

Hebrews

Chapter 2

4- God testified at the same time with signs and wonders and many kinds of miracles and gifts (distributions) of the Holy Ghost according to His will¹.

14- Since therefore the children share flesh and blood He likewise partook of the same that through death He might destroy² the one who has the power of death that is the devil.

¹ How does God testify to the truth? Through signs and wonders, and many kinds of miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost! It is amazing that so many Church leaders demand that we do away with any expectation that God would move like this today. Those who insist that they are teaching the truth of God's word do not have one verse of scripture to support their claim that God no longer moves in such a way among and through His people. Rather they believe that the church runs only by human effort; not by the Spirit, but by men's power and strength (Zechariah 4:6; 1 Corinthians 2:4). Any notion of signs and wonders and the gifts of the Spirit are branded as excessive or even error. To many, the beauty of prophecy and the expression of Pentecost are acts of heresy and contempt. Yet how could any sensible person come up with such a conclusion, when the entire bible is devoted to a God who works in and through His people in a miraculous way? Jesus demanded that we follow Him, that we imitate Him; but how are we supposed to do that unless we are filled with the same Spirit that He was filled with? How are we to be the witnesses that Jesus has commissioned us to be if we refuse the empowerment of the Holy Ghost that He has given? Jesus is the baptizer; He is the One who sent the Holy Ghost. The expressions of Pentecost are the results of His ministry (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Acts 1:5; Acts 11:16; John 7:39; Acts 2:33).

Make no mistake: those things that were true for the first century church are true for us today. There are not two or three different church ages, but one single church baptized in one body. The church is to reveal Jesus - who is the same yesterday today and forever. We are living in this acceptable year of the Lord; and Jesus and the Holy Ghost are in charge of everything that concerns the church (Ephesians 1:22-23; Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 1 Corinthians 14:4,12). These are the last days, and God has poured out His Spirit upon all flesh (Acts 2:15-17; Joel 2:28; Acts 2:39). We live in perilous times where men are deceiving and being deceived; and we must recognize that unless we hold to the word of God, we will be deceived. Our experience and relationship with the Lord must be exactly as described in the Bible. If not, then we must recognize that we have been misled. Will you refuse the ministry of Jesus, who desires to baptize you in the Holy Ghost and fire? Will you be unwilling to allow God to testify of all His great love and mighty power through your life?

² One of the key words used by Paul in this verse is 'katargeo' which means to "render inactive" or "to put out of use." It is used in a similar fashion in Ephesians 2:15 and 2 Timothy 1:10, where it is usually translated 'abolished.' Both the Levitical ordinances of the law and the power of the devil were abolished when Jesus died at Calvary. There was no more need for the sacrificial system because the One to whom all the sacrifices pointed had come and finished the work through His death. Likewise, Satan could no longer exercise his reign of terror over men because the death that came on Adam and Eve, when they sinned, was destroyed through the death of God, Christ Jesus. Thus the

Chapter 4

2- For we were also evangelized just as they were but the word did not profit them because it was not combined with faith in those that heard³

12- For the word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any double edged sword, piercing even unto the distinction of soul and also spirit and joint as well as marrow and is a judge of the thought and intent of the heart⁴.

"old man" or the condemned man with a nature twisted and dominated by evil spirits was put to death through the death of our Savior and Deliverer (Romans 6:6- is yet another place that 'katargeo' is used and rendered 'destroyed').

³ Until we believe the word of God, we will not experience its results. So many are waiting to have what God has already given. Like Thomas, they must first see with their eyes and put their hands upon it before they will believe (John 20:25). Instead, when we hear the promises of God we must respond "it is mine;" and though we have not seen, rejoice with joy unspeakable that is full of glory! It is through this response that the word of God is activated, and goes to work in those who believe (1 Thessalonians 2:13). It is only by the word of God and the Spirit of God that we are empowered to know the will of God. When we hear the testimony of God and believe, then the word of God is activated to produce the miracle. Do not doubt nor waver, for God cannot lie - all of His promises are "Yes and Amen." Like Abraham, we must be willing to be fully persuaded of the promises of God, and not stagger through unbelief (Romans 4:20-21; Mark 11:24).

God had promised the Israelites an unimaginable inheritance: the great abundance of the land that He had sworn to Abraham. However, they did not believe that it was already theirs. They saw it as a place that they would have to possess through their own deeds; and based on the measure of their ability, it was impossible! We must not respond to the inheritance that has been given to us in the same way, or we will end up with the same results (Hebrews 4:11). We will never walk in the authority of sonship that has been given to us until we accept it as ours; and say "it's mine!"

All we must do is conform to His image, and accept this oneness by agreeing with God's word. See Jesus not only at the right hand of the Father - but also in your inner man. See Jesus in the life that you now live. Confess that what He has spoken is true of you today, and hold fast to that confession without wavering! (John 1:12; John 15:1-5; John 17:21-23; Romans 8:29; Hebrews 10:23; Romans 4:17; Mark 11:22-24). Recognize that what God will give you and do through you is not based on any works of righteousness which you have done, but because of His great love with which He has loved you (Ephesians 2:4-6; Galatians 3:2-5). The Holy Spirit is leading us and calling us to believe the truth, and respond to the word of God (John 16:13; Hebrews 4:12; Hebrews 11:1-2). We must not harden our hearts because of trials and disappointments. We must not believe another gospel that would fit our circumstances; but instead let the confidence in God cause us to mount up with wings like an eagle, and soar in the realms of faith! Let the weak say "I am strong" (Joel 3:10). Let everyone who has been born of God say: "I am one with Jesus, He is in me and I'm in Him."

⁴ The word of God is more than a collection of thoughts; it is the living creative agent of God's own thoughts. It is spirit and life, and has the reproductive and creative power of God to produce every good word and work in our hearts (John 6:63). It is an incorruptible seed that will produce the fruits of God's nature and blessings in our lives (1 Peter 1:23; Luke 8:15; Mark 4:20). The word of God expresses the will of God, and should be allowed to rule our lives. Everything that we believe and do should be dictated by the word of God. It should govern our hearts and be the deciding factor for what we believe.

God created a new heart in those who believe, and has placed His word there to govern it (Ezekiel 36:26; 1 Timothy 1:5; Hebrews 10:22; 1 Peter 1:22). Knowing that whatever a man believes in His heart determines how he will act, we should submit to the living word of God and allow it to be the inspiration for what we think and do (Romans 10:10; Hebrews 3:12). If we are not careful, we will allow the circumstances of life or the words that someone else spoke over us to dictate what we believe about ourselves. However, if we will let the word of God rule our hearts, then we will find ourselves living in the blessings of His abundant life.

Chapter 5

8- Although He was a Son, He learned obedience by the things He suffered⁵.

Chapter 6

1-Therefore, leaving the fundamentals of the word of Christ let us go on to maturity not laying⁶ again the foundation of repentance from acts of death and faith towards God.

The word of God has the power to overthrow everything that would try to displace it from our hearts. It is the sword of the Spirit, and a sure defense for all who have it. If it is kept in the heart, then it will keep you from sin and destruction (Ephesians 6:17; Psalm 17:4; Psalm 119:11,114; Psalm 119:130,162; Psalm 132:12; Proverbs 2:11; Proverbs 22:12). God upholds all things by the word of His power, and He will uphold you if you will allow Him (Hebrews 1:3; Psalm 119:116). God has magnified His word above His name, and will in the end judge every person according to it (Psalm 138:2; John 12:48). Let His word judge you now and produce His knowledge and understanding in your life. Let His living word reach into your innermost being and supply your every need.

⁵ The Holy Spirit is dedicated to teaching us perfect obedience. We have not been called by God to live out our own lives, but to come and abide in the life of Jesus (John 15:1-5). Even though Jesus existed as the eternal God, when He became a baby in the womb of Mary, He became a human being who needed to learn to choose the good and refuse the evil (Isaiah 7:14-15). He was declared to be the Son of God by the Spirit of Holiness, and because of His obedience to the Father He had this testimony: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22; Mark 1:11; Matthew 3:17; 17:5). Jesus had to be obedient to the death of the cross, and suffer many things to purchase our salvation. Even in the final acts of His obedience when He suffered great agony in the garden of Gethsemane, the Author of our salvation never submitted himself to a single act of disobedience.

Through the new birth we have received a miracle life that has allowed us to step into the life of Jesus. The Holy Spirit has come to teach us everything about Jesus, and lead us and guide us into His obedience to the Father (John 16:13-15; 2 Corinthians 10:5-6; 1 Peter 1:2,14; Psalm 138:8). We must learn perfect submission to the Holy Spirit so that we may have perfect obedience to the Father (Genesis 17:1; Matthew 5:48; Psalm 18:32; 37:37; 101:2,6; 138:8). There is no other example of perfect obedience than Jesus, and there is no way to have this obedience other than living and dwelling in Him. Something that many seem to neglect - or fail to even acknowledge - is that we are servants to whom we obey. If we obey righteousness that produces the fruits of holiness, then we are the servants of God. If we are disobedient to God and instead obey unrighteousness, then we are the servants of Satan (Romans 6:16-22; 1 John 3:7-8).

⁶ The most critical issue being addressed in this passage is the essential need to mature in those things that have been supplied to us by the Spirit (Matthew 5:38; Ephesians 4:12,13; Colossians 1:28; 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:17). A foundation has been laid and the principals of God have been established, now the child of God must give all diligence to make their calling an election sure (2 Peter 1:8-10). Paul is not suggesting that we leave any dimension of the doctrines of God but rather take the fundamentals of the new creation and the doctrines of God and begin to function in the fluidity and maturity of the Spirit. An athlete will take great amount of time to train and learn the techniques of a sport so that they can build on the foundation of those techniques to become the best in the world. Now, we have been changed by the power of God and filled with the Holy Spirit so that we may freely receive all those things that belong to God. Through the blood of Jesus, the power of His word and the working of the Holy Spirit we can walk in faith and turn from the corruption and death that is in this world and continually mature in the life of Christ Jesus.

God has given us His divine nature through the new birth (2 Peter 1:4; 1 Peter 1:23). The things of the Spirit and the ways of God have been established in our hearts and minds. However, it is essential that we give ourselves to the nature of God if these things are going to be developed and matured within our lives. The Lord has commanded that we come to the fullness of the maturity of the ministry of Jesus but if we do not give ourselves to faith, virtue, humility, knowledge, self-discipline, godliness, holiness, righteousness, brotherly kindness, meekness, love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, mercy and forgiveness then how will

Chapter 9

2-For a tent was constructed the first one in which there was the lamp stand and the bread of presence which is called the sanctuary.

3- But behind the second curtain a tent called the Holies of Holies⁷.

we ever become trained in the fundamentals and then ultimately go on to maturity in the nature of God (2 Peter 1:5-7; 3:11; Galatians 5:22-23; Romans 6:16-10; Titus 2:12; Romans 14:17; 1 Peter 1:15-17)?

We have to recognize that the old nature and the former lifestyle have been destroyed (Romans 6:1-4; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Colossians 2:11. We are no longer of this world and therefore must no longer be conformed to this world (John 17:14,16; Romans 12:2; 1 John 2:15-17) . If we continue to stagger between two opinions then we will never move forward into the realms of the maturity and the ministry of the heavenly realm that has been made available to us. If we continue to relay the foundation then there will never have a building. We must decide once and for all that we are finished with sin and the world. We must be crucified to the world and the world to us. The walk of faith must become to us the life of Jesus Christ imparted into us so that we may fully live in Him. If we continue on in sin then we are blind and have forgotten that the old man was crucified. Until we cease from sin and take hold of the walk of faith spiritual maturity will not be realized. The walk of faith that please God can even be observed in an Old Testament saint like Enoch (Hebrews 11:5-6). Now, how much more in us that have received the Holy Spirit of promise!

Be of an understanding heart and realize that sin is an act of death and friendship with the world and act of hostility against God (Romans 5:12,21; 6:23; James 1:15; 4:4). Consequentially, the acts of sin demand that the foundation be laid again and retraining in the walk of faith given. How will we ever mature in the heavenly realms of the Spirit and the ministry of Jesus when we continue to allow fellowship with devils to go on in our lives (2 Corinthians 6:14-18) ? We must embrace the heavenly calling and the image and life of Christ and take our position in the heavenlies (Hebrews 3:1; Romans 8:29; Ephesians 2:6; 4:24; Galatians 2:20). If we are going to mature then we must make up our mind that we will move on from an existence of stumbling and falling and step into the maturity that has been granted to us in Christ Jesus (2 Peter 1:10; John 16:13; 1 John 2:14).⁷ The first tent was a place of ceremonial ritual but the second tent was where God's manifest glory was encountered (Hebrews 9:6,10). There are many people who go to the sanctuary but never experience the manifest presence of the living God (1 Corinthians 14:1,24-25; 2:4; 4:19-20; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; Romans 14:17; 15:19; Acts 1:8). Too many people are content with the ritual of song, the offering, the preaching and the altar call and are willing to sit back and watch it all take place or in some cases sleep through the whole process. The Protestants think the Catholics are all too ritualistic and the Catholics think that Protestants have lost the sacred touch when in reality it is not about the process that we go through week after week with very little results.

God has called us into the second tent the place where His manifest presence is revealed (Hebrews 9:8,11; John 17:21-23; Ephesians 1:23; 2:6; 3:19). Where we may encounter the awesome glory of the One who sits enthroned upon the mercy seat. We have been granted access into a realm that all men were cut off from until Jesus the redeemer tore open the veil (Hebrews 9:7-8; 10:20; Colossians 1:13). God loved us so much that He paid a very costly price so that we could once again walk with Him and enjoy the fullness of His splendor. (Hebrews 10:19; 12: 22-24; 1 Corinthians 14:1; Ephesians 5:18; Acts 2:4; John 7:38-39; Matthew 3:11; Luke 1:41; Isaiah 61: 3-11). Why would we choose to sit inside the tent of ritual and believe that all is well when all the time access has been granted for us to come into the place of His manifest presence. Why would we choose to be content with the equivalence of lighting the candles and setting out the bread instead of stepping into the place of fullness of joy where the life of God causes those things that

12- Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by with His own blood He entered once into the Holy Place: having obtained eternal redemption for us⁸.

Chapter 10

4- It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin⁹.

were dead to spring to life again. Where the rod of Aaron buds with almonds and the streams that make glad the city of God flow freely with abundant life? Is it because we like Israel do not want to hear his voice (Hebrews 12:19). Is it a rebellious heart that would rather have the ritual of the sanctuary than the intimacy of the Holies of Holies?

⁸ The blood of Jesus presented to us by Jesus our great High Priest must produce certainty and confidence about our relationship with God, and authority over all things that would oppose us. Out of this certainty and confidence, an absolute authority will arise within us to crush every scorpion and serpent, and every power of sin and the demonic realm. In this authority, no power of darkness can harm us, and every demon is subject to us. Every mouth is stopped and every power of condemnation is silenced when the blood of Jesus Christ is applied. If we apply the blood of the covenant properly, then we will apply it with faith and authority: knowing that nothing is more powerful than the sacrifice that Jesus made. Our confidence in the blood of Jesus causes us to know that what God has promised is ours today, that the power of the blood covenant cannot pass away. Through this we refuse all intimidation, and with the authority that the Spirit of the Lord commands - we speak and everything must obey. It was with this confidence and authority that Jesus entered into heaven with His own blood to obtain an eternal redemption. It is with this same confidence and authority that He has entrusted unto us the ability to minister in His place, as priests of our great High Priest, Christ Jesus.

The blood of the passover lamb was applied to every house of God's covenant people in Egypt that first Passover night. Death could not trespass against the blood and claim the lives of those who were under its protection; for wherever the blood is applied, there the power of redemption and the power of God's life resides (Exodus 12:13). It is the sacrifice for sin that stops the plague and provides deliverance from every curse and claim of Satan (Numbers 16:46-48). The blood of Jesus, which all these sacrifices represented, was sprinkled upon all who have believed (1 Peter 1:2; Hebrews 9:19; 10:22; 12:24). Our great High Priest has applied it to our lives (Hebrews 2:17; 3:1; 4:14; Matthew 26:28). Now as His priests, we present His blood to all who would be saved (1 Peter 2:5,9). We apply it as the cure for sin, for sickness, and for disease. In every way that the blood of the Old Covenant was used, we apply the blood of Jesus just the same today. With the word of authority and a command in Jesus' name, the blood takes hold of all who will believe - and every demon power has to flee.

⁹ Many today and throughout history have failed to realize why the subject of the blood is so important to both Judaism and Christianity. As blood is fundamental to physical life it is also fundamental to spiritual life and redemption. The blood carries within it both the breath and the healing agents of physical life. Without the blood a person cannot live for the life is in the blood. But the life giving power of the blood extends beyond physical life and is central also to redemption. Man had ruined His life and wreaked it with the incurable disease of sin. The only way that man could be cured and redeemed to life again would necessitate the destruction of his sin-disease and the recreation of a new life in God. Rather, than wiping out sinful man and starting over God brought forth a means of recreating man through a redemption that would transfuse the life of God into him and thereby make a new creation (John 12:24; 14:17; 15:1-5; Titus 3:5; John 3:3-5; Romans 8:9,11; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Colossians 1:28; 1 John 3:24; 4:4,12,13,14,15,16; 2 Timothy 1:14; Ephesians 4:24)!

Without the blood there is no life, no forgiveness, no redemption, and no hope for mankind. The story of the blood's role in redemption is first fully realized in the events of the Passover when the blood served as the protective and redemptive agent for the people of Israel- the night they were delivered from Egypt. Similarly, God became the lamb for

10- By whose will we have been made holy¹⁰ through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all¹¹.

14- For by one offering he has forever perfected¹² those who are sanctified.

mankind and offered His own blood to set us free. When He died on the cross He poured out His life's blood to both deliver us from the tyrannical reign of sin and impart His life into us. The blood of Jesus became the means to wipe out the power of sin as well as the source by which all humanity might live. God's life destroyed death and His blood cured the disease of sin. There is no other power that can swallow up death and cure man from this disease other than the blood of God Himself. As a substitute the blood of animals were used to represent what God Himself would do. The use of their blood would represent the blood of the coming redeemer. It was only through faith in the blood of the redeemer that men, who were dead in their trespasses and sins, could approach unto God.

¹⁰ Kataballō - overthrowing or laying

¹¹ have need of now and for all time to come. Whereas the sacrifices offered by the priest could never result in a transformation of man's nature, the sacrifice of Jesus did. To think that we are any less than sanctified or made holy through the offering of the body of Christ is to refuse to believe what is stated here in verse 10, "By whose will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" and also in 1 Corinthians 6:11 "And such were some of you: but you are washed, but you are made holy, but you are made righteous in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." It was in Christ Jesus' body that he destroyed the power and dominion of sin so that we can now live in righteousness (1 Peter 2:24). The sacrifices of the first covenant could never take away sins because they were only a testimony to the coming redeemer. But when Christ Jesus came He came and destroyed sin in the body of His flesh and thereby ridding all who would believe of that deadly and eternal spiritual disease (Colossians 2:10-12; 1 John 3:8). Now it is because of this work of Grace that we can walk into the holies of holies with all boldness (Hebrews 10:19; 4:10). When we consider that this is the place where God dwells and it was forbidden to all mankind until Christ came then we can recognize that a dramatic change has taken place. God who is immutable has not changed (Hebrews 9:8; 10:20). What has changed is the heart and nature of man. We who were unlike God have been united together with Him in Christ and accepted into the Holy realm of The Most High. Therefore, we come to understand that we can be holy even as He is Holy because he made us holy through the transformation of our lives (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 3:5; Colossians 3:10-14). When we accept the good news that our lives are united together with the life of Christ Jesus then we can also accept that we are sanctified because He sanctified us (Hebrews 2:11; Ephesians 2:5-6; Romans 6:3-4; 8:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2,30; 4:17; 2 Corinthians 1:21; Galatians 6:15). From the very beginning God purposed that we should be in Him and that we should be holy and without blame (Ephesians 1:4). We are called saints because we are the sanctified ones and we are sanctified because our lives are in Christ. We have received the same glory from Him that He received from the Father and now for us to live in Christ (John 17:21-23; Philippians 1:21; Galatians 2:20; 2 Timothy 3:12). The whole expression of our lives are to be the expressions of the Holy Spirit who is Holy and everything He does is holy (Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5; Romans 8:14-16; 8:9; Ephesians 5:9; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 5:16, 22-25).

If we fail to believe the good news concerning what Christ Jesus has done for us then how can we receive the everlasting benefits of His grace (Romans 10:16-17; Hebrews 4:2; 11:6; Mark 16:16; Luke 8:12; Galatians 3:8; 1 Thessalonians 2:13). So many things are said, by people of good intention, that are far from being confessions of this absolute and complete work of grace. We live in a day of sermonizing and entertaining speeches that are by and large absent of even a cursory evaluation of the word of God. If we are not being fed the word of God then we will not be able to live in the things that the word of God describes. We must rise up in agreement with the word of God and say we have been perfected forever! Because of this finished work of salvation we are complete in Him (Colossians 2:10). The covenant that we now live in is that of the circumcision of Christ in which His laws are in our inward parts and written upon our hearts and everything belonging to sin is removed (Jeremiah 31:33-34; Hebrews 8:7-9; Colossians 2:11).

¹² Many people act as though the Bible does not discuss perfection but nothing can be further from the truth. As soon as we begin to talk about perfection many people become intimidated because they think we are referring to things such as freedom from ignorance, mistakes or temptation and in the words of John Wesley "and a thousand infirmities connected with flesh and blood." However, perfection is the life and

- 15- And the Holy Spirit also testifying to us after foretelling
16- This is the covenant that I ordained for them after those days says the Lord I will put my laws in their hearts and in their minds I will write them.
17- And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.
18- Where there is the forgiveness of these there is no more sacrifice for sin.
19 Therefore brethren have boldness to enter into the holiest¹³ by the blood of Jesus.
20 By a new and living way that He has consecrated for us through the veil (that is His flesh)¹⁴.

glory of Jesus Christ our Lord reigning over our lives by the Holy Spirit until we all come unto a perfect man, for we are perfected by one sacrifice, Christ Jesus (Hebrews 2:11; 7:19;10:14). The only perfection that we have is not of ourselves but of the Holy Spirit who both produces and reveals the life of Jesus in us. If we are going to have the glory of His love, which joins us unto the motions of His actions and yokes us together with Jesus Christ then we must yield to Him (Colossians 3:14; Matthew 11:9). Through the centuries of men developing theological concepts much of the heart of the matter is lost on semantics. Rather than talking so much about the doctrine of justification or sanctification and being lost up in the concepts of processes we should rather talk about what it means to walk with Jesus and be filled with the Spirit everyday for all of these things are only a reality when the life of Jesus is revealed in us.

