Word, and began to put it into action. Each person must learn to stand on their own two feet in faith, and in a personal relationship with the Holy Ghost! We have all been anointed together with Jesus: God's ministers are here to show you how, yet not always do it for you (2 Corinthians 1:21-22).

<sup>6</sup> The rich parallels that Paul uses to declare the miracle of salvation reveal the personal work of the Living God in each of our lives. Just as the Almighty had with His own finger written His law on tablets of stone He has now written them on the tablets of a heart of flesh (Exodus 31:18; Deuteronomy 9:10). The Spirit of God who now lives in us speaks out the word of God and influences every dimension of our being with His own nature and passions (2 Peter 1:4). He has taken a stony heart and made it a heart of flesh, soft and sensitive to do His will (Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26). He has written His laws in our mind and our hearts so that we will keep His statutes, His judgments and His precepts (Hebrews 8:10; 10:16; Ezekiel 36:27; Jeremiah 31:33). He has given to us the Spirit of obedience to do those things, which His heart designed when He made man in His own image and likeness. He has made our spirit one with His Spirit and given to us the ability to know Him (1 Corinthians 6:17; John 14:23; 17:21-23). Through our lives God desires to announce to the world that regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost has come to man!

<sup>7</sup> The new covenant is all about God breathing His life and nature into us by the Holy Spirit and causing us to live. The new covenant can never be understood on the basis of a legal contract and then enforced or

7- Now if the ministry of death written, engraved in stone came in glory so that not able to look the children of Israel into the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, which is now set aside.

8- How much more will the ministry of the Spirit be glorious.

9- For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation much more does the ministry of righteousness exceed in glory<sup>8</sup>.

10- Indeed what once was glorious has lost its glory because of the greater glory!

11- For if that which was set aside be glorious how much more glorious that which remains

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upheld by the fine print. To reduce the new covenant to such an idea is to make it equivalent to two married people who lived together not out of love but because they are legally obligated by a written law. God desires truth in our inward parts and wants us to walk with Him and obey Him because we love Him. Therefore He has come with His grace and love and made Himself known to us. He has delivered us from falsehood and deception so that we may truly interact with Him and love Him from our hearts. God has made us to live by the transfusion of His life into ours. He has filled us with His nature and with His love so that we might obey Him and love Him and be devoted to His life. This is a covenant of union of nature and being. This new covenant established the ways of God in our nature and wrote the laws of God upon our hearts (Jeremiah 31:33; Hebrews 8:10; 10:16; John 17:21-23; 2 Corinthians 3:18). God who sought us out said behold here am I to a people who were not His people and to all of us who would receive Him He has come to be our teacher so that we might say we are taught of God (Jeremiah 31:34; Isaiah 65:1; Romans 10:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; 1 John 2:27; Isaiah 62:12). To enter into the new covenant you must be born of the Spirit so that you may know God and worship God in the inward parts of your passions and emotions not from a mere mental affirmation of a religious ritual (John 3:3,6; Romans 2:29; 8:1-3, 9; 1 Corinthians 6:17; Galatians 3:14)

<sup>8</sup> What kind of ministry are you receiving? Are you receiving a ministry that is teaching you that you are righteous and one with God or are you receiving a ministry of condemnation that says you are separated from God and that you are not allowed to draw near to Him (Exodus 19:12,21; Hebrews 12:20). The ministry of the Old Covenant came by means of the commandment. Mankind was then left to his lifeless strength to obey and fulfill what was requested (Galatians 3:21-22). The ministry of the New Covenant is by God the Holy Spirit who both imparts life into man and gives them divine strength to obey (Galatians 3:3; John 15:5). Thus the letter of the Law condemns the lifeless and powerless spiritual condition of man but the Spirit of God gives us life. The Old Covenant pointed to what man was doing and condemned his failure. The New Covenant points to what Christ Jesus has done and reveals our righteousness. Under the Old Covenant when a man looked in the mirror he saw someone who was guilty (Romans 3:9-20; 7:23). Now in the New Covenant we look in the mirror and see the glory of God (2 Corinthians 3:18). The law produces guilt and condemnation but Jesus gives life and righteousness (Romans 8:1-9). The Law is a bond of indebtedness a guardian of discipline and a yoke too heavy to bear. Righteousness is greater than condemnation even as the work of the Holy Spirit is greater than the letter of the Law and as God is greater than Moses. Whereas we all came under condemnation and were gripped by the power of sin because of Adam's transgression we are now all under righteousness and gripped by the Holy Spirit by the life that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 5:12-21; 6:17-18). The Law revealed mankind's death, a condemnation of their sinful state and otherness from God, whereas the Spirit reveals our life through the righteousness that is given us in Christ Jesus our Lord. The Law revealed the way of sin but the Spirit reveals the way of righteousness. Righteousness is the opposite of condemnation and thus you must choose one or the other. If you choose Jesus then you have righteousness. If you choose to accept condemnation then you are without Christ Jesus the life giver. The Spirit of God transforms hearts of stone into receptive hearts of sensitive flesh (Ezekiel 36:26; 2 Corinthians 3:3). The Law eliminated sin by putting the sinner to death. The Spirit eliminates sin by giving the sinner life through Jesus Christ. The law revealed just enough of the glory of God to reveal the shameful and sinful state of man thus leaving him condemned and ashamed. The New Covenant has revealed all the fullness of the Glory of God that has come to impart the life of God that produces His righteousness in us (John 1:16; 17:22; Ephesians 3:19; 4:24; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 5:17-18; 2 Peter 1:4; Colossians 2:10; 1 Peter 2:24; Romans 6:4; 10:3; Philippians 3:9).

17- Now the Lord is the Spirit<sup>9</sup> and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom.  
18- And all of us with an unveiled face beholding the glory of the Lord in a mirror are transfigured<sup>10</sup> into the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord.

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<sup>9</sup> The Spirit of the Lord is the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. The Holy Spirit has come to reveal Jesus, and to transform those who will believe into a new creation through the miracle of salvation (John 3:3,5; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:24). Paul relates this work of grace to those things that Moses experienced after he beheld the glory of God. Moses was granted his desperate desire to see the Almighty God in all of His glory. After that experience Moses had to veil his face, because the same glory that he beheld on God was also on his face; but the people did not want to look at it. They did not want to look at the glory, because of their stubbornness and religious heart. They only wanted to have a religious knowledge of God; they did not want to know Him as Moses did (Exodus 20:19; Psalm 95:10). Therefore out of their fear and hardness of heart, they demanded that Moses veil his face (Exodus 34:30).

Paul relates the glory on the face of Moses to the glory of the new creation; and for the children of Israel to look at it would mean that they would have to look at the abolishment of the old (2 Corinthians 3:13). As a result, Moses veiled his face when he talked with the people; but when he went into the tabernacle to talk with God, he took the veil off (Exodus 34:34). If we want to know God, then the veil must be removed from off of our hearts. If anyone calls upon the name of Jesus, the Holy Spirit will come and remove the veil of hardness of heart and disobedience - and set all those who are in the prison of sin and blindness of heart completely free (Luke 4:18; Romans 6:6; Romans 6:18-23; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 2:11).

The allegory does not end with the removal of the blindness of heart, but extends to an encounter with God that brings to pass a transformation (2 Corinthians 3:14). Through the work of the Holy Spirit, the new creation is brought forth in the likeness of Christ Jesus. The image of Christ and the glory of the new creation springs forth: like the rising of sun (Isaiah 60:1). The most important part of Paul's message has to do with our willingness to behold the glory of God, which has been freely given to all those who will believe (Colossians 1:27-28; 2 Corinthians 11:4). We cannot remain religious and unwilling to believe the good things that God has done. He has called us to come and hear His voice and know His ways. We cannot fall after the same manner of unbelief that took place in the heart of Israel when they had the gospel preached to them (Hebrews 4:2).

For us to refuse to see the freedom and glory of the the new creation, that has been brought to us by the Holy Spirit - would be equivalent to demanding that Moses' face be veiled. We must be willing to look, as it were, into the mirror; and behold the same glory on our face that the Father gave to Jesus (John 17:21-23; Romans 8:29; Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 6:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Corinthians 4:7; Ephesians 4:23-24; Romans 8:1-4; 2 Peter 1:4). The Spirit of the Lord has brought to us freedom from the old man, and the newness of life; but unless we are willing to believe, we will fail to take hold of the glory that has been given! (2 Corinthians 3:3; Ezekiel 36:26; Hebrews 10:16; John 3:3-6; Romans 6:6; Romans 7:5-6; Romans 8:9).

<sup>10</sup> Moses beheld the glory of the Lord and his face shown with the glory of that encounter. Jesus was caught up into the glory of God and was transfigured before Peter, James and John (Mark 9:2). Today Gods' people also have an opportunity to be transfigured. We are transfigured as we allow our hearts and mind to come into agreement with the word of God. As we take hold of those things that God has said about us and believe that we are what He declares us to be then we are renewed in the spirit of our mind and are transfigured into inage of Christ (Ephesians 4:23; Romans 8:29). We must be willing to make no prevision for the realm of humanity and instead allow the Spirit of the Lord to cloth us with the splendor and image of Christ (Galatians 3:27). We are suppose to look at our selves in the light of what God has both said about us and made us to be in Christ Jesus. When we look at our reflection we should see the glory of the Lord and find ourselves being transfigured into that glorious image of Christ. We are continual faced with the challenge as to whether we will believe what man and demon spirits say about us or to believe what God says about us. If we will accept the identity that we have been given by God in Christ Jesus and walk according to the word of God then we will realize all of the glory and splendor of the life of Christ. God has an image and identity for us and that is the image and identity of Christ. God predestinated us to be conformed to this image (Romans 8:29). We were given this image when we were born of the Spirit. At that moment we were created anew in Christ Jesus after the likeness of His righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24). This is what God desires for us to know about our selves that for us to live is Christ (Colossians 3:10; Philippians 1: 21; 2 Corinthians 5:14). If we are willing to take on the image of the Son then we will discover and ever increasing glory of the manifest presence of Christ Jesus in our lives (Romans 12:2). If we refuse to accept anything other than what God has said about us then we will arise out

## Chapter 4

3- And also if our gospel is hid it is hid to those who are lost (perishing).

4- In whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers so that they cannot see the light of the gospel the glory of Christ who is the image of God<sup>11</sup>.

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7- But we have this treasure<sup>12</sup> in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us<sup>13</sup>.

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of the ashes of shame and failure and experience a continual increase of God's manifest glory and power in our lives and we will shine as the sun (Isaiah 60:1; Matthew 5:14; Philippians 2:15; Matthew 13:43; 17:2).

<sup>11</sup> The light of the gospel is the glory of Christ, the manifest presence of Jesus. There is no power of darkness that can bind the lost because Jesus sets them free (Acts 26:18; Luke 4:18). Of course there are many who refuse to accept this freedom and know this glory of God but we may all be certain the Almighty God has given to us the authority to break every stronghold of Satan (Luke 19:10; Ephesians 1:21; Matthew 28:18). The gospel of Jesus that we must proclaim is "prisoners go free!"

We are not to speak with intellectual arguments the persuasive words of men. We are not to be scribes and lawyers, we are to speak with authority (Mark 1:32; 1 Corinthians 2:4; John 1:12). Jesus has given us His ministry we don't have our own (John 20:21; 2 Corinthians 3:3; 4:5; Phil 1:21). We must not depend upon ourselves but wholly speak on His behalf. We must understand that it is by the faith of Him the faith that is in His name that the prison doors are open and the crippled walk again (Acts 3:16; Mark 16:20).

<sup>12</sup> God has put a treasure in earthen vessels, a wellspring in the earthen body and the rivers of God in the depths of our being. This treasure, which Paul also called a precious thing or deposit is none other than the new creation (2 Timothy 1:14). Peter referred to the treasure as the divine nature and John the Greater One who is in us (2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 4:4). Both the Father and Jesus have come to make their dwelling in us (John 14:24). The Holy Spirit is both with us and in us inasmuch that we are His temple, His dwelling place. If we are going to walk in this divine life of God then we must be convinced that Jesus Christ is in us? Do we realize that God demands that we not only recognize that Jesus is in us but that we also be conformed to His image (2 Cor 13:5; Romans 8:29)? How can there be any room for anyone to believe that those so transformed have "no good thing in them?" Our faith becomes effectual when we acknowledge this good thing that is in us (Philemon 1:6). If we deny this glorious work of the new birth and the presence of Christ Jesus in us then we deny the faith. Unless we are willing to look into the mirror and behold the fulness of the glory of God then we remain unchanged (2 Cor 3:18; Ephesians 4:23-24; Romans 12:1-2; John 1:16).

<sup>13</sup> The excellency of God's power is the all-surpassing ability of God. It is a description of His nature and of His deeds. It is that which surpasses all other things. It is God who has decked Himself with majesty and excellency, and arrayed Himself with glory and beauty (Job 40:10). Through His great love that He has for us, He has poured out this glory and honor as a treasure into our hearts; and has given anyone (who has the will and desire to walk with Him) the divine ability to live His glorious life (John 17:21-23; Colossians 1:27; Ephesians 1:18; 3:16; 4:24; Luke 24:49; Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Acts 1:5; 11:16). We have been given the opportunity to be clothed with the honor and majesty of His nature and His presence.

God has given to us the excellency of His power out of the abundant riches of His grace. It is a grace that excels in glory beyond what those of the Old Testament had (2 Corinthians 3:10). Daniel had an excellent spirit because of the glory that he had received from the first covenant; and it brought him into the highest honor that men could give (Daniel 5:12, 14; 6:3). How much greater should that excellent spirit be in those who now live in the New Covenant! If we will separate ourselves to walk only in the things of the Spirit of God, then we can realize a greater revelation of the excellence of the spirit of God than anyone we read of in the Old Testament. We can grow in excellence of spirit, and excellence in health, as well as excellence in business and finances. Truly God's eyes search throughout the earth to show Himself mighty on behalf of those whose hearts are perfect (2 Chronicles 16:9).

13- But we have the same Spirit of faith<sup>14</sup> according to the scripture, I believed so I have spoke, we also believe and so we speak.

## Chapter 5

1- For we know that if our earthly tent like house were destroyed we have a building from God a house not made by hands eternal in the heavens<sup>15</sup>.

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7- For we walk by faith, not by sight<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> There are many who consider the "spirit of faith" as the attitude of the spirit of man. Yet it is more in keeping with the scripture as well as the context that Paul was not referring to the attitude of man regarding faith but to the Holy Spirit who is the one who creates faith (Romans 10:6-10; 1 Corinthians 12:9; Romans 8:14-16; Galatians 3:2,5,14; 5:5; 1 Corinthians 2:4-5; 1 Thessalonians 1:5-7). Matthew Henry says in his commentary regarding this verse, "faith which is the operation of the Spirit." Paul, like the Psalmist, is faced with death and affliction yet because of the Spirit of faith he, like the Psalmist was inspired to testify of the glory and power of God that rested upon him. Paul makes it clear that for the Word of God to work it must be spoken, "for with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:9-10). When Paul speaks the word of faith by the Spirit he is doing so out of the treasure that was placed in his earthen vessel (mortal body- 2 Corinthians 4:7). He goes on to further describe the treasure as the new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). It is out of this treasure that the power of God brings forth the Spirit of faith. The Holy Spirit has placed the word of faith in our hearts and upon our lips so that we may declare the wonderful works of God and become the beneficiaries of all the blessings that He has poured out (Romans 10:8; Ephesians 6:17, 1 John 2:27; Hebrews 8:10-11; 2 Corinthians 3:3; Ephesians 1:3). The same Spirit of faith that prophesied through the Psalmist of old was speaking through Paul (Acts 1:17; 1 Peter 1:11). Today, we have the same Spirit of faith inspiring us an impressing us to proclaim the Word of the Lord. When the Spirit of faith speaks then the promises of God are received and the riches of God are revealed (Hebrews 6:12; Mark 11:23; John 7:38-39).

<sup>15</sup> We may only have a tent like house right now but we have a building of God not made with hands eternal in the heavens. Paul had no desire at all to be naked or to be disembodied and he assured that those that he ministered to that they would not be disembodied but they would be clothed with a heavenly building. Moses was seen in His heavenly body when he appeared along with Elijah on the mount of transfiguration (Matthew 17:3). The body of Moses was buried and the first fruits of the resurrection, Christ Jesus had not yet been raised from the dead so we know that Moses did not appear in a resurrected body but none the less a heavenly one (1 Corinthians 15:20). While it is true that the earthly body will be raised up from the grave to an incorruptible body at the coming of the Lord, Paul also causes us to realize that there is also something glorious that we will be clothed with while we wait (1 Corinthians 15: 23, 42-44, 49, 53, 1 Thessalonians 4:16).

Paul was so aware of his heavenly building that he groaned to put off the earthly tabernacle that he was housed in (2 Corinthians 5:2). Oh that we would allow God to make us more aware of the heavenly reality than the earthly sojourn. That we would understand that the faith that we now walk by is a relationship with God that affords us the opportunity to see what eyes have not seen and to hear what ears have not heard and understand what has never entered into the heart of men (1 Corinthians 2:9-10). These things are now revealed to us by the Holy Ghost who has come to lead us and guide us, to bring us to revelation of the heavenly. The Holy Spirit is our guarantee that all these things are certain (2 Corinthians 5:5).

<sup>16</sup> God is doing more things around us and in us than we realize. There is a greater interaction going on between us and the things of the Spirit than what we are aware of - so let's start living by the word of God and make what God said our living reality, and not the things that we believe we can prove through our own observations. It's time to speak the Word, and let your faith be effective and powerful by the acknowledgment of every good thing that is in you (Philemon 1:6; 2 Corinthians 4:16). We must boldly proclaim the word of God as it has been delivered to us in the Bible. Satan is the master of deception: with his lies and tricks he has deceived many. As God's people must not walk by sight, but by faith! We must be

8- But we are confident, and also take great delight in taking leave of the body to take up residence with the Lord<sup>17</sup>.

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confident in the working power of God fulfilling everything that He has promised - whether we think we see it or not!

Satan's propaganda is to testify of all that opposes the truth; he attempts to hide transformation of heart and spirit and all that is good! Demonic forces focus on running interference with the truth and producing some kind of distraction to prevent that which God is doing from being magnified. The demonic lie will produce every slanderous and accusing thing to convince men that Satan somehow still has the upper hand in the lives of men. Whether it is the message of Christ in you, or healing for the body - you will find Satan saying it is not so. If five people received a healing or a miracle and one does not, Satan is very effective at magnifying the one that did not get healed. If the sea just parted before you and the cloud of glory is over your head, the demonic forces will be screaming that it would have been better to die in Egypt (Exodus 16:3). The powers of darkness fight against every faith-producing action and faith-producing word. God's people are going to have to wake up and begin to aggressively lay hold of the truth, see the truth, and focus on what God has both promised and is doing. The only way not to be deceived by the tricks of Satan is to believe the word of God and call it done. It is time to stop being discouraged and influenced by doubt and uncertainty. Believe those things which God has said whether you see them or not; know that what God has promised and you have believed has taken place - and time will bear out the testimonies of God.

<sup>17</sup> Now if our bodies be destroyed we have a heavenly tabernacle, eternal in the heavens (2 Corinthians 5:1). We must all understand that though the body may be dissolved into dust, it shall be raised up again at the time of the resurrection. Because of Adam's rebellion against God, the Lord appointed the body to return to the dust from whence it was taken (Genesis 2:7; 3:19). Yet He subjected the body to the grave in hopes of the resurrection. What is equally important to realize is that all those who die in the Lord have a tabernacle in heaven. God gives us a spiritual body to wait for the resurrection of the natural body. Paul was so eager to be with the Lord that he groaned to put off the earthly body so that he could be clothed with the heavenly one (2 Corinthians 5:2-3). Peter also referred to putting off the body as a tabernacle at the time of death (2 Peter 1:14). At the time of death we depart to be with the Lord, while our bodies are laid to rest in a grave. We have been made one with God, and nothing can separate us from this holy union. Christ dwells in us and we dwell in Him, both now and forever. When we were born of the Spirit we experienced a spiritual resurrection, wherein we were raised up together with Him and were seated together with Him in the heavenly realm (Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 3:1-3). When we die this just goes to another level, and we are enabled to see Him as He is - for we shall be like Him (1 John 3:2).

Paul regarded the death of the body as gain, because it meant that He would depart from the body and be with the Lord (Philippians 1:21-23). Every one of us are on our way to an appointment with death. The moment that we die we step over into eternity, from whence there is no turning back. Jesus described this in a story about a rich man who had rejected God's covenant. When the rich man died, he lifted up his eyes - being in torment (Luke 16:23). However, when Lazarus died he was carried into a place of the departed saints called "Abraham's bosom." All the saints who had died in the time before Christ were still held under the claims of death. But when Jesus died at Calvary, He destroyed him who had the power of death: that is the devil (Hebrews 2:14). He abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (2 Timothy 1:10). Jesus spoiled principalities and powers and made an open shame of them, declaring their defeat and His triumph over death, hell, and the grave (Colossians 2:15; Revelation 1:18). When Jesus died on the cross He gave up His spirit, which then went down into hell to liberate the lives of the departed saints who had been held prisoner because of Adam's sin and Satan's claim. He led captivity captive and took them into heaven, where they now stand as a great company of saints in the presence of the Lord (Ephesians 4:10-11; Hebrews 12:1,22). Jesus came forth as the firstfruits of the resurrection when His spirit was reunited with His body, and he provided the same resurrection power to all who will believe in Him.

There is the death of the body, and there is a resurrection of the body. Death is a separation of the spiritual man from the body. The spirit leaves the body at an appointed time, and the body then is defined as dead; and is laid to rest (or sleep) until the time of the resurrection (James 2:26). When the body is laid in the grave, it is sown a natural, corruptible body - to later be raised up as an incorruptible and eternal body (1 Corinthians 15:42-44). The body is left to rest in the earth until the time of the resurrection. When Jesus comes to set up His Kingdom on earth He will come with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead bodies of all who died in Christ shall be reunited with their departed spirits, which have been with Christ Jesus in the presence of God (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Revelation 20:5-6).



11-Because we know the terror<sup>18</sup> of the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is well known to God; and I hope it is well known to your conscience.

14- For the love of Christ urges us having judged this, that One has died for all so then all have died

15- And he died for all so that those who live might not live unto themselves but to Him who died and has risen<sup>19</sup>.

16- Therefore from now on we know no one after the flesh even though we have know Christ after the flesh yet now we know Him no more<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> There is a judgment time for every person. The message of Jesus Christ is: repent or perish (Matthew 3:2; Mark 16:16; Acts 17:30). The loving and merciful Lamb of God went everywhere telling men to repent, because the Kingdom is at hand. There are many who are convinced of the love of God, but very few who recognize the judgments of God. But everyone who knows about God's wrath against all unrighteousness, and all who are certain of the terror of the Lord - these are deeply moved to command all men everywhere to repent (Romans 1:18; 2:8; Ephesians 5:6; Colossians 3:6). The simple and plain truth that must be told is that the wrath of God abides on those who refuse the new life that God has offered (John 3:36).

Each person needs to decide whether or not they want to live in a world that has no sin. The Kingdom of God has only purity and holiness in it. The Holy Spirit has come to convince every person of sin who does not believe; and everyone who does believe of the righteousness that God demands (John 16:7-9). If there is going to be another spiritual awakening in the Western World, then there is going to have to be preaching that is in cooperation with Holy Ghost conviction.

A sugary theology that contrives an indulgent and permissive God has no basis in scripture. The torturous death of Jesus provided a way for us to escape sin, and to escape the wrath of God against all iniquity. If we neglect so great a salvation, we shall surely perish! Those who refuse to obey God after having known Him are described by Paul as those who have no fear of God before their eyes (Romans 3:18). It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God (Hebrews 10:31). God has made a way for us to escape the wrath that is to come, and that way is the life of Jesus: made available to anyone who is willing.

<sup>19</sup> The Holy Spirit has imparted the life of Jesus Christ into us through the new birth. No one has found life until they find the life that is in Christ Jesus. There is no reason for us to hang on to our own lives when we have been so endowed with His life. Just think of the exchange, the limited earthly human existence for the life of unlimited opportunity in Christ Jesus. The good life is the life of Christ. The abundant life is the life of Christ. The eternal life is the life of Christ. The life that is full of joy unspeakable and glorious is the life of Christ. The life of being able to do all things is the life of Christ. The life of power and authority is the life of Christ!

God has given us an opportunity to have His life but there must be a willingness on our part to loose our own life. The exchange has already been granted to anyone who is willing, His life for ours and in exchange our life for His. If we are willing to loose our lives and deny ourselves then we will have His life. This life of Christ is realized simply by believing and obeying the Word of God. We are constantly faced with a decision to do what God says or to do it our own way. If we will do what God says then we will discover all of the blessings and promises of living the glorious life of the only begotten Son.

The Holy Spirit has come to lead us into all the ways of this life but we have to be willing to lay aside all of our own opinions and in total trust and reliance upon the promise of God follow the Holy Spirit. God has called us His sheep because a sheep is one who is totally dependent upon the Shepherd. A lamb that is born in the Shepherd's fold will live in total dependence upon the direction of the Shepherd. He has called us his branches because He is the vine that supplies the life so that we may be the ones blessed with the glory of the fruit that the vine produces. Will you make the decision today that you are going to live by the word and the opinion of the Father? Will you stop living in a self-preserving manner and trust God to lead you, to guide you, to protect and provide for you? Say no to discouragement and fear and yes to the voice of the Shepherd who is speaking encouragement and love. Recognize our lives are all about Jesus. Our lives are to reveal the glory of the Only Begotten Son of the Father.

<sup>20</sup> We must stop seeing things through natural eyes and on the basis of a temporal and earthly prospective. It is time we see people for what they really are. If they have been born of God then we must begin to see them as the children of God and as those who stand in the place of Christ Jesus on the earth (2 Corinthians

## 18- And all things are of God who has reconciled us unto Himself by Jesus Christ and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation <sup>21</sup>

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5:19-20). Our interaction and compassion for those who have not been born of God must be equally spiritual. We must recognize that they are children of disobedience. Like all other men they were born in sin and shaped in iniquity. Unless they are liberated by the power of the gospel they will spend an eternity in a place called hell. All those who have not been born of God are the children of the devil and the wrath of God abides on. Only through the anointing of the Holy Spirit and the preaching of the gospel can they be rescued from their terrible fate.

Those that have been born of God have received the life of Christ. Therefore, each person must confess, "for me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21; Galatians 2:20; 3:20; 2 Corinthians 3:3; 5:14-15; ) To regard those who have been born of God as anything less than heirs and coinheritors with Christ is completely out of touch with the reality of the gospel (Romans 8:17; Ephesians 2:6; Hebrews 2:11; John 17:21-23). It is essential that we realize that what we do unto the least of those who have been born of God we do unto Christ Jesus personally (Matthew 25:40). Also any consideration of the natural dimensions of a person at any level has no real value. In Christ there is no significance in the nationality or ethnicity of a person. There is neither Greek nor Jew, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, everyone is the same in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28).

God has designed a special purpose and written out a plan for each individual. One of the most important things that we must understand is how we can assist each person in fulfilling the call of God upon their life. The Holy Spirit has divided to each one giftings according to His will and we must come to know and understand these diverse roles that each member in the body of Christ is called to fulfill (1 Corinthians 12:7,11). We must not be threatened by diversity but embrace it and even covet the operations of all the gifts and callings of God in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:17-25). Yet the most important thing of all is that we must recognize the divine life of Jesus being made ready to be fully expressed in each of our lives (Ephesians 4:13; 2 Timothy 2:21; Romans 8:29)!

<sup>21</sup> A dramatic and revolutionary change has taken place - the old has passed away and behold, everything is new! This is the message of salvation, a miracle of a new creation: proclaimed by the Word, purchased by the blood, and brought into existence by the operation of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit came upon the chaos and darkness of our lives, and brought forth the life of Jesus Christ. The message of reconciliation is the leading theme of Paul's gospel. The basic meaning of the Greek word 'katallage' is "exchange." The life of God was exchanged for ours. He who knew no sin became the sin offering, so that we might be made the righteousness of God by Him. At the very heart of the gospel is the theme of reconciliation. This is one of the most powerful words associated with redemption. This same Greek word can also be understood as "change;" the change that takes place from the exchange. The message of salvation is the message of change: a change from the old to the new. Every person must be changed before they can be accepted into the family of God. We have been given both the message and the word of reconciliation, but for the Word to produce its miracle it must be believed. If our message is not the message of change, then how can it be the gospel?! The Good News is that the days of our captivity are over, for the Deliver has come and we have been set free! As ministers of reconciliation we declare that "old things have passed away, and behold all things are new!" And all things are of God for everyone who will believe! (2 Corinthians 5:17-19).

Those of us who were once alienated from God, and enemies because of the sin and iniquity in our lives, have now been reconciled (Colossians 1:21-22). This change can only take place through the redemption made possible by the blood of Jesus, by whom "we have now received the reconciliation" (Romans 5:11). Now we who once stood under the condemnation of death and who were once stained with sin are presented holy and without blemish and reproach (Colossians 1:22). The change is complete on God's part, but must be believed and received on the part of man. Those who would try to bring this change about some other way will never find it. The ministry of reconciliation is the ministry of righteousness - a righteousness that is imparted to us by the Spirit of the living God (2 Corinthians 3:8-9).

Being born of the Spirit and of the Word does not produce a partial change, but a radical and miraculous one. The power of change worked a miracle of translation, making us no longer of this world (John 17:14,16; Colossians 1:13). The child of disobedience ruled by the spirit of disobedience was set free from the prince and the power of the air (the god of this world), and is now made a servant of righteousness (Ephesians 2:2-3; Romans 6:22). The body of sin was removed by the circumcision of Christ, and the

20- So then we are ambassadors for Christ since God calls out through us we implore you on behalf of Christ be reconciled to God<sup>22</sup>.

21- For He who knew no sin was made sin<sup>23</sup> for us so that we may be the righteousness of God<sup>24</sup> in Him.

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twisted nature of sin was washed away by the waters of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). A radical change has come: from darkness to light, from old to new, from sin to righteousness, from disobedience to obedience, and from Satan to God! The change was so complete that the old man was put to death, and a new man raised up by resurrection life (Romans 6:16-22; Colossians 3:1-3). The man of sin was destroyed, and the man of God brought to life. The life of Christ Jesus is imparted to everyone who will receive the free gift of reconciliation. The darkness is gone, the true light now shines: for the light of life has come, and lives and abides in the heart of the redeemed. (John 1:4, 1 John 5:11).

<sup>22</sup> God is asking all men to become His friends. The good news of the gospel is summed up in the declaration of go free from your captivity (Luke 4:18; Ephesians 1:7; Acts 13:38). It is God's desire to release every person from the prison of sin and death and to bring them into this glorious fellowship of abundant life. In reality all men seek for God but the deception and spiritual blindness holds them back from the truth (2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 6:11). For this reason God has anointed us with the Holy Spirit to empower us in order to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God (Acts 26:18).

One does not have to be overwhelmed with the notion that they are responsible to stand in for the Savior of the world and address the lost. God who has requested us to do these things will also supply the ability. It will not be a glazed over recital of scripture that will reach the lost but the love and grace that flows out like a river from Christ Jesus Himself to a lost and dying world. Christ Jesus Himself will call out to the lost through you and you will be swept away in the joy of it. Too many times when we come to know the will of God we look to ourselves to supply the ability. God does not want us to look to ourselves but rather look to the Savior; look to the supply of the Spirit and the anointing which God has given. Ask God and He will fill you with the wisdom and the love to deal with each person in a unique way that is full of the grace and wisdom of God. If you will simply allow God the privilege of using you then you will discover the life and anointing of Jesus flowing through you to touch the hearts of all those you encounter.

<sup>23</sup> The prophet Isaiah gives an account of how Jesus took our sin and shame upon himself on the cross (Isaiah 53:6-6,10). In this account he reveals to all the world that through God's righteous servant (Christ Jesus) many would be made righteous (Isaiah 53:11). Peter also revealed to us that Jesus bore our sins in his own body on the tree so that we may be dead to sin and live unto righteousness (1 Peter 2:24). Because of the sin of one man (Adam) the power of sin dominated the heart of man but through the righteousness of one man Christ Jesus the power of sin was destroyed (Hebrews 2:14; 2 Timothy 1:10; Romans 5:17; 1 John 3:5; John 1:29). To accomplish the destruction of sin God made Jesus to be sin with a sin that was our own so that we might be made righteous with a righteousness that is His own. As sin dominated our hearts because we were born of man now righteousness dominates our hearts because we have been born of God. One of the great stories of forgiveness and mercy are given to us in the small book of the Bible called Philemon. A slave named Onesimus stole from his master whose name was Philemon. If Onesimus were caught and punished for his crime he would be crucified. However, instead he met Paul and was changed into another man by the blood of Jesus. Paul wrote to Philemon concerning Onesimus and said, "receive him as myself." Also, if he owes you anything put that to my account (Philemon 1:18). Through Paul's intercession the relationship of Philemon and Onesimus were restored because a righteous man interceded for an unrighteous one. Onesimus did not continue to be a thief and a run away slave but was restored to a right relationship with Philemon. Similarly, Jesus had all of our sins charged to his account and through His intercession He restored us to a right relationship with God. Yet, he did more than just restore us to relationship (reconcile us) He provided us with a change of nature (2 Corinthians 5:17). Then to seal our success He came along with us into our restored relationship to teach us and guide us into every correct action and attitude. The life of sin is a life of wrong actions whereas the life of righteousness is the life of right actions. When the power of sin rules over the heart of man then there will only be wrong actions but when the Holy Spirit rules over the heart there will be right actions. Jesus put sin to death on the cross so that righteousness might take its place in our life (Romans 8:3). To make salvation anything less than a

## Chapter 7

### 10- For God sorrow brings repentance<sup>25</sup> unto salvation producing no regret but the worldly sorrow produces death.

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change in nature does away with faith altogether. To suggest that we are no different in our behavior after we have been redeemed is to make God a liar. To believe that we are somehow perfected through our own good efforts or through religious practices is no different than trusting in the law for righteousness. The treasure of God's righteousness is only found in Christ Jesus for he alone has the power to reconcile us and transform our lives into a new creation. Through depending upon and yielding to the Holy Spirit we live the life of righteousness that God created us for.

<sup>24</sup> There are three kinds of righteousness: self-righteousness, the righteousness of the Law and the righteousness of God. Of these three only the righteousness of God belongs in the New Testament (Matthew 6:33; Romans 1:17; Romans 3:21-22; 10:3; Philippians 3:9). The righteousness of God is an imparted righteousness; a righteousness that anyone can draw on by making a simple request for salvation. When we call upon the Lord He cloths us with a new self which is created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10). In the Commentary, Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible by Jamieson, Fausset and Brown we read, "the righteousness of God- Not merely righteous, but righteousness itself; not merely righteousness, but the righteousness of God, because Christ is God, and what He is we are (1Jn 4:17)..." Paul revealed two kinds of righteousness when he lamented over the ignorance of Israel. Because they were ignorant of God's righteousness they were still seeking to establish their own instead of submitting to the righteousness of God (Romans 10:3). Today, Christians fall into the same snare. They become so focused on their efforts that they fail to realize that there is a righteousness that comes from God that they can draw on through the supply of the Holy Spirit. Instead of attempting to arise from our struggles with our own strength we must look up and behold the righteousness of God that is revealed through faith for faith and realize that those who are righteous live by faith (Romans 1:17; Philippians 3:9). The power of faith that is fueled by the Holy Spirit is not only enough to move mountains into the sea and make the impossible possible but it is also the means by which you and I walk in all the ways of God's righteousness. Could there be any greater joy or a more blessed life than to be privileged to walk in the majesty of God's one righteousness? When we consider that God's love is one of the chief characteristics of His righteousness we may begin to grasp the quality of life that has been handed to us as a free gift. We are so blessed that we do not have to labor and strive for such a righteousness to be established in our lives for Christ Jesus gave it to us with one act of love. Yet, to benefit we must learn how to let the Spirit of God rule over our lives by simply submitting to the activity of His working power that is at work in us (Ephesians 3:20; Colossians 1:29; 2 Corinthians 4:7; 1 Corinthians 2:5).

<sup>25</sup> Repentance is more than a change of mind although a change in opinion is part of repentance. It is more than remorse for the wrong that was done although remorse accompanies it. It is more than a change in judgment even though repentance brings a new mind and a new way of looking at things. Repentance is a gift from God that produces a new heart and a new spirit. Through repentance we are empowered to change in every way and be transfigured by the Holy Spirit. Because of the change that repentance brings our heart and the spirit yearn to do the will of God and when it is discovered that there is fault the heart and the spirit cry out Abba Father. When conviction comes the child of God turns earnestly away from the wrong and lays hold on the comfort of a loving Father ready to heal and to strengthen. Many people never allow conviction to become conversion rather because of their unwillingness to change conviction becomes condemnation (death). Yet, if we will simply believe and respond with a surrendered and yielded heart to the conviction of the Holy Spirit God will empower us to change.

We must understand that friendship with the world is enmity (hostility, hatred) against God (James 4:4). Our heavenly Father cries out "Come out from among them and be separate and I will receive you says the Lord" (2 Corinthians 6:17). God wants us to be obedient children who do not fashion ourselves after the former lust but will in every way conform to His will in all things (1 Peter 1:14). Our Heavenly Father has given us repentance that leads to life (Acts 11:8). He has given to us the conviction of the Holy Spirit who teaches us good from evil, right from wrong. When He speaks our hearts must be tender to respond and our minds willing to change. He wants us to be reconciled to Him. When He places the book of our thoughts over against the book of His thoughts He wants to say, It's a match. However, when He finds something different He will put His finger on it and demand that we change. Thus He empowers us with the ability to

## Chapter 8

9- For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich for your sake he became poor so that by his poverty you might become rich<sup>26</sup>.

## Chapter 9

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change and be reconciled. But we must be willing to be sensitive and submitted to His instruction and not stubborn and rebellious. Through the preaching of the word the Holy Spirit will produce godly sorrow so that whatever may be unlike God will be conformed to the image of the Son.

<sup>26</sup> If we want to understand how God has made us rich then we have to understand the riches of God that are in Christ Jesus. How was Jesus rich before he laid aside all of His wealth to become our sin offering? When we consider Gods wealth then we must reach beyond everything that anyone has because God owns it all. God is rich in love and in every other attribute of goodness that can be thought of and more. All of the treasures of heaven and the earth are his possessions and He knows where everyone of them is.

We must also consider the situation of the Macedonians and understand the context that Paul is speaking to them in. The Macedonians had made themselves poor by giving of their material goods to the gospel (2 Corinthians 8:2-3). However, Paul is making it known that through the miracle supply of Gods grace they are about to receive an abundance of what they have given (2 Corinthians 9:5-8). Paul encouraged the Macedonians again in the Epistle to the Philippians and reminded them in the same context that God would supply their needs according to His riches in glory (Philippians 4:19). We may rightly conclude then that material things are definitely a part of the riches that Paul is referring to in this passage.

There have been those who would want to limit the riches that we have in Christ Jesus to spiritual riches. However, they failed to realize that through the benefit of spiritual riches we come to have every other area of our life enriched as well. Through the prosperity of our souls we are also enriched in health and in material goods (3 John 2; Matthew 6:33; Mark 10:29-30). The notion that God is not interested in material wealth is foreign to the God of the Bible. From the very beginning God lavishly supplied Adam and Eve with a garden paradise rich in material goods. Unfortunately, many pagan ideas were incorporated into Christianity over the centuries that attributed a mystical and spiritual benefit to poverty. These religions that have some of their counter parts in modern day Hinduism and Buddhism think that a desire for material things is evil and restrains the mystical development of the spirit. Those who would attempt to limit this passage to Neoplatonic and metaphorical interpretations are actually violating the context of Paul's message in order to remain true to their philosophy of the superior spiritual attributes of poverty. These concepts and ideas are entirely foreign to the way God has presented Himself and His will for our lives in the Bible. It is God who makes us rich and adds no sorrow with it (Psalms 112:3; Genesis 13:2; 14:23; 36:7; 1 Samuel 2:7; 1 Chronicles 29:12,28; 2 Chronicles 1:12; 9:22; Proverbs 3:16; 8:18; 10:4,15; 10:22; 22:4).

We share in the riches of Christ Jesus as heirs and coheirs together with Him (Romans 8:17,29; John 1:12; Galatians 3:29). We have been blessed with all spiritual blessings and given an unlimited provision to ask what we will and He will do it (Ephesians 1:3; John 15:16). We know that He is providing for our needs according to His riches in glory. We also know that asking God for material prosperity is one of the prayers of the Bible (Psalms 118:25). To think that God is not going to resource us to accomplish the things that He has purposed for us to do in this life is nonsense. If we take just one of the many things on the list of responsibilities that God has given us then we must recognize that material provision becomes an essential part of our purpose. For example if we see a brother or sister in need we are supposed to open up our purse and meet that need (1 John 3:16-20). Well, what if there is nothing in our purse? We are called to take care of the orphans, the widows, the poor, the needy, the ministry and the advancement of the gospel throughout the world. Certainly, we don't have to think too long and we realize this takes lots of material provision.

8- God is able to supply you with every blessing in abundance so that you may always and in everything have all the resources with more than enough for every good work<sup>27</sup>.

## Chapter 10

4- For the weapons<sup>28</sup> of our warfare are not of human ability but of God's power to demolish fortresses.

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<sup>27</sup> God has not excluded us from the responsibility of properly utilizing the wealth of the earth for His purposes. For too long much of the wealth has been in the hands of the wicked because God's people have not understood the principles of faith to lay hold on it for the advancement of the Kingdom of God. Wealth was not placed in the earth for the purposes of Satan it was placed here for the purposes of God. Of the many things that could have been highlighted by God in Genesis chapter two God mentions the gold that was placed in the garden (Genesis 2:11-12). When God blessed Abraham he was made rich in gold and silver and much cattle (Genesis 13:2). God intended to so bless the nation of Israel that poverty would cease to exist and they would enjoy days of heaven on earth (Deuteronomy 15:4; 11:21). In fact the blessing of the Lord is always linked to both spiritual and material prosperity.

If we are going to enter into this realm of faith then we cannot count our lives dear unto ourselves and engage in the fight. We must lay hold on those things that the powers of darkness have attempted to hinder God's people from possessing. We must remember that even though the promise land was Israel's inheritance God still made them fight for it.

Even in the days of Paul the need for money to advance the Kingdom of God was essential. Today we have opportunities to evangelize the world that Paul could have never dreamed of. I have watched most of my life as people have complained about the preachers who ask for money but it was those same people who did very little if anything to obey God and evangelize the nations. We must recognize that God is lavishly generous and will abundantly supply us with the resources if we will with abandonment seek His Kingdom first and take those things that He has blessed us with and sow them into the Kingdom. God will rebuke the devourer and destroy the yoke of poverty and mediocrity. If we will give ourselves over to God's purposes with total abandonment then we will see the abundant supply of wealth that is needed to reach the lost without suffering the ruin of our own lives. Many people allow themselves to be harassed with the fear that they will not have enough if they give to the things of the Kingdom but God has made a promise and God cannot lie. If we will do as He says then our hearts will be made ready to handle all that He desires to pour out upon us. A reluctance to sow generously reflects a refusal to trust God.

<sup>28</sup> We must declare war on every thing that is contrary to the will and blessings of God. Sin, sickness, disease and poverty must become our sworn enemies. Everywhere we find them we must come out against them with the power of God that has been entrusted to us and destroy them. All of the blessings and promises of God are ours. However, Satan in His obstinate and rebellious manner sets up fortresses to resist our authority in Christ and impose his will upon us. If we will not back down but, having done all to stand, continue to press the battle then we will see the lost come to the saving knowledge of Christ Jesus and the wealth of the world released for the Kingdom of God.

There are four verses of scripture that use the word for weapon (hoplon). They are: 2 Corinthians 10:4- the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly; Romans 13:12- put on the weapons of light; 2 Corinthians 6:7- the weapons of righteousness on the right and left; and Romans 6:13- your members as weapons of righteousness to God. Knowing that God has given us these weapons for the spiritual battle that we face and that we are to put them on then it would be good to identify what the weapons are. The most important weapon spoken of in the New Testament is the Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12). This is the weapon that Jesus used when He faced the devil on earth and the one that He will use when He fights against His enemies in the future. The word of God is pictured as a sword, which comes out of His mouth (Revelation 19:15; 2:16; 1:16; Isaiah 11:4). We must all recognize that it is essential that we follow the Captain of our salvation, Jesus Christ into this battle against the defiance and iniquity of the Satanic realm.

The weapons of light speak of the manifest presence of the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. If we walk in the Spirit then the light of God's presence and the light of His truth will overthrow the darkness that would otherwise deceive us and gain authority and influence over our lives. Then finally the weapon of righteousness that was given to us in Christ Jesus empowers us to walk in the obedience of Christ. The

5 To destroy arguments and every great obstacle raised against the knowledge of God and to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ<sup>29</sup>.

## Chapter 12

4For if one comes proclaiming another Jesus<sup>30</sup> who we have not proclaimed or you receive another Spirit who you have not received or another gospel who you have not accepted- you are all amazingly tolerant!

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righteousness of God that we have is an authority that keeps us from every form of disobedience that would subjugate us to Satan's will.

We must engage in the most important battle that will ever exist. This is a battle for the souls of men including our own. We must recognize that God has called us to be soldiers and that He has guaranteed the absolute certainty of our success if we will do what He says (2 Timothy 2:3-4; 1 John 5:4; Romans 8:37; John 16:33). Just as Jesus was manifested to destroy the works of darkness He has called us to the same battle. It is our responsibility to be used of God to advance the Kingdom of God in the earth. If we fail to arise to this battle, the opportunity of standing up in His greatness will be lost to us forever. Let us seize this opportunity to stand up and speak with a voice that will last throughout the ages. Let us proclaim with every act of righteousness and truth that the things of the Kingdom of God are worth fighting for. Through obedience to God's word we can yield our members as instruments of righteousness and the Holy Spirit will use them as weapons to destroy every grip of Satan and renders his influence powerless.

<sup>29</sup> The battlefield that we are engaged upon is the battlefield of the thoughts. Thoughts are the inspiration behind our decisions and our decisions set the course of our actions. Our actions will determine our success or our failure now and throughout eternity. God has not left us to our own ability to deal with this complex matrix of reasoning and thinking but has given to us His thoughts (through His word) and His divine assistance to destroy the influences of man and the demonic realm every time they arise in our thinking. We must be wise enough to take our position upon this battlefield with a resolve to stand against all those things that oppose the knowledge of God (Ephesians 6:10-11). If we do not sober up and realize that this is a real war then we will constantly be overthrown by our own neglect. We must place God's word in its rightful position as the supreme knowledge and insight. If you want to be successful and have those things that God has promised then every opposing thought must become the enemy and must be destroyed.

Both the Satanic forces and natural events attempt to act as a blockade between us, and the promises that God has given. These "high military works" that are thrown up to prevent us will not be able to stand against us as we move in the knowledge of God. Yet at the same time we must recognize that the knowledge of God will run contrary to what we have come to learn and believe about the world that we live in. God's knowledge says to raise the dead, man's knowledge says impossible! God's knowledge tells us that whatever we ask Father He will do it whereas man's knowledge says "God helps them that help themselves." God's knowledge says give and it shall be given to you, man's knowledge says save it and you will have more.

Imaginations that come out of a logic inspired by fear and self-preservation will always lead us in a direction opposite of faith. Imaginations begin where knowledge ends. Knowledge allows us to understand the situations and challenges that we are faced with and derive a plan of action to deal with them. Imaginations are never based upon truth but upon fantasies; it is a kind of "false logic" that has no substance in reality. To be so naïve and ignorant as to think that our imaginations are worth the time and meditation that we give to them is self-destructive. When you lack truth and knowledge imaginations set end therefore turn to the source, the word of God.

If we are going to be obedient to God then we are going to have to allow God's Word to dominate our thoughts. God's instructions must be the knowledge that we base all of our decisions on. There is no weapon like the sword of the Spirit, or the word of God because the knowledge of God will cut off every false thing. Those who walk in the knowledge that the Word of God gives will have those things that God has described and the blessing that its wisdom brings. It is the truth that sets free and the power of God that overthrows every lie and deception. It is the means to discern good and evil and the revealer of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

12 The true signs of an apostle were performed by me with all perseverance; signs, wonders and mighty works<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> Paul, who had worked so hard to establish the Corinthians in Christ Jesus, was having to fight for their respect. There were those who were coming into the community of the church preaching another Jesus, another Spirit, and another gospel. As it has been pointed out by others, Jesus/Spirit/gospel is a good summary of the New Covenant. What people believe about Jesus will extend over into what they believe and accept about the Holy Spirit and the gospel message. What we can be certain of is that Paul relied upon the Holy Spirit to be the one to reveal Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the one who came to make known Jesus the Savior, Healer, Deliverer, and Baptizer. Those whom Paul was opposing were perverting the truth, and making Jesus someone different than He was revealed to be. The ministry of Jesus was established in His earthly sojourn, to which Paul made absolutely no alterations. He, like the others that were anointed to preach the gospel, picked up the mantle and continued on in the ministry and works which Jesus Himself did (John 14:12; Ephesians 4:13; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:4; Romans 15:19).

There cannot be two concepts of Jesus and both be correct. There cannot be two concepts of the working and ministry of the Holy Spirit; there cannot be two gospels. The Corinthian church had to decide which Jesus they would follow: the one Paul preached, or the one that these outsiders were proclaiming. The message of salvation that Paul delivered to the Church at Corinth had produced the glorious manifestations of the Holy Spirit that we read about in 1 Corinthians chapters 12 through 14. The results of these outsiders produced fruits of a different kind: quarreling, jealousy, anger, selfishness, slander, gossip, conceit, disorder, impurity, sexual immorality, and lustfulness (2 Corinthians 12:21; 2 Timothy 3:13; 1 John 2:26; 1 Timothy 4:1). One thing is for certain: Paul was not going to turn a blind eye. If need be, he would come with a rod; as would any good shepherd (1 Corinthians 4:21).

The one way that each person can know for certain whether or not a person is preaching the same Jesus that Paul preached is by the fruits it produces in the lives of the hearers. If the preacher turns men from their sin and iniquity unto a life of righteousness and purity, then it is the same Jesus that Paul preached. Otherwise they are these that Paul described here: they are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as the apostles of Christ. They, just like Satan, are disguised as angels of light; but they are ministers of unrighteousness (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). Their message of the cross does not free men from their sins and give them power over Satan. Their message of the Holy Spirit does not produce the fruits of righteousness, holiness, and purity. Their message of the gospel does not liberate the hearers to walk in the freedom and liberty of Christ Jesus; but instead holds the hearers in bondage to sin, and justifies acts of iniquity. Their deception is a lie that will bring damnation; and their heresy - it is nothing less than doctrines of devils, that will ensnare those who had completely escaped the power of sin and death; and leave them defenseless against all that belongs to the dominion of the devil.

<sup>31</sup> Apostle is not a common idea of the Old Testament although it may be argued that a related Hebrew word (shluchem) may be applied to Moses, Elijah, Elisha and Ezekiel the concept as represented in the New Testament does not exist. It may be used of Moses, Elijah, Elisha and Ezekiel in as much as they did things that are reserved only for God to



## Chapter 13

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5- Examine yourself to see if you are in the faith. Test yourself do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you? If not then you are counterfeit<sup>32</sup>!

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do such as bringing forth water from a rock, bringing rain, raising the dead, opening the womb. An apostle is one who fully represents the one who sends him.

There are only 13 men in the New Testament books that may truly be classified as apostles appointed by Jesus (Matthew 10:2-4; Galatians 1:1). They are distinguished from many different types of ministries that are also sent by God such as prophets, evangelist, teachers, missionaries, the seventy others and the individual believer. When we consider the role of the prophet who is not only authorized and sent by God but is so empowered to represent the sender that His words are equivalent to the One who sent him then we must further refine the specific meaning of an apostle.

What is certain is that the special ministry of apostleship is the first one given out by Jesus after His general call to discipleship. Secondly, it is the first ministry given to the local church and by context an ongoing ministry throughout the church age necessary to perfect the saints (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11-12; ). The model of apostleship are the 12 disciples that Jesus appointed as apostles Paul and of course Jesus Himself (Hebrews 3:1). Matthias who was appointed by the apostles themselves would have to be considered as a unique classification in that he was an appointment of the disciples much like Epaphroditus or others who accompanied Paul (Acts 1:26; 2 Corinthians 8:23; Philippians 2:25). In a strict sense an apostles can only be appointed by Jesus and are those given special authority and revelation to fully represent Jesus in every way in order to establish and to build His church (Matthew 10:2; Mark 3:14; Acts 1:10; Galatians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 15:8; Ephesians 2:20; 3:5; 2 Peter 3:2; 2 Corinthians 12:12).

<sup>32</sup> A living faith has a living Jesus in it. A living faith is a faith that sees and knows with certainty. A living faith interacts in a very personal way with the living Savior, Christ Jesus. Do you realize that Jesus Christ is in you? The faith, which is in Christ Jesus made it possible for Christ Jesus to be in us. When the Spirit of God came upon us we received more than just a change of heart and spirit, we were given a new heart and a new spirit. Thus we boldly proclaim that we have been born of God who formed His son Christ Jesus in us (Galatians 4:19; 1 John 3:24). We therefore have both experienced and acknowledge that Christ Jesus lives in us! The miracle power of faith has brought forth the very life of Christ Jesus into our beings (Colossians 1:27; John 17:23; Romans 8:11; 10:8; Romans 13:14; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 10:7; 13:3; 1 Corinthians 6:15; Galatians 2:20; 3:27; Ephesians 3:17; 4:13; Philippians 1:21; Colossians 3:4; 16; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 2 Corinthians 1:21; 2:17; Galatians 4:19). The faith of God brought forth the life, nature and acts of Jesus into our lives.

It would have been difficult for Paul to use a more harsh word for those who failed the test. To say that one is counterfeit or reprobate means that they are both undiscerning and unfit. This word is used of those who have either rejected God or have been rejected by God (Titus 1:16; Romans 1:28; 2 Corinthians 2 Timothy 3:8; 1 Corinthians 9:27). Such a one has failed to realize much less confess that Christ Jesus is in them. Certainly Paul did

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not believe that they would fail the test but they indeed needed to be sobered up because they were drifting upon a sea of jeopardy.

If we are going to receive the benefits of faith then we must believe the word of God! It is essential that we acknowledge the truth and of the glorious mystery of God that Christ is indeed living in us for this is the living faith of the living Savior who has made us alive together with Him and in whose life we dwell (Colossians 2:2; 1:27; 1 Thessalonians 5:10; John 15:1-5)! In Chapter 11 Paul had warned that there were those who were preaching another Jesus (11:4). The Jesus that Paul preached was one who had both risen from the dead and was dwelling in the life of those who had received the miracle of salvation. There is no faith without Jesus for He is the author and finisher of it!