

**THE
EVERLASTING
GOSPEL**

by

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Chapter 1

CALL TO WORSHIP

Throughout eternity God has desired that His people worship Him. He desires that they come to Him with a spirit of praise and thanksgiving, for He alone is God and there is none like Him.

In these last days, according to Revelation, there is a call going throughout the world. That call is for God's people to worship Him, the Creator. In Revelation 14:7 an angel brought a message... "Saying with a loud voice, 'Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: And worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters'."

This word will be going out prior to the mark of the beast and the time of bible prophecy which is still ahead. We believe that the Spirit of God is moving in an even greater way as the day of our Lord's return draws closer. God's people are beginning to enter into a new dimension of worship and praise.

I have found that worship is a subject that needs to be taught. People need to learn how to come into God's presence and worship Him in spirit and in truth. I thank God with you that His Holy Spirit is revealing these truths to us, that we might grow in understanding of God's word and that we might grow in an expression of our love for our heavenly Father. That expression of love is known as worship and praise.

A call from our Lord to worship Him is in Deuteronomy 26:10. "And now, behold, I have brought the first fruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, has given me. And thou shalt set it before the Lord thy God, and worship before the Lord thy God:" In this scripture God is calling us, through His servant, to come into His presence with an offering in order to worship before the Lord our God.

1st Chronicles 16:29 "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name: bring an offering, and come before Him: Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

Psalm 95:6 - "O come, let us worship and bow down: Let us kneel before the Lord our maker."

Psalm 96:9 "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: Fear (reverence) before Him all the earth."

Matthew 4:10 - "Then saith Jesus unto him, 'Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve'."

John 4:24 - "God is a Spirit: And they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Revelation 22:9 - "Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: For I am thy fellow servant, of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: Worship God."

The background of Revelation 22:9 is this: the apostle John was going to bow down to the angel who brought him the revelation by the Spirit of God. The angel said, "Don't bow down to me: Worship God." This powerful word expresses the call of God Almighty to His people that we are to worship Him. We are to put no one or nothing before Him. We are not to bow down to angels, for we are here on this earth to worship God and God alone. We are created to be to the praise of His glory. The call of God for all eternity is to worship Him, bow down to Him, honor Him, and give glory to His holy name.

I am excited about this message because I believe that the Spirit of God is the One giving the call to minister concerning worship. I believe this call will go throughout the body of Christ. God's ministers will be bringing it forth and teaching by the Holy Spirit of God. Then God's people will grow to prepare themselves for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the time when we will sit before the throne of God, worshipping and giving glory and honor to Him. He alone reigns on the throne; He alone is God.

The Lord has been dealing with me about the importance of coming into His presence to worship Him in spirit and in truth, and how to come into His presence.

Chapter 2

ATTITUDES OF WORSHIP

Attitudes of Worship

The Holy Spirit Himself ministered through various words of prophecy about how to come into God's presence and worship Him correctly in spirit and in truth:

1. COME IN HOLINESS.

When we talk about holiness, we have noticed that some people get shook up about it. They think it is unattainable. It is something they cannot grasp or deal with because in themselves they are not holy. Man, in himself, is poor, miserable, and wretched. Nevertheless, the word of God shows what God has done in our behalf through the blood of Jesus Christ.

God is holy, according to His word, and there is none like Him. Those who would come to Him must be holy. It goes beyond some people's comprehension that they could come into the presence of God. There is a fear in their hearts about Him, and a feeling of unworthiness. They wonder if they have the right to come to God and to be in His presence.

Leviticus 10:1-11 - "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer and put fire therein, and put incense thereon and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not." (Note here that this displeasing offering was called "strange fire," which God had commanded them not to offer. This offering was not correctly brought to God, so His judgment was brought down upon them). "And there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them and they died before the Lord. Then Moses said to Aaron, this is it that the Lord spoke, saying, 'I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified.' And Aaron held his peace."

There was a high calling upon the priests when they came into the presence of God; they were to have prepared themselves. They were to have sanctified themselves by the means that the Lord had set down. They were to be cleansed, prepared, and made holy as they came before God because only holiness would stand in the presence of God.

How important for us to understand the need to be holy as we come before God! We need to be cleansed by the blood of Jesus. We need to be prepared. Otherwise we are not coming into God's presence properly.

Verse 4 - "And Moses called Mishael and Elzapan, the sons of Uzziel, the uncle of Aaron, and said unto them, 'Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp.' So they went near and carried them in their coats out of the camp; as Moses had said. And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar his sons, 'Uncover not your heads, neither rend (tear) your clothes; lest you die, and lest wrath come upon all people: But let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the Lord hath kindled. And ye shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: for the anointing oil of the Lord is upon you.' And they did according to the word of Moses."

The anointing oil of the Lord upon the priest was part of the sanctifying process in the Old Testament. God's anointing was upon them, and they were to be ministering in the tabernacle of the congregation, and they were not to go out to the rest of the people lest they die also.

"And the Lord spoke unto Aaron, saying, "Do not drink wine or strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: It shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations: And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy and between unclean and clean; and that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses'."

Exodus 15:11 - "Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" It needs to be established that a holy God can have only holy people coming into His presence.

The people recognized that they could not come before a holy God on their own.

1 Samuel 6:20 – "And the men of Bethshemesh said, 'Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God? And to whom shall he go up from us?'"

Psalm 99:9 - "Exalt the Lord our God and worship at His holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy."

Isaiah 6:3 - "And one cried unto another and said, holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: The whole earth is full of his glory."

Revelation 15:4 - "Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? For Thou art holy: For all nations shall come and worship before Thee: For Thy judgments are made manifest."