Jesus gave us His glory so that we could be one with Him (John 17:21-23; 2 Corinthians 5:17-18; Colossians 1:27-28). It is only through this unification with Him that we can live in the splendor of the life of Christ. To say that it is no longer I that lives but Christ is not so much the function of any single event, other than salvation; rather, it is a choice that we make everyday to live in His presence and yield to His Spirit. All that God did for us through the new birth is depended upon the Holy Spirit to give it expression. We must be willing therefore to be dedicated to depending upon the Holy Spirit by being continually filled with the glory He supplies (Ephesians 5:18; Romans 6:14). We must be willing to be dedicated to the things that the Lord has asked us to do (2 Peter 1:5-10; 1 Peter 1:15-16; Galatians 5:16, 25). We must be dedicated to accepting those things that God declared us to be (Ephesians 4:24; 2 Corinthians 5:17). When we were born of the Spirit, God dedicated us to living the eternal life, the life of the Spirit, the life that belongs to God. As much as we are continually dependent upon drinking water to live we must recognize that we are dependent upon being filled with the Spirit if the life of God is to be manifested through us. Holiness, purity, righteousness and every attribute of the life of God is only communicated to us by and through the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit operating in our being.

¹³ There is only one place in which we can interact with God, and that is in the realm of holiness (Exodus 3:5; Exodus 19:23; Exodus 26:33; Isaiah 6:1-4; Numbers 17:4; Numbers 18:10; Hebrews 9:8). God in His mercy sanctified and cleansed us by the blood of Jesus, so that we could interact with Him (John 17:19; Hebrews 2:11; Hebrews 10:10,14; 1 Corinthians 1:2,30; 1 Corinthians 6:11). Regardless of how evil and sinful we had been, He loved us with His great love, and gave us all an invitation to enter in. However, many fail to realize that God has called us to holiness with a holy calling: to an awesome realm of sacredness and purity, where He Himself dwells. Many would think that they can have a deep relationship with God in their disobedience and sinfulness; but that is not true. The deeper you are willing to allow the Holy Spirit to lead you into the sacred realm of God, the deeper and more glorious the revelation becomes of the one who dwells in the Holy Place (Isaiah 57:15; Ephesians 3:18-19; Habakkuk 1:13; Psalm 5:4; Psalm 11:7; Psalm 34:15-16; 1 Peter 1:15).

God made a way where there was no way: a way for us to be purified, not by any works of righteousness which we had done, but through the blood and life of His only begotten Son. It has always been God's desire that we worship him in holiness and truth, and so He gave us an example like Aaron; who after being set apart and given a special anointing to stand in His presence, had a crown of gold placed upon his head that said "Holiness to the Lord" (Exodus 39:30). Anytime we think of the work of the Spirit we should think of absolute holiness, because He is the Holy Spirit; which is the very expression of Holiness. And He has come to lead us and guide us into all the ways of holiness - the life of God, which is a life of purity and love (John 4:23-24; Romans 15:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Ephesians 4:24; Titus 3:4-5).

¹⁴ When Jesus died for us at Calvary, the Holies of Holies was not destroyed; rather access was provided for all to come in (Matthew 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45). The earthly tabernacle was only a sketch and a figure of the true Holies of Holies in heaven (Hebrews 8:5; 9:24; Exodus 25:9,40). The Holies of Holies is in fact the throne-room of God: the most sacred place in all creation (Psalm 11:4; Habakkuk 2:20; 2 Samuel

21- And having a great high priest over the house of God.

22- Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance¹⁵ of faith having our hearts sprinkled¹⁶ from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

6:2; 1 Chronicles 13:6; 1 Samuel 4:4; Psalm 99:11; Isaiah 37:16; Ezekiel 10:1-4; Hebrews 4:16; 8:1; 12:2; Revelation 4:2-10; 5:1,6,13; 7:9-17; 8:3). Today, anyone who is willing has been given access to come in and dwell in the throne room. The love of God poured out upon us has made us heirs of God and co-inheritors with Christ. We can now be seated together with Christ at the right hand of the Father, in the Holiest Place of all! (Ephesians 2:6; Romans 8:32).

During the time of the first tabernacle, there was only one opportunity to enter into the Holies of Holies; and that was during the yearly purification (Leviticus 16:2). At that time, God made a way that the sins of the people might be removed from before His presence. The blood of the sacrifice had to be sprinkled upon the mercy seat. There God would see that sin had been put to death. The sins of the people were sent away - never to return; and the sin and testimony against man, that was before the throne of God, was removed (Leviticus 16:1-16). There was only one person who could enter into this most sacred realm, and that was the high priest. He was consecrated with the blood and the anointing oil to appear only once a year before the Father; but he could only come for one reason, and that was to deal with his sins and the sins of the people. The blood of the sacrifice would remove the scarlet stain of sin that testified of man's condemnation before the throne of God. The veil of the temple, that separated all mankind from God, stood as the evidence of a thick separation due to Adam's treason. Jesus tore that separation in two when he offered himself as a perfect sacrifice, having obtained eternal redemption (Mark 15:38; 1 Peter 2:24; Hebrews 9:12,15). We may now walk in, and behold the glory with no condemnation or fear. Every stain of sin has been removed: we are accepted in the beloved, and united together with God in Holiness.

The church is to be the visible and living reality of the Holies of Holies in the earth today (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:32; 1 Corinthians 12:12,27; Colossians 1:18; 2:9). The church is supposed to be the visible manifestation of all the glory and majesty of the unseen throne-room. When we consider that the church is the body of Christ, and that it is the fullness of Him that fills all things - then this is not hard to realize. The church is fundamental to the New Testament (Matthew 16:18; 18:17; Acts 2:1,47; 14:23; 20:28). It is the means by which God advances His Kingdom, and the place where the present reign of Christ is revealed. The church occupies the realm in which all the fullness of God may be manifested, and the full measure of Jesus' ministry realized (Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Matthew 21:43; 1 Peter 2:9; Colossians 1:13; 1 Corinthians 12:8-11). Jesus and His church are one; there is no distinction between them. When Paul described the assembly and the worship of the church, he revealed that it was Zion the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22-24; 10:25). God has taken us and built us up together as a holy habitation by the Holy Spirit, even as one stone is laid upon another. Together we appear as a holy temple in the Lord (Ephesians 2:21). As His Holy Church, Jesus Christ is the cornerstone that God laid in Zion, and has built us upon (1 Peter 2:6; Ephesians 2:22).

¹⁵ Many times we have asked God to draw us close to Him or to allow us to experience a greater depth of communion with Him. All of this is good but we must understand that Father has made a way for us to come into His presence and be one with Him (John 6:56; John 14:17, 20-24; John 15:5; 17:21-23; 1 John 3:24). The way that has been made is Jesus. His blood was poured out for us so that everything that would separate us from God or condemn us would be completely removed (Hebrews 10:17; Isaiah 59:2; 1 Corinthians 6:11). We must believe that the blood has cleansed us from all of our sins and iniquities so that we may have boldness and confidence (1 John 1:9; Philippians 2:15; 2 Peter 3:14; Revelation 1:5; 1 Timothy 6:14). We cannot draw near to God without this boldness; a boldness that only comes to us because we are absolutely convinced that the blood of Jesus has made us holy and acceptable unto God (Ephesians 3:12; Hebrews 4:16; Romans 12:1-2). We cannot please God nor draw near to Him without such faith. If we try to access the presence of God based upon our own personage we will not be allowed in. Our access into the presence of God is by the faith of Jesus and by the Holy Spirit that brings us in (Ephesians 2:18; 3:12; Romans 5:2; John 10:7,9). Even as the preacher led you into the water to baptize you and as you submitted yourself to be immersed in the water you must also submit to the work of grace that brings us with all boldness into the presence of God. An evil conscience cannot come in. A heart that is condemned a soul that is ashamed has no access to the presence of the Lord. Only those who have believed what God has said about His Son and receive the cleansing may stand in the Holies of Holies (1 John 5:10-13; Hebrews 10:19).

God wants us to have full assurance of the faith. The faith is that we have been washed and cleansed from all of our sins by the blood of Jesus Christ. The faith is that we have been made sons and daughters of the

23- Let us hold fast the confession¹⁷ of our confidence without wavering for He is faithful that promised.

Most High by the Spirit of the Lord (John 1:12; 3:5; 1 John 3:1; Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:14,16) . The faith is that we can draw nigh and experience union and acceptance because of the gift of holiness and righteousness that has been given to us (2 Corinthians 5:17-21). The assurance of the faith is essential if we are going to enjoy the relationship that has been purchased for us. Until we are willing to simply believe that all of this has been freely provided for us as the gift of God we will never realize the union and the authority that we have been given. Another way to express this point is to realize that the opposite of the Greek word that we translate assurance (plerophoria) is unbelief (apistis). The unbeliever is not allowed into the presence of the Almighty (Titus 1:15; Revelation 21:8).

The language that is used in this verse reminds us of the washing that took place just before Aaron and his sons put on the priestly robes so that they could stand before the presence of the Lord in the earthly tabernacle (Leviticus 8:6). All of the filth of the flesh had to be washed away before the holy garments could be worn. The blood of the covenant had to be applied so that the sin of man could be removed before the presence of the Holy One of Israel. We must believe that the washing of regeneration has taken place; that the circumcision of Christ has removed the filthiness of the flesh (Titus 3:5; Colossians 2:11). We must believe that the blood of Jesus is upon us, testifying that sin has been destroyed and the life of God imparted (1 Peter 2:24; Romans 6:6).

¹⁶ When the covenant was being ratified Moses took the blood of the covenant and sprinkled both the tablets containing the promises and the people with the blood (Hebrews 9:19). Therefore, when Paul or Peter speak of sprinkling it refers to the application of the blood upon our lives (1 Peter 1:2). It is by the application or sprinkling of the blood of Jesus on our lives that we have both the access as well as the assurance that we can interact with the Almighty God.

There are so many things that God wants to show us about His ways and nature. He wants to speak to us and to teach us all about the ways of righteousness so that we can learn how much more wonderful it is to walk in His ways than the ways of the world. The only way that we can know these things is to interact with God. If we have a defiled conscience that condemns us and causes us to feel that there is a separation between us and God then we will not be able to interact with Him and learn of all His goodness. We must allow the blood of Jesus to produce the purity and holiness that makes us feel washed and clean throughout our spirit souls and bodies (1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 Corinthians 6:11, 19-20; Ephesians 5:26; Titus 3:5). Therefore, we must believe what God has said about the power of the blood of Jesus and apply the blood of Jesus to our hearts and minds so that we do not have any sense of sin that would inhibit us from loving and being loved by our heavenly Father.

One of the primary challenges that the saints have is to not listen to the accusations and slanders of Satan. We must be willing to believe God's report concerning the redemption that was purchased for us in Christ Jesus. Jesus who is our shepherd will teach us to listen to His voice and not to the voice of another (John 10:27). As His sheep we must be committed to not listen to the voice of the destroyer. Come with a faithful and obedient heart by the blood of Jesus and step into that realm of the Spirit where the emotions, passions and attitudes of the divine nature can flood your soul. If you will then you will discover that the ways of God are far better than the ways of men and of darkness. Come now and drink of the presence of God and let His life flow out of you like rivers

¹⁷ Our confidence comes from the promises that God has made to us in His word. The word of God empowers us to have faith that moves mountains and makes the impossible possible. When we read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews we get a glimpse of all that faith can do. Faith is an unwavering confidence and trust in God that is activated by the Word of God and infused with the power of God by the Spirit of God. The faith that has been given to us produces a certainty that nothing is impossible for those who believe (Matthew 17:20; Mark 9:23; 11:23; Luke 1:37)! Our heavenly Father just wants us to believe that nothing is impossible and that we can do all that He has said we can do. He has ordained to obtain promises, subdue nations and walk in all of the authority of the Kingdom of God (John 15:16; Hebrews 11:33-35). To many people regard faith as a hope or an idea. However faith is the power of God invested into us by those things that God has spoken in His word and He is looking for a return on His investment.

There are many things that would attempt to wear us down and try to still our confidence but we must not waver. We must find our strength to stand against all of the tricks of Satan and hindrances that come out to stop us by being continually reminded of God's faithfulness to the faith that He has supplied us with. Somehow we fail to realize that the strength of faith is our relationship with God and the more that we know Him and place our trust in Him the more confident we are about having the ability to do everything

24- And let us consider one another to stir up love and good works.

25- Not neglecting the assembling of ourselves as is the habit of some; but exhorting, and with great intensity as you see the day approaching¹⁸.

that He has commanded us to do. We must realize that we will grow strong in the fight of faith if we do not back down. We will reap if we do not faint and inherit all God has promised if we refuse to turn back. To do all of these things we must be confident not in ourselves but in God who has promised. Unfortunately, when we are in the heat of the battle everyone has the temptation to run and hide like a coward or make excuses for retreat. Instead let us hold fast to the confession of our confidence. Will you believe that what you have spoken in the name of Jesus will come to pass today (Mark 11:23; Romans 10:10)? For nothing is impossible for those who put their trust in God!

There is a confession with every motion of faith. That confession is found in those things that we are confident of. Out of the inspiration of the word of God we are commissioned to subdue nations and give witness to the resurrection and all of the blessings and promises of God. Recently, I heard a successful business man who does not know Jesus nor the faith that He has given say, "we have moved mountains." Well, if those who do not know God can find confidence to move mountains then we should be able to move whole continents. Men succeed because they have confidence in their selves and their pride and ambition will not let them quite. But the people of God should have confidence in God and in His dedication to our success and as a result be unwilling to waver.

If you turn back because your ministry or business is not achieving the success that you thought it should then you have left off trusting God! It is time to press in and take hold of the confession that the word of God has filled your mouth with and begin to shout the shout. Shout and the walls will come down! Shout and the Lord will answer! Shout so that all of your senses are filled with the testimony that you believe God. When all men thought for sure that they would die because of the violence of the storm when they had given up all hope that they should saved one man stood up and said, "I believe God" (Acts 27:25). Will you lay hold on the word of God and the unlimited promises of God that affect every dimension of your life and say boldly today, "I believe God?"

¹⁸ There are those who believe that reading their Bibles in their homes or having a worship service with their kids is equal to being in the church; but this is not the case. It is in the church that the Lord Jesus placed the gifting for the perfecting of the saints; the strengthening and the development of each person that has been born into the family of God (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:28; James 5:14). The church is inseparably linked to Jesus, and is the manifestation of His being on the earth. It is the church that the Lord Jesus is coming for. It is the church that He purchased with His own blood. The church is the fullness of Him that fills all things, and Jesus Himself is the head of it. Jesus stands in the midst of the church and sings praises. Jesus loves the church so much that He laid down His life for it; and His love for the church is to be a pattern for the way that men should love their wives. The church may not be so special to many people, but it is very special to the Lord.

The Greek word for church 'ekklesia' is derived from 'ek kalew', which means "called out." The church is the assembly by definition, both in terms of the meaning of 'ekklesia' and by the description given of it in the New Testament (Matthew 18:17; Acts 11:26; Acts 13:1; Acts 14:23,27; 1 Corinthians 11:18; 1 Corinthians 14:12-23). The New Testament was written as an address to the local churches, which all make up one church (2 Corinthians 8:1; 2 Corinthians 8:18-19; 2 Corinthians 8:23; 2 Corinthians 11:8,28; Galatians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 2:14). The church is not defined by a "universal church" or a global community, but by a local church and a local community. Thus the letter to the church at Corinth addresses the church of God at Corinth, not the church of God throughout the world. Likewise Paul wrote to the churches at Galatia, Ephesus, and Philippi. If a person wants to be a part of the body of Christ, then they are going to have to be a part of the local church. If they feel they don't fit in, then they are going to have to deal with why the love of God is not manifested in their lives as a witness that they have been born of the Spirit; for everyone who loves Him that begat also loves him who is begotten (1 John 5:1; 1 John 3:16; John 13:35). When we are born of the Spirit we become members one of another, and our love and affection is both developed and strengthened as we live out a life of community and family in the local church (Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 6:15; 1 Corinthians 12:12).

The first church was an upper room where the saints of God gathered. After being filled with the Holy Spirit they immediately grew to 3000, and began to assemble in Solomon's porch (Acts 5:12; Acts 3:1). The idea that the church was only in someone's house is a very narrow and small perception of things. The church of the first century was too big for someone's 500 square-foot home. And besides, if there was going to be a church in someone's home, then there would be first an apostle, secondly a prophet, thirdly teachers,

- 26- For if we willingly continue in sin after receiving the knowledge of the truth their remains no more sacrifice for sin.
- 27- But a fearful expectation of judgment and fierce fire that will consume the adversaries.
- 28- Anyone who violated the law of Moses died without with out mercy by the testimony of two or three.
- 29- How much worse punishment do you think those are worthy of who trampled the Son of God and profaned the blood of the covenant by which they were consecrated and outraged the Spirit of grace¹⁹?
- 30- For we know the one who said vengeance are mine I will repay says the Lord and again the Lord will judge His people.
- 31- It is fearful to fall into the hands of a living God²⁰.

after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments and diversities of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:28). Jesus gave the giftings to the church so that the flock of God could be fed, and become the manifestation of His presence on the earth - His body (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 1:22-23; Hebrews 2:12; Revelation 1:13,20; Ephesians 3:10; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 5:24,27; Ephesians 5:32). It was not the custom of Paul to preach in someone's home; but rather in the synagogue, which in many ways is both linguistically and functionally related to the church (Acts 13:5,14; Acts 13:42; Acts 14:1; Acts 17:1,17; Acts 18:4,19; Acts 18:26; Acts 19:8). Look, the exhortation is plain enough: get yourself in church and even more as the end of time approaches, lest you find yourself overrun by deception and apostasy.

²⁹The context presented here with regards to sin is not in reference to many acts of sin but rather one single act. Under the Law of Moses a person was not put to death as a result of many acts of adultery but rather as the result of one act of such a sin. Therefore, what do we think a person should be thought worthy of now? Now, that the cure for sin has been provided to us through the blood of Jesus and the life of the Spirit given so that we may fulfill all Gods righteous commands (Hebrews 10:16; 8:10; Romans 6:1-2; 8:3-4,9,14,16)?

One of the important things to understand is that the act of sin is not some sort of casual and expected act when it comes to the children of God. There are many today that think that it is actually false doctrine and a lie of Satan to believe that God expects His people to live pure and holy lives. They have lost godly sorrow over any act of sin (2 Corinthians 7:9-10). They have become hardened through this false concept of what it means to know God and have lost conviction over sin (Luke 13:27; 1 John 1:6). The acceptance of sin as an inevitable consequence of everyday life result in an acceptance of sin as common and acceptable to God therefore, when they lie or do some other acts of sin and transgression they have no conviction and as a result do not come to the cross of Christ for cleansing. When they commit other acts of sin it does not burn in their hearts as a violation against God and therefore they do not go to their knees in agony over their acts of treason against God. They do not see sin as trampling on the Son of God, or treating the blood of Christ as unclean or as outraging the Holy Spirit. If those who have called on the name of the Lord could only understand that their sin is so evil and that it is the worse kind of insult and outrage then there would at least be a true godly sorrow, a brokenness and a repentance for the evil that was done. False doctrines truly blind the hearts of men from relationship with Jesus and leave them in bondage to their sin and iniquities.

One of the important things to grasp in this passage is that the Son of God, the blood of the covenant and the Spirit of grace are equivalent. All acts of sin are an act of violence against them. You cannot do something to the Holy Spirit without equally affecting the Son of God and the blood of the covenant. It is desperately important that we recognize how God feels about sin. It is not that He is unwilling to forgive us for if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). However, if we retain some casual attitude about sin and think of it as anything less than an act that is worthy of death our souls are truly in jeopardy (Romans 6:23; James 1:15; 1 Peter 1:14-17; 2 Peter 3:11-14; Hebrews 10:27). Father has a jealous love for His Son and for the Holy Spirit and those who mistreat them will have to deal with the Almighty to whom belongs vengeance who also will repay those who have trespassed (Philippians 2:9; John 5:23; John 12:28; Luke 12:10; Matthew 3:17; 17:5)! But the worst state of all are those who steal godly sorrow and the power of repentance from the hearts of men who otherwise would have come to know the living Savior. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a Living God.

²⁰ God cannot just be described as one who is loving for He is the one who defines love itself. Outside of Him and His influence there is no love at all. Thus the concept of the judgment of God causes a certain

32- But recall those former days when you were enlightened you endured many struggles suffering.

33-

Chapter 11

1 Now faith is the reality²¹ of things expected the proof of what is not seen²².

amount of confusion. The question that many ask is how can a loving and caring God be a God of judgment. It is easy to discover the answer to this question when we consider the fact that God who not only created all things is also the one who protects and sustains life. Thus how can a loving and caring God be anything less than a God of judgment and justice. Of course the need for judgment and justice becomes all the more apparent when we ourselves have been wronged.

God has gone to great lengths to create mankind and to provide everything that they need that pertains to life and godliness. God has sought to establish in the heart of man the rules that pertain to the coexistence of a good and blessed life. Unfortunately men in their finite knowledge want to define those rules for themselves.

God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of His saints and to be held in reverence by all them that are about Him (Psalms 66:5). God should be both revered and feared because there is no one who knows more or understands more about life than the One who created it. God is not trying to withhold the good life from men rather He seeks to teach us the ways of it. Those who reject God's life have no alternative but death for He alone is the possessor and sustainer of life. God has given us all a sacred moment a space in time to live and to make choices about what we want. If we will choose life then we will live but if we revolt against God's love and redemption then we will find that God will hold us responsible and that judgment is final and eternal. For Yawheh your God is a God of gods and Lord of lords, a great God a mighty and a fearful One who does not regard persons nor takes bribes (Deuteronomy 10:17). Knowing that God is no respecter of persons but will judge everyman according to His works live in reverent fear during the time of your sojourn here in this world (1 Peter 1:17). It is essential that we all be willing to be holy even as He is holy (1 Peter 15-16).

²¹ In a whole series of other instances, however, the normal Gk. meaning of ὑπόστασις is plain. What is meant, usually in a transf. sense, is the "reality" behind phenomena. ὑπόστασις is the "underlying reality behind something." As the "plan" or "purpose," or as "that which endures," enclosed in God, ὑπόστασις is used quite precisely for a variety of Hebrew equivalents. Melancthon advised Luther to use the rendering "sure confidence."¹²⁹ Whereas all patristic and medieval exegesis presupposed that ὑπόστασις was to be translated substantia and understood in the sense of ὑπόστασις (what exist in one's own property, goods, wealth). Luther's translation introduced a wholly new element into the understanding of Hb. 11:1. Faith is now viewed as personal, subjective conviction. This interpretation has governed Protestant exposition of the passage almost completely, and it has strongly influenced Roman Catholic exegesis. It has also had a broader effect. Yet there can be no question but that this classical Protestant understanding is untenable. The starting-point of exposition must be that ὑπόστασις in Hb. 11:1 has to have not only a meaning like that in Greek usage elsewhere but also a sense similar to that it bears in the other Hebrew references. It should also be noted that ὑπόστασις here is parallel to εἰς (proof) and that it occurs in a sentence full of central theological concepts. Now as regards εἰς (proofs) it is evident that this does not mean subjective non-doubting nor does it have anything at all to do with conviction; it bears the objective sense of "demonstration."

Theological dictionary of the New Testament. 1964-c1976. Vols. 5-9 edited by Gerhard Friedrich. Vol. 10 compiled by Ronald Pitkin. (G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley & G. Friedrich, Ed.) (electronic ed.) (8:586). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

²² What is reality to you? Most people live their lives on the logical predictions that they forecast for themselves. For example: we predict our budgets based upon what money we make and then we predict what we can and cannot do based upon that budget which of course is all very sensible and rational. But there is a reality that is superior to the one in which we forecast our present and future events and that is the reality of God's promises. The word of God and the promises of God produce faith. Fundamentally, God's promises produce a good hope or expectation of the future. The Spirit of the Lord takes that hope and expectation

3-We understand faith framed the universe by the word of God so that things seen were made from that which cannot be seen²³.

Chapter 12

6-

into the realm of divine power and provides faith. We may trust in God to work on our behalf but faith allows us to participate with God in the miracle.

The Greek word 'hypostasis' (reality sometimes translated substance) was a word used exclusively in science in ancient Greece. The word expressed the hidden reality behind observable phenomenon (Theological dictionary of the New Testament). Now it is faith that makes our expectations in God a reality! Many want to make faith a set of philosophical beliefs or religious opinions but it was not Daniel's opinion's that delivered him from the lion's mouth. It was not the philosophical beliefs that caused Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah to be untouched by the flames that engulfed them (Daniel 3:20-30). Noah was warned by God of unseen things and because he obeyed the word of God and did what appeared to men to be foolish he and his house was saved. Abraham believed the promises of God and moved in obedience and stepped into a great inheritance. When we believe God and act in obedience to His word He will reward us with the promises that He has made. God has promised to bless and prosper us but we must move in accordance with His word. He has promised to do exceedingly above all that we can think or ask but we must believe that it is true and obey!

Faith brings into reality those things that God's word has led you to expect. Faith also demonstrates that which cannot be seen. Even as the worlds were made from unseen things faith that comes by hearing the word of God demonstrated those things, which are not under the control of man. Recently, there was an evangelistic crusade in the nation of Nepal. Everyone said that it was impossible to rent the National Stadium, which was the icon for the Kingdom of Hinduism. Yet, knowing the promises of God faith not only brought to pass that impossible event that resulted in thousands of salvations but the church in the nation began to experience unprecedented growth. After that crusade when a great missionary organization took their cameras to Nepal to document a church planting work by a young preacher, who was impacted by that crusade, a storm began to come up that would have disrupted the meetings. The young preacher commanded the wind and the storm to cease and immediately the wind stopped and the storm dissipated. The young preacher turned to the camera and said, something like, "God has taught us to believe for the impossible." Now faith is the reality!

²³ Faith is the creative power of God that works by His spoken word. The opening statements regarding faith in Hebrews chapter eleven sets the foundation for understanding the function of faith in verse three. Faith is the reality and proof of what cannot be seen. When we need something we begin to try to imagine where it will come from. However, God always brings forth the things that He provides out of a realm of what we would classify as nothing. It is out of this realm that God calls those things that are not as though they were and substance is produced (Romans 4:17). God created everything that exist in the universe (aions) from things that cannot be seen. Everything that is attributed to faith in the New Testament is associated with the miraculous power of God from the power that makes a new creation and the great faith of the centurion to the faith that was once delivered unto the saints (John 3:3; Matthew 8:10; Jude 1:3). Faith is mountain moving power, the power that speaks to the wind and the waves and that produces all of the wonderful blessings described by the word of God (Mark 11:22-24; Matthew 8:26). If the word of God is not believed then faith does not work (Romans 10:16; Hebrews 4:2).

There has been a degree of confusion imposed on the meaning of faith because many have limited it to a religious belief or philosophical opinion. However, we discover from the word of God that faith is a creative power that changes physical things and overrides physical laws. Faith is something that belongs to God and something that He gives to men (Romans 12:3). Faith comes to us by the hearing of the word of God (Romans 10:17; Galatians 3:2). When we believe the word of God no matter how impossible or unimaginable the things may be faith works and produces the will of God for our lives. How wonderful it would have been if Israel would have just believed the impossible blessing of God regarding their inheritance (Hebrews 4:1-11). It is time that we start agreeing with God. We must begin to proclaim those things that God has said and call them done! If we want to walk in the Spirit then we must agree with the word of God for two cannot walk together unless they agree.

14- Pursue peace with everyone and the holiness without which no one shall see the Lord²⁴.

28- Therefore, receiving an unshakeable kingdom let us hold on to grace through which we can serve God acceptably with reverence and awe²⁵.

²⁴ If we desire to see the Lord then we must be willing to have our hearts made pure and accept holiness as our state of being (Matthew 5:8; 1 Timothy 1:15). The Psalmist said, "Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord or who shall stand in His holy place? He who have clean hands and a pure heart..." (Psalms 24:3-4). The only way that we can draw near to the Lord is with a true heart in full assurance of the faith (Hebrews 10:22). We cannot enter into the realm called the holies of holies where God dwells if we have a defiled conscience and consider ourselves unholy. We must be willing to accept the miracle of a transformed heart and nature. We must allow Jesus to dress us in the holy garments of His righteousness and holiness even as Moses dressed Aaron in preparation to enter into that holy realm. If we do not accept the good news that our hearts have been purified, having been made new by the Spirit of God through the blood of Jesus, then we will not see God now or in the future. God petitions us to take the redemption that imparts the life and holiness of God into our beings by the blood of Jesus and come into the holies of holies with all boldness (Hebrews 10:19).

When the people of Israel were about to meet with God and hear the commands of the covenant God commanded Moses to sanctify the people. They were to get themselves cleaned up and take unto themselves the identity and consciousness that they had become the holy people of God (Exodus 19:6-22). God was leading them into His holy habitation but they had to be willing to be a people different from all the other nations that were around them (Exodus 15:13). The people witnessed everyday after the tabernacle of God was erected that the only way that anyone could go into the presence of God was if they were made holy. This was vividly displayed before them as they watched the man that God had anointed with His Holy Spirit wash his body with water and put on the holy garments and finally the crown of glory that expressed his identity and the identity of all Israel, "Holiness Unto The Lord" (Exodus 39:30). When God was preparing Israel through Joshua to come into the land that He had promised Joshua commanded the people to sanctify themselves or to see themselves as holy because they were about to come into the presence of God who was going to do great wonders among them (Joshua 3:5). They were going to experience one of the great displays of the power of God as they walked through the midst of Jordan. What an awesome and terrible sight that would have been to pass through the Jordan with a column of water on your right reaching unto the clouds and a dry river bed on your left. This was a moment that was surely filled with the awesome presence and glory of God's holiness.

There are many people who attend the churches throughout the world that act as though they have no responsibilities to live holy and godly lives. I have spent my whole life in the churches across America and I have never heard so many people confess unrighteousness and impurity as a state of their life in Christ Jesus as I do today. Truly this is a sign of the apostasy where men turn away from the sound doctrine of redemption in Christ Jesus and take on their own identities and those, which men and the powers of darkness would impose upon them. If our souls have not been washed clean in the blood of Jesus now then when will they be? If our spiritual garments are not spotless now when will they be? If we have not been made a new creation now then when will we be? If we are not the holy and righteous people of God now then when will we be? The cry of the old gospel song rings out today for all who will hear, "Are you washed in the blood in the soul cleansing blood of the Lamb are your garments spotless are they whiter than snow are you washed in the blood of the Lamb." There is an invitation now for you to meet with the Lord and to have an ever increasing intimacy with Him but you must believe His report and except His salvation for their is no other way to come into His presence. Today the Lord says to you be holy even as I am holy (1 Peter 1:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2).

²⁵ The grace of God that has been given to us is a divine empowerment that enables us to do those things that God has purposed us to do. It is the grace of God that has brought salvation (Titus 2:11-12). This grace is more than just divine favor it is divine ability supplied to us by the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. There are some translators who translate the word grace in this passage "being grateful." This is certainly not without merit from both a linguistics and contextual position. Certainly, if we are going to look to the Spirit of God for the ability to serve God acceptably then we are going to remain positive and thankful about our relationship with Him and His commitment to strengthen us and help us do that which is

Chapter 13

15- By Him then let us bring the sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is the fruit of our lips: confessions to His name²⁶.

pleasing. If we will allow the Holy Spirit His proper place of leadership in our lives then He will show us the things to come. We will be allowed to taste of the power of the world to come. He will reveal Jesus to us and we will be struck with the splendor and beauty of His goodness and love. With such revelation from the Spirit of God we will find ourselves in awe of Him.

God's Kingdom will stand forever and ever. Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus we have been brought into this glorious kingdom now (Colossians 1:13; 2 Peter 1:11); Romans 14:17; John 17:14,16; 1 John 4:5-6). We are presently under the kingly rule of the King of Kings and are being taught by the Holy Spirit the manner, culture and servitude of this unshakable and eternal realm. Let us give ourselves to such exceeding great and precious promises and not neglect so great a salvation.

²⁶ Learning to give thanks continually will mean that you must have a change in your values. The things of heaven must be more important to you than the things of earth. It must be more important to you that you have a river of life springing up and flowing out than if you have money in the bank. Being the temple of the Holy Ghost and being clothed with Christ must have more meaning to you than a house, a good job, or a nice car. The gifts of the Spirit must be more important than the praises of men and the goals of self-interest. What we can all be certain of is that wherever our treasure is, there will our hearts be also. If our treasure is in heaven, then only the things of heaven will really matter. God wants you to trust Him so much that even if there is no calf in the stall, no fruit on the vine, no laughter and no making merry - you can be found rejoicing in the Lord and joying in the God of your Salvation, who will provide for you according to His riches in glory (Habakkuk 3:17-18).

In the Old Testament, the priests stood before the Lord giving thanks continually (1 Chronicles 15:27-28; 2 Chronicles 31:2; Ezra 3:11; Nehemiah 11:17,22-23; 12:27). The earthly temple was designed according to the heavenly one, and God's ministers in heaven are continually giving thanks. If we want to enter into that realm and participate with the things that are going on in heaven, then we must participate with the giving of thanks (Psalm 30:4; 35:18; 27:6; 79:13; 97:12; 106:47; 119:62). There is little difference between giving thanks and praising God, and this is exactly what we were created in Christ Jesus to do. He called us out of darkness into His marvelous light - so that we might show forth His praise (1 Peter 2:9; Isaiah 60:1-3; Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:15-16). This is how simple it is to submit to God and to yield to the Holy Ghost: just like those of old, we enter His gates with thanksgiving and we come into His courts with praise (Psalm 50:14; 69:30; 75:1; 95:2; 100:4; 104:33). The display of God's wondrous works and mighty acts will always be associated with thanksgiving and praise, so lift up your voice and shout the shout of triumph! When you go to prayer just start giving thanks, and you will find out how easy it is to step right over into that realm where glory fills your soul and the things of the Spirit begin to flow right out of you (Philippians 4:6; Colossians 2:7; 4:2). Don't allow yourself to be held in a prison of discouragement and defeat. Don't yield your members to the voices of accusation, condemnation, and unrealized expectation. Lift up your head and begin to give thanks for all that God has done. Don't forget all His benefits; instead name them one by one. How He is your God and you are His child! How he has filled you with good things and caused your cup to overflow. How He heals all your diseases, and cleanses all our your iniquities too! If you want to live the good life, then you must be willing to be continually filled with the Spirit: speaking to yourself with the songs of praise and thanksgiving, singing and making melody in your heart (Ephesians 5:18-20). These utterances of the Holy Spirit are always present, but we must be willing to let them flow. The love, the joy, and the peace are always there; but we must be willing to yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit's influence. It's a matter of our will - and we must be willing to will what God has purposed for our life, rather than being all wrapped up in our own concerns and goals. When Pentecost came and the Holy Ghost was poured out, the 120 could be heard declaring the wondrous works of God (Acts 2:11). When we allow these issues of the Spirit to flow out of us, thanksgiving is elevated to another level and we are giving thanks most excellently (1 Corinthians 14:16-17). Yet if we are unwilling to give thanks and confess all that God has done out of the realms of our understanding, we fail to make that connection with what God has purposed for our lives, and we can easily miss out on the blessings that are coming down from on High! By letting the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, your values will be placed in those things which the word of God reveals; and your desires will not be on the earthly things, but on that which is heavenly (Colossians

21- Make you perfect in every good work to do His will producing in you that which is well pleasing in His sight²⁷ through Jesus Christ: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen!

3:1-4,16-17). The confession of those good things that God has done, which is the acknowledgment that they are yours right now, will bring a change in the way you interact with God and will make what He has given easily received. We are the spiritual house of God that has been built up for a habitation of God, where these spiritual sacrifices may be offered continually (1 Peter 2:5,9; Psalm 107:22; 116:17). The sacrifices of a broken and contrite heart are found in continually saying, "Not my will Lord, but yours" (Isaiah 57:15-17; John 4:34; 6:38). The sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving are the confessions of all that God has done - the acknowledgment that God is your protector, provider, and perfecter. This is the will of God for your life: that in all things you give thanks (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

²⁷ What a rich summary this verse brings to us of all that God has done and has purposed for our lives in Christ Jesus. It is God that makes our way perfect to do every good work. Through Christ Jesus and the power of the Holy Ghost at work in us God produces in us every thing that is well pleasing in His sight. Jesus commanded us to be perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48). We are to be those who keep covenant and who walk the love, the mercy, the forgiveness and kindness of our Heavenly Father. This has all been made possible through the power of the blood of the everlasting covenant that brought Jesus back from the dead (Hebrews 13:20). Through the power that is in the blood the life of God and the Spirit of God has come into our lives. God has given us His life changing word that is spirit and life, living and powerful to instruct us in the ways of righteousness so that we might be perfect furnished unto every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17; John 6:63; Hebrews 4:12). His has given to us His Spirit of Holiness so that we might do His deeds and functions in His works. He has placed within His church the gifting of apostles, prophets, evangelist, pastors and teachers so that we might be made perfect, complete resourced and empowered to do His will and walk in His ways (Ephesians 4:12).

If there is one expression that we find above all other things concerning our relationship with God and the purpose of our lives it is to do the will of the Father (Matthew 6:10; 7:17, 21; John 1:13; 5:30; Romans 8:27; 12:2; 1 Peter 4:2) . God in His immeasurable grace has provided the means by which these things may be produced within us. Through the activity of the Holy Ghost at work in our lives He established us together with Christ Jesus in all the holy conduct that is well pleasing in His sight.