These scriptures deal with the fact (and it is established throughout the word of God) that God is holy, perfect, and blameless. There is none like Him.

God's call to His people concerning holiness is shown in the following:

Leviticus 11:45 - "For I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: Ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."

Luke 1:74, 75 - "That He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life."

It is the call of God to us, His people, to be holy and righteous (in right standing) with Him.

2 Corinthians 7:1 - "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God,"

Hebrews 12:14 - "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

1 Peter 1:16 - "...Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

2 Peter 3:11 "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation (way of life) and godliness..."

According to His Word, God desires us to be holy as He is holy.

Again, the term "holy" strikes fear in many people. As they look at themselves, they see themselves unworthy, weak, and failing every now and then (sometimes more often). Still, as we study how to worship, we realize we are to come into His presence in holiness.

2. RECOGNIZE THAT GOD HAS MADE YOU HOLY.

Is it possible to come into God's presence in holiness? On what basis do we have to come to Him? Take a look at what God has to say about it:

Psalm 65:3 - "Iniquities prevail against me: As for our transgressions, Thou shalt purge them away."

Isaiah 1:16 - "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil."

Isaiah 1:18 - "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

In the Old Testament scarlet was a dye. When it was put into the material, it could not be removed. "Though our sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow." In other words, though it be impossible for our sins to be removed, God says He will remove them. He will make us holy in His presence.

Ezekiel 36:25 - "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you."

Zechariah 13:1 - "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness..."

God will cleanse us. It is tremendously exciting to see what God is doing. He is making us holy.

Malachi 3:3 - "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." This means an offering that is worthy and acceptable to God.

Ephesians 5:25b - "...Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it..." Verse 26 - "That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."

We are washed, cleansed, and made holy by the word of God. As we learn to appropriate the blood of Jesus that has been provided for us, God cleans us and makes us holy. God Himself has made us worthy to come into His presence. He alone could do that because He alone is holy. Since God, in His love, wanted us to worship and praise Him, and have life with Him forever, He had to move in our behalf to prepare the way for us to come. He had to do the cleansing. Otherwise we never could have come into His presence.

I thank God for the privilege of coming into His presence through the blood of Jesus. His blood has made us holy and worthy so that we can now come freely. We can worship Him and give Him the honor that is due His name because He has made us sons and daughters through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 9:14 - "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Works done on our own are dead as far as God is concerned, nor are they pleasing to Him. As the blood of Jesus was given for us, and as we now appropriate it in our daily lives, God cleanses us and makes us holy so that we can come into His presence and serve Him with a clean heart. We can know that His power is flowing through us, that He is receiving the offering of our lips and the sacrifice of praise before Him.

1 John 1:7 - "But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ His son cleanseth us from all sin."

We want to come into His presence cleansed, knowing that we are forgiven. If we have any unforgiveness in our lives towards anyone, we need to ask God to forgive us and then come to worship and praise Him.

3. COME WITH AN AWARENESS THAT WORSHIP IS ONLY POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF GOD'S MERCY.

Psalm 5:7 - "But as for me, I will come into Thy house in the multitude of Thy mercy: and in Thy fear will I worship toward Thy holy temple." Fear means reverence or holy awe towards God. It is important that we pay close attention to this because it is an attitude God would have us develop. Because of the mercy of God we can now come, for in His love, He has not held our sins against us. He has made us worthy and holy by the blood of Jesus, and He now allows us to come into His presence.

Because of the mercy of God we have been put in right standing with our heavenly Father through Jesus Christ. Hebrews 10:18-25 gives a fuller explanation of His mercy:

"Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh: and having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for He is faithful that promised); and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: And so much more, as ye see the day approaching."

To sum up: We are called to worship God. God has made us holy enough to come into His presence because of the blood of Jesus and because of His mercy.

The Old Testament tells us that this matter of coming into God's presence was one of seriousness. The priest going into the Holy of Holies had bells around the bottom of his robe, which would jingle as he walked inside. If he was not right with God when he walked into the Holy of Holies, he would drop dead. Because of that, they tied a rope around the high priest's ankle in case something should happen while he was in there (that he had not sanctified himself correctly). Then they would be able to pull him out by the rope. If everything went well, the priest came walking

out. If it didn't go well, then he was to be pulled out. You might think this strange, but remember they were dealing with coming into the presence of God Almighty. He has set down ways to come into His presence and to worship Him. As His children, it is the desire of our hearts to come in the way God has instructed us.

We now come in through the blood of Jesus Christ as shown in the New Testament. We are bound with God in an everlasting covenant. This promise of God is that He is ours and we are His. Therefore, worship and thankfulness are attitudes that come from our hearts to God. We want to worship God, and we want to do it in a way that is pleasing to Him.

4. COME BEFORE GOD WITH THE PURPOSE OF HEART TO HONOR AND GLORIFY HIM.

Psalm 29:2 "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." We are to come before God, giving glory to His name, in an attitude of heart which is pleasing to Him. We are to come in the beauty of holiness.

I want to emphasize that we are to give to the Lord the glory due to His name. In other words, God has glory coming because of who He is and what He has done in

behalf of His people. As we come to Him, we are to give Him the glory and the praise that He is worthy of.

Psalm 22:23 tells us, "Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him; all ye the seed of Jacob glorify Him and fear Him, all ye the seed of Israel."

Again, this is a call to give glory and honor to God. This call goes out to His people. Since we are His people, we want to glorify Him, give Him honor, and give Him praise. We want to recognize who He is. He is the Lord God of hosts. There is none like Him; there is none beside Him. He alone is God. He alone is worthy to be praised; great is our God and greatly to be praised. Honoring Him and glorifying Him is to be the attitude of our hearts as we come to Him in true worship.

Isaiah 25:1 - "O Lord, Thou art my God; I will exalt Thee, I will praise Thy name; for Thou hast done wonderful things; Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth."

As we teach about worship, I believe that the Spirit of God ministers to people in a spirit of worship. Enter into that tone of worship as you learn about it because you are not just being taught. This is a time of worship and praise to God as well. Because we are studying about worship, we cannot help but give glory and honor to God. So, expect that as you read, you are worshipping and praising God with me today. The Spirit of God will touch your life in a new and refreshing way.

5. COME BEFORE THE LORD WITH REVERENCE.

As stated previously, holy reverence is often called fear. We come before God, counting it as a sacred time, as a holy time, as a special time. It is a time in which we and God become one. We unite with others in giving Him praise and thanks. Then the power of the Holy Spirit is free to minister.

Many times the Spirit of God begins to move in the place when we praise and worship Him. He does wonderful things too great for our minds to understand. As people enter in, much will happen in the spirit, in the mind, and in the physical realm because the Spirit of God will minister. This attitude of reverence is something that is often lacking.

Worship does not involve just being quiet. Quietness often has nothing to do with praise and worship. Praise can be loud because we are rejoicing. What we need is an attitude of the heart that we are in awe of Him, honoring Him and glorifying Him in holy reverence.

Psalm 89:7 - "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him."

In Exodus 3:5 we find an example of God's servant Moses coming into the presence of God on holy ground. "And he said, 'draw not nigh hither: Put thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground'."

God told Moses not to come up until he had taken his shoes off because he was in a holy place. We are not recommending today that you take off your shoes, or this or that, when you go into worship. However, if God calls you to do something while worshipping, be obedient to do it!

As we enter into worship, we should recognize that it is a holy time. It is a special time which shouldn't be clouded with distractions and distracting thoughts. It is a time when all of our being is to be focused upon the Lord.

Here is another account of needing holiness when coming into God's presence: "And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, 'Loose thy

shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy.’ And Joshua did so." Joshua 5:15

As we come into God's presence to worship, God will move, and it will be a holy time.

Psalm 4:4 - "Stand in awe and sin not: Commune with your own heart upon your bed and be still."

Psalm 33:8 - "Let all the earth fear the Lord: Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him."

Habakkuk 2:20 - "But the Lord is in His holy temple: Let all the earth keep silence before Him." God is to be revered and honored as we come before Him.

Deuteronomy 10:12-13 - "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?" Again, we see the call to reverence God, to honor Him in a holy time.

Ecclesiastes 12:13 - "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear [reverence] God and keep His commandments: For this is the whole duty of man." The call is to reverence God, which has to be an attitude that we begin to develop within our hearts. It is a matter of coming into the presence of a holy God who has given us the privilege and right to worship and honor Him.

Isaiah 8:13 - "Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear and let Him be your dread."

Many times people have a disrespectful attitude when they come into worship. This needs to be dealt with seriously. God has set down our time of worship as a time of holiness and honor. So, it is tremendously important that we not neglect to do so. Take time to prepare before coming to worship. Pray in the spirit, pray with your understanding, sing and rejoice in the Lord. As you come into worship with other believers, be ready to go.

People come in with thoughts weighing them down. They are thinking about other things or scurrying around. They may be relieved to finally get there, but then it takes a long time to get them into a spirit of worship and praise. I find it is helpful for all of us to enter into worship before we ever get together with other believers. At that point we will see a powerful move of the Spirit of God because of the unity and oneness right from the start.

I am fully convinced that we are not to come into God's presence being afraid of Him. What Isaiah 8:13 is talking about is understanding that

God is holy and that He has given us the right and privilege to come to Him in worship. We do not need to be afraid of Him, but we do need to reverence Him.

It would be like coming into the presence of the king, as recorded in the bible, and recognizing that we were under the king. The king was free to do whatever he wanted to do. In the same way, God is Lord of all. He is King of kings. As we come into His presence, we need to reverence Him. We need to honor Him. He is our friend and our Father, and we are to show Him honor for now and forever.

6. LEARN HOW TO LISTEN TO HIM.

When people come to worship, they often minister to one another. Worship is not a time of edifying one another as much as a time of edifying and worshipping God. As one worships Him, the attention goes towards Him, and then He will edify every person.

We know that as we pray in the spirit we are edified. But, who are we praying to when we pray in the spirit? It says we are praying to God (1st Corinthians 14:2), and He edifies us. As we pray, worship, and sing praises with the spirit and with our understanding, He is the one who is moving. Please note, the attention is going to God.

It would do us well in our worship time to learn to listen to God. This is something that we have to develop. It is difficult for many people to sit still and be quiet because they are so used to busily running around and being active. There comes a time, as we are entering into worship by the Spirit of God, that we need to just listen to God, and He will move in our midst.

In Acts 13 a group of men who were in various ministering offices came together to worship. Verses 2-3 tell us, "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said: 'Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.' And when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

In verse 2 it says, "As they ministered to the Lord..." This is what worship is all about, ministering to the Lord that which God has a right to have: our worship, our glory, our praises, our honor, our whole being. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost spoke to them (one of the spiritual gifts was operating there). As they ministered to the Lord, the Holy Spirit then ministered to them. This is always the way it is when we enter into the true worship that is pleasing to God. He will always come

down and minister to His people. As we listen for His voice, He will speak in that still, small voice inside.

Ecclesiastes 5:1, 2 - "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: For they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God: For God is in heaven and thou upon earth: Therefore let your words be few."

A fool is known for talking too much. Proverbs say that the wise man says few words, but what he says is of importance; it is valuable. The fool talks about everything that comes to his mind, and there is not much of importance coming into his mind to talk about. When we come into God's presence, He wants us to be sincere in heart and words. . . and listen to Him.

As you grow in the spirit, the Lord begins to minister to you by speaking to you. It may be in an audible voice, or it may be inside you. You will find that when God speaks, He has few words to say, but they are to the point, they are true, and they change people's lives. He wants to be heard today in our hearts. As He is heard, changes happen.

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." James 1:19-20

As we learn to listen to God, then we get His direction. He will never steer us wrong. He wants to lead us in the true path. He wants to lead us in His true ways.

Idle words are not pleasing to God. He says He will hold us accountable for the words that we speak. (Matthew 12:36-37) I don't take that as condemnation because God understands the way we are, but I do see it as an encouragement to speak that which is profitable to the hearer. Especially when we are speaking to God, we should speak from the heart because He knows what is in our hearts. It is important that we learn to know what is in us too. The closer we draw to God and He draws near to us, we are able to get His clarity of instruction, wisdom, and understanding. I find that as we enter into worship, He often gives direction and leading.

Ezekiel 33:32 - "And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument: For they hear thy words, but they do them not."

Many times God's words come to us as a pleasant voice and like an instrument. We will hear those words, but it is important to do the words,

not just go through the motions. Get serious about what God has given you to do and then do it.

Worship is more than something we do. Worship is our way of giving honor and praise to our God. It is our way of expressing our love for Him and our thankfulness to Him.

7. PUT ASIDE AND AVOID ALL FORMALISM.

Avoid mere traditions of men when coming to God. Put the commandments of God first.

In Matthew 15:1-9 Jesus said that the people did not worship God correctly. "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Formalism and man's ways of coming to God are not pleasing to Him. Jesus made this quite clear. The only thing pleasing to God is coming to Him His way, and He is the One who has set down the ways in which we are to come.

The finest way to come is with a clean heart, knowing that the blood of Jesus has washed us clean. We are forgiven and not forsaken, and we are God's children. He lives within our hearts. He is the One who has made us holy and worthy. This is not a dead ritual. We come to our God in truth, rejoicing in His presence.

The Lord tells us in Hosea 6:6 - "For I desired mercy and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Come to God with knowledge of the ways He has set down, with a true heart that is pleasing to Him.

For your own reference you might also like to take a look at Isaiah 58. The things that deal with true worship (and not dead formalism) are listed there.

Chapter 3

ENTERING INTO GOD'S PRESENCE

On a February day in 1982, the Spirit of God gave a word in one of our meetings. I would like to share with you as the Lord gave it and as it was recorded during the time the Spirit was ministering. The Spirit of God was teaching on worship and how to come into His presence. It was to this effect:

- “Comfort My people with these words: That I love them. That I care for them, and I will strengthen them. That I will help them. That I will hold them up with My word for I am their God. Comfort them with these word. Teach them, My son, to worship Me – what to do in my presence. Teach them that I might receive their praise. Teach them how to come before Me, for I love them and want them to know how to come into My presence that My joy will fill them to overflowing. Teach them, for I am with you.”

This was the preface to the message that the Lord brought forth.

God wants us to come into His presence in worship because He loves us and He wants us to come into His presence. In the presence of God is fullness of joy. (Psalm 16:11). The word being brought forth stated that the joy of the Lord will fill us to overflowing as we worship Him. The body of the instruction of the Spirit was given through the prophecy. I take the liberty now to share the Scriptures with you as they were inserted the day after the message was brought forth.

- “Prepare your hearts to receive Me,” said the Lord. “Prepare your hearts to receive from Me. Cast all your doubt, your worry and your fear away from your heart, for I love you. Set your heart upon Me, not on the things of the world. Set your heart upon Me and I will put everything into perspective because I love you.”

The scriptural base for this part is found in 1st John 4:18-19. *“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: Because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”*

In order for us to come into God's presence in worship, the Lord would have us cast aside all doubt, worry and fears from our hearts because His perfect love casts out the fear and the torment involved in the fear. This will help us as we enter into worship.

The second part the Lord brought as we were ministering was for us to set our hearts upon Him, not on the things of the world so that He may put everything into perspective, because He loves us. *“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof: But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.”* (1st John 2:15-17)

Another Scripture that was given was *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.”* (Matthew 6:33) As our hearts get off of the world and onto God in worship, then God starts to order our path.

➤ The prophecy continues. *“You have been risen with Me and are seated with Me in heavenly places, so praise Me as if you were in heaven.”* The Scripture to confirm that is Ephesians 2:6. At times the Lord gave the Scriptures later. *“...And hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”* (Ephesians 2:6) This tells us what has been done for us in Jesus Christ. God has raised us up together with Jesus and made us sit together in heavenly places in Him.

As the word said, we have been risen with Jesus and we are already seated with Him in the heavenly places, even though we are in this world (also see Colossians 3:1-5). As the Spirit was directing, we are to praise Him as if we were in heaven. We are not of this world but belong in heavenly places with our Lord Jesus. We are in this world for a mission and a purpose – to spread the love of God. When we leave here, we will be with our Lord forever and ever, sitting before His throne, worshipping Him, praising Him and giving Him glory that is worthy to His name. We have been created to be the praise of His glory. (Ephesians 1:12) Let us get into practice for what will come in the new heaven and new earth.

➤ The prophecy goes on. *“I have given to you a new heart that you might worship Me in spirit and in truth.”* Jeremiah 32:38-41 and 31:31-34 were

given by the Spirit the following day. They were not given at the time of the prophecy but later were given for teaching and instruction purposes and to amplify the ministry for God's people.

“And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good and I will plant them in this land assuredly with My whole heart and with My whole soul.” (Jeremiah 32:38-41)

Here the Lord has made a change in people's hearts. The Lord followed up with.

“And they shall come thither and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh and will give them a heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes and keep mine ordinances and do them: And they shall be my people and I will be their God.” (Ezekiel 11:18-20)

We see God giving a new heart to His people. The Lord has told us here in the prophecy that He had given us a new heart that we might be able to worship Him in spirit and in truth. *“But what saith it: The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart: That is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness: And with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”* (Romans 10:8-10)

As people hear the word of God, the word of God goes forth and touches their hearts by the ministry of the Holy Spirit and God produces faith in their hearts. As people then have a change of heart, they respond to God. God enables us to worship Him in spirit and in truth.

In Peter 1:22-23 we find out again about the change of heart that God has given to His people through the blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ. *“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto*

unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.” (1st Peter 1:22-23)

God has made us born again, alive to His Spirit now so that we will be able to worship Him in spirit and in truth. Before we received Jesus into our heart as our Lord and Savior our spirits were dead to God. Now, since we are born again because of the blood of Jesus and the word of God, we are able to worship God. We are able to come into His presence, in spirit and in truth, for our spirits (or new hearts) are alive to God.

God has prepared us to worship Him now. *“Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: So is everyone that is born of the Spirit.” (John 3:3-8)*

Clearly it says, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and it cannot worship God. But that which is born of the Spirit is spirit and is alive to God.

“But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: For the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: And they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:23, 24)

We have to be alive to the Spirit of God. We have to have a new heart before we are able to enter in worship in spirit and in truth, which is holy and acceptable to God. According to the prophecy that was given and according to God’s word, God has given us new heart that we might be able to worship Him in spirit and in truth.

- The prophecy continues: “Come into My presence in Holy Spirit and awe, reverence and quiet. Get all irreverence out of your thoughts. Not quiet as one would understand quiet but, rather not doubtful and fearful.”

The Scripture to confirm this: *“For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; in returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength; and ye would not.”* (Isaiah 30:15)

The Lord dealt with the fact that we are to come in a spirit of reverence and awe, and be quiet in our hearts and minds. Irreverence to God is putting things of the world before Him, putting things that have no place there before God Almighty. A key statement is, *“not quiet as one would understand quiet but rather, not doubtful and fearful.”* The quietness is an inner peace and a rest which God has for His people. He will give it to us as we enter into worship. The attitude in which we come into God’s presence is to be one of quietness and confidence that God is in the midst of His people and all is well!

- *“My Spirit will teach you how to worship Me in spirit and in truth.”* The following scripture tells us that the Holy Spirit will teach us, as God’s people, how to enter into worship and what is pleasing and acceptable to God at that time. *“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.”* (John 14:26)
- *“Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: For He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come.”* (John 16:13)

It is speaking about the ministry of the Holy spirit here, as the Spirit of God was saying, that His Spirit will teach us how to worship Him in spirit and in truth. (See also 1st Corinthians 2:9-13) These verses tell us that the Spirit of God will lead us into all understanding concerning how to worship God in spirit and in truth.

- Let us go on with the prophecy. *“Your mind rejects what I tell you, so reject your mind.”* This was a powerful statement. It took me a little searching before the Lord about what He meant. I do not believe that God wants us to throw aside our minds. On the other hand, God has a higher purpose as we start to understand worship and all spiritual truth, that all spiritual truth basically is not received by the mind but received by our spirits which is alive to God.

It says in Proverbs 20:17 *“The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord,”* meaning that God lights and directs us through our spirit and not through our mind. All the things of the spirit are, interestingly enough, foreign to the mind and the mind will reject them and cast them down. The Spirit of God was telling us that the mind will reject many of the things of the Spirit. So what we need to do is to reject our mind, or put it aside, and seek God in the spirit to find out what He is trying to reveal to us.

Spiritual things cannot be understood by a person who is operating by his mind, they can only be understood by a person who is operating by the Spirit of God. Another Scripture that was brought out at that point: *“For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.”* (1st Corinthians 14:14) In the Greek the term for “understanding” is “mind.” The scripture refers to praying in tongues (or praying in the spirit), and the mind is unfruitful or unproductive during that time as one is praying in the spirit.

If we don’t get our minds out of the way as we are worshipping God in the spirit, the mind will actually become a hindrance to us. Romans 12:2 says we are to renew the mind, not have it conformed to this world but bring it into line with what God’s word says. That is what we have to do according to God’s word, it says the mind is unfruitful and unproductive when we pray in the spirit. Many people think it’s crazy. Why do we do it? We do it because that is how God intended for us to worship Him, in spirit and in truth. (John 4:23-24; 1st Corinthians 14:14-15) That mind has to be brought into line with the word of God. The Spirit of God was directing it as He gave instruction that day through the prophecy.

- The prophecy went on. “I bring you life abundantly if you will set your heart to learn of Me. Cleanse yourself of anything in your heart that is displeasing to Me and will hinder your worship to Me.”

The scripture that was given: *“Behold the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear.”* (Isaiah 59:1-2) Apparently, as the Spirit was directing, we need to do some cleansing before we enter into the presence of God in worship and praise. We need to ask the Lord to cleanse our hearts of anything known or unknown that might be hindering the flow of His Spirit in our behalf. Psalm 51:10-17 was also given.

The attitudes of our heart or actions we have done will hinder our worship. God wants us cleansed of these. He wants us under the blood of Jesus. He wants us to come to Him as it says in 1st John 1:9 and acknowledge our sin to Him. As we do so, He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. It is important, that, as we enter into worship, we are doing so as the Spirit directs.

- The word of prophecy continued. “Learn of Me. Learn what My Spirit says to you. Cast aside all cares about situations you may be in. Cast your cares upon Me, for I love you.” was the Scripture given there. “ *Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.*” (1st Peter 5:7)
- The prophecy continued. “I gave My life for you as you might come to Me and have rest.” The goal of the Christian walk is to enter into the rest of the Lord. (Hebrews 4) How exciting that Jesus Christ, in His love, gave His own life for us, did all the work for us, took all of our sins and all that separated us from God upon Himself and gave us His right-standing with the Father, that we might enter into rest. The rest was provided by God Himself. This is what worship is all about. As we grow in understanding concerning, worship we see we actually do enter into the rest of God as we worship Him in spirit and in truth.
- The prophecy went on. “Abundant life I gave My life for.” says, “*The thief [Satan] cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I [Jesus] am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.*” (John 10:10)
- The prophecy continued. “Willful resistance to My Spirit grieves Me. Grieve not My Spirit, for I want you to be free to worship Me, free to love Me, free to love one another as I have loved you.” Scriptures references are Hebrews 3:7-19, 1st Thessalonians 5:16, and Ephesians 4:29-5:2. In this we see the call of God. In the love of God, the working of the Spirit of God has set us free. We are not to willfully resist doing what God says because that actually grieves the Spirit of God. It puts us into a situation where we are not able to worship God because we are out-of-sorts with Him. Obedience to God’s word enables us to walk in the fullness of what He has provided for us. It actually allows His love, mercy, and every blessing to come to us. As we are disobedient to the

word of God and willfully resisting Him, at that point He is not free to do what He wants to do towards us in His love.

- “Free to give your life for one another, as I gave My life for you.” tells us, (The Lord Jesus is speaking)
- *“This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”* (John 15:12-13) “This was the whole point of Jesus life, that we were to be free, as He gave His life for us, that we could now give our life for others. 1st John 3:16 deals with the same thing.
- The Spirit of God continued in the ministry of the word. “Stir up the gift within you, that you might worship Me in spirit and in truth.”
- We see in 2nd Timothy 1:6 that we are to stir up the gift, the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38 deals with the fact that as we repent and are baptized, the Spirit of God is then able to come to us (as we have noted in other lessons) in response to our being born again and asking to be filled with the Holy Spirit (or through the laying on of hands). As we noted before, the Holy Spirit does not come with water baptism. (Acts 8:15-17) But as we stir up the Holy Spirit within us into worship, then we are able to worship God in spirit and in truth.
- The word continued. “I know your needs better than you do.” Matthew 6:8-32 says that God knows our needs even before we ask.
- Then the Lord said, *“Enter into My presence with praise.”* Psalm 100 deals with entering into God’s gates with praise and into His courts with thanksgiving and rejoicing in the Lord!

Chapter 4

THE WORD OF GOD AND WORSHIP

His word is going forth throughout the world, and as it is going forth, it is touching the hearts of those who hear. It's producing faith within them to receive all that God has for them. I thank God again for the privilege to share His word with you because we believe that the word of the Lord is spirit and life. It brings changes to those who hear it. The ability of God actually comes within them and we become one with God through His word. I thank the Lord today that as we continue in this study on worship, a deeper understanding and appreciation for our Heavenly Father is coming to us, and a deeper appreciation of His love for us as His people. This word of God brings life wherever it goes forth.

I hold the word of God in very high esteem, higher than anything else in this world. The word of God and the Lord are one. His word and He are one. Therefore, we respect and honor His word. I believe it is important that I share this with you because there is a relationship between the Word of God and worship. We will show a new dimension to worship which the Spirit has revealed. I don't believe it is anything new, but it is another understanding of something that is in the heart of God, which you will see as we review the subject in this chapter.

Psalm 138 speaks about our hearts towards the word of God. *"I will praise Thee with my whole heart: Before the gods will I sing praise unto Thee. I will worship toward thy holy temple and praise Thy name for Thy loving kindness and for thy truth: For Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name."* Let us now look at the relationship between worship and the word of God. I would like to share some understanding about things present (here and now) and things to come in the new heaven and new earth, with our Lord forever and ever.

The purpose of man, as he was created, was to be to the praise of God's glory. (Ephesians 1:12) In the beginning God created man. Man was in communion with Him and in perfect fellowship with Him. Man walked and talked with God, physically as one with Him. This is the way Adam and Eve walked the earth, being in perfect communion and fellowship with God. Man was created to have fellowship with God, to be one with Him.

After the fall of man, he became separated from God. He was no longer able to physically nor spiritually commune with God, because he was now separated. Nonetheless, God wants us to have fellowship with Him again. The call of God's word goes out to us that we are to be born again. As we are born again, the life of God comes into us, and we become one with God again, in spirit. Our bodies are still separated from God, but He is waiting for the day when we will be one with Him again, in spirit and in body. We will then stand before His presence day after day, like Adam did before he disobeyed. We know the blood of Jesus has paid the price for our separation. Whoever looks to the Lord Jesus Christ and calls upon His name will be saved and will have the life of God flow to him. As such, we become new creatures, old things are passed away, and God makes everything new. We are now able to worship God in spirit and in truth, as He desires.

In John 4:23-24 the word of God tells us, *“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: For the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: And they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”* This is the way God desires us to worship Him. I fully believe that as one starts to grow in understanding of the word of God, one would learn that the key of the Scriptures is a call to worship, honor, and reverence God above and before anything or anyone else in this world. God has set down a purpose for His word. That purpose is clearly given to us in the Holy Scriptures. I want to show you that there is a difference between the word of God and worship. There is a very important difference and I believe it will become clear to you as we continue with our study.

2nd Timothy 3:14-17 lays out the purpose for which God has given His Holy Scriptures. We are going to see here that many people put down worship. One, they do not know how to enter into worship and that is part of the problem. Two, they do not understand what worship is all about and that is part of the problem. Three, they would rather hear teaching than to worship God. What we are trying to do is to bring a balance concerning the importance of teaching and what it is for and the purpose of worship and what it is for.

Here is the purpose of the word of God: *“But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou*

hast learned them: And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (2nd Timothy 3:14-17)

The first purpose for which the Holy Scripture (the word of God) has been given is to make us wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. We know that faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. As we hear the word of God in this life, it produces faith within us by the Holy Spirit, to enable us to receive the life of God. That is the first and foremost purpose of all Scripture, to lead us to have life with God because of faith in Jesus Christ, enabling us to see the whole plan of God’s love and purpose for us. From the beginning of the word of God to the end, we see God’s plan of life for His people, that whoever would call upon the name of the Lord would be saved. It is important to understand why we have the word of God and then why we worship.

Secondly, all Scripture is profitable for doctrine, teaching, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. Profitable for doctrine, means teaching us and setting down God’s standards. What does God have for us, what are God’s teachings? Profitable for reproof and correction – God’s word shows what is right before God and what is wrong before Him. When we are wrong, His word will reprove and discipline us, will cleanse us and drive us to the Lord Jesus Christ. As we do so, we will be forgiven and cleansed. God will then enable us to do what is right, as we seek to walk in His word.

Instruction in righteousness has to do with Ephesians 1:17 and following – that we might know what is the hope of our calling in Christ Jesus, that we might know our inheritance in Christ Jesus, and our rights and privileges as the children of God. The word of God tells us that to as many as receive Jesus Christ gave He power to become sons of God. (John 1:12) The life of God is within us, and now God has given us rights and privileges as His children. The word of God instructs and shows us what is ours in Jesus Christ. It tells what it means to be righteous and holy and blameless in God’s sight. It then goes on to show the exceeding greatness of the power of God that is available to us in Jesus Christ. It teaches us about the authority of the believer through the name of Jesus and the right and privilege to use

the name of Jesus. It says that to as many as believe in Jesus, they will do the works He did and even greater works than these. (John 14:12) So whatever we ask in the name of Jesus, Jesus will do it that the Father be glorified in the Son and that our joy be full. *“Whatever you ask in My name, I will do,”* Jesus says. We learn all these wonderful and exciting truths from God’s word, and if we act upon them, the life and power of God flows and things start to happen in others’ lives.

The word of God has a very definite purpose for us in this world, in this life. 1) It helps us to come to God, 2) it enables us to grow in the Lord, 3) it will keep us in life as we obey it. It establishes us and keeps us in fellowship with God. Ephesians 6 deals with the word of God as being the whole armor. The whole armor of God consists of the word of God. We see here the great importance of His word. I would like to show you something that reaches beyond these things. It has to do with worship and the significance of it in a believer’s life. I believe worship is even more significant than the word of God. You will understand why as we go on.

1st Corinthians 13:8 and following, tells us *“Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.”* This deals with spiritual gifts and the operation of the Spirit of God. This verse is often quoted, *“Where there be tongues, they shall cease,”* and some say this means that tongues are no longer for today. I would like to point out that the verse continues, *“whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.”* We ask people if they believe that knowledge has vanished. They say, no, we still have the word of God. That is correct, we have the word of God. But the day is coming (and soon) when knowledge shall vanish. All of the workings that are going on now, whether it be by spiritual gifts, the preaching of the gospel, or the word of God, will see there is a time when it will end. The word of God will not longer be in effect for us as we understand it now in this world and life. You will understand this more as we go on.

“For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” When the Lord Jesus returns and the new heaven and new earth is established, then that which is in part shall be done away with. We will see a new order, a higher order brought in by the Lord as the new heaven and new earth is established. What we have always thought of as the gospel will change has

happened at that point. We see, though, that the word of God is forever settled in heaven and that heaven and earth will pass away but not one part of God's word is going to pass away until everything is fulfilled. It will all stand.

What I am trying to point out is that there is going to come a new order, and in that new order we will see a new operation. We have God's word right now, and His word is intended for us to use today – now. It is what is going to keep us walking strong in the power of God Almighty in this world. When we enter into the new world, there will be a different order of working. All these things shall pass away. (1st Corinthians 13:8) There will be no more need for it. There will not be any more need to preach salvation because everyone has made their choice to be saved or are condemned forever (because they rejected the Lord Jesus Christ). There will not be any more choice. We will either be with God or we will be separated from Him.

What are they doing in heaven in the presence of God? Revelations 19:19 tells us, so please turn to it right now and read it. Throughout the Bible it talks about the bride and the bridegroom. Jesus being the bridegroom and we as God's people (the church) being the bride. I fully believe that the day is coming when the Lord and His people are going to be one. Not only in spirit, but we are going to be one forever. The Bible speaks about a communion in worship. As we worship God, we become one with Him. As God's people are worshipping, the bride and the bridegroom become one in a way that cannot be expressed, in the same way as the union of a husband and a wife. When God's people start to worship God, it is a union of His people, His bride, with Himself. It is exciting to see the implications of what happens as people start to worship God. Many times, as we were worshipping and praising God, the Spirit of God moved among the people and healings happened without any prayer, just as the Spirit of God was ministering. Deliverances happened and people were freed by the power of God, as they worshipped God, giving Him honor.

Revelations 5:8-14 is worthy of your reading. Please turn to it now and read it. In Revelations 4:9-11 we see the same kind of thing going on in heaven. We see the same thing in Revelations 7:9-12, and Revelations 15:2-8. In heaven they were worshipping and praising God before His throne, giving Him glory and honor.

In the Old Testament, God inhabited a building. He came down and inhabited a tabernacle. Later, when Solomon built the temple, He came down and inhabited the temple. As God came into the place, His glory (His presence) came in. Only certain people could go in, and they had to be sanctified before God to come in because it was holy ground. No one was able to come in except those whom God instructed and were sanctified as holy. As we stated earlier, those who did not prepare themselves properly died in the presence of God.

In the New Testament God changed His order of working. God now lives in the hearts of His people. 1st Corinthians 6 says we are temples of the Holy Spirit. The life of God is no longer in any buildings. Therefore, we need to change our view of the church in the New Testament. The church is not a building. The church is the people of God who are indwelt by the Spirit of God. That is the church that the Bible talks about in the New Testament. As such, God now indwells His people. This is the importance of keeping our lives clean before God – we are the temple of the Holy Ghost.

As we enter into the new heaven and new earth, when the Lord brings time to a close, and He establishes everything, we with Christ judge the fallen angels and unbelievers, (1st Corinthians 6:2-3). We will see the different order that God is going to be working. Revelations 22:4 tells us, *“And they shall see his face; and His name shall be in their foreheads.”*

What is the importance of this? In the Old Testament no one could see the face of God. In the New Testament, no one could see the face of God. But, in the new heaven and new earth (Revelations 21:22), the Lord no longer is living in a building (as in the Old Testament), no longer living in His people (as in the New Testament), but He is now living as the temple Himself. In the new heaven and new earth, *“And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.”* (Revelations 21:22)

For the first time, God and His people will be one in a physical kind of way that we will, as it says in Revelations 22:4, *“See His face.”* In that new heaven and new earth there will not be death to those who look upon God. We will see His face. Face to face we will stand before Him in worship and in praise.

Christianity is the only religion which deals with a physical resurrection. In this world we are worshipping God in the spirit. There will come a time

when we will physically stand before His presence, face to face. The greatest revelation of the Spirit of God as the Bible shows is to have the glory of God come into our presence in the form of smoke, as a cloud. It may be that we may even be able to see the hind parts of God as Moses was able to see. However, in this world we will not be able to see God as we will in the new heaven and new earth because this body is not able to take on the holiness of God. In the new heaven and new earth God has prepared a new spiritual body to match our spirit. We will walk and talk in the presence of God, worshipping Him before His throne forever. (1st Corinthians 15)

What is the significance of this? 1st Corinthians 13 clearly brings out that there will be no more need for the word of God. *“But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”* We will not need to be instructed in righteousness. We will not need reproof; we will be walking in the presence of God. *“When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: But when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through the glass darkly.”* In this world we see dimly even with the Word of God because we cannot see God face to face. *“But then face to face:”* In the new heaven and new earth we will see God face to face. *“Now I know in part; but then I shall know even as also I am known.”* This is the beauty of entering into the life of worship and praise. We are preparing ourselves for what is ahead.

Revelations 14:6, 7 mentions an everlasting gospel. You are sure to find this interesting! What the gospel consists of is not the gospel as we understand it. It actually has nothing to do with salvation in Jesus Christ. It has to do with an eternal higher order that belongs to God’s people through Jesus Christ. It is an eternal principle. The gospel that we understand is temporal. It is for this period of time until the final judgment. At that point those who have received Jesus will be saved, those who have rejected will be lost.

Look at the content of the eternal, everlasting gospel: *“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, [here comes the content of the everlasting gospel], Fear [reverence] God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: And worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”* (Revelations 14:6-7)

There is the content of the everlasting gospel. We are to enter into a dimension of worship where we reverence God and give glory to Him. We worship the Creator God who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of waters. We will be doing this forever and ever before the throne of God. Even though right now we can worship God in spirit and in truth, we have the physical part of us dragging us down. We have to really enter into the spirit to worship God in this life. We need to pray in tongues, worshipping God in the spirit, and worshipping with our understanding. (1st Corinthians 14:14-15) We need to come into the dimension of worship where we seek God and enter into His presence (as has been laid out in previous chapters) in holiness because He has made us holy, and then make sure our lives are clean. This dimension of worship will be greater than anything that is spoken about in this world because the worship dimension is how we will spend forever before our God, face to face. Let us get ready and get started. That day is coming when we rise to meet Jesus in the air and we will be established before God face to face, worshipping Him. I look forward to that.

Chapter 5

HOW TO GLORIFY GOD

The word of God tells us we are to glorify God – that is why we were created – to be to the praise of His glory (Ephesians 1). Let us take a look at different ways we can be giving glory to God, for this is a part of worship. Our entire lives are to be dedicated to worshipping and honoring the Lord.

The first way found in the Scriptures that we can give glory to God is found in our praise. Psalm 22:23 tells us, *“Ye that fear [or reverence] the Lord, praise Him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify Him; and fear Him, all ye the seed of Israel.”* We know that God’s promises have gone to those who have turned to the Lord Jesus Christ and have called upon His name. As we have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, and we will not be ashamed when we call upon Him. His power and ability have gone towards us, in our behalf, setting us free. So, out of a thankful heart to God, we now lift up our praise and thanks to God for all His wondrous love towards us.

The second way in which we give glory to God in our lives is through good works. People really look more at what we are doing than listening to what we say. As I have been stressing, it is important to say what great things God has and is doing in our behalf. This is a part of our praise and thanksgiving to God. We should let the people know what great things God is doing and wants to do in their behalf. However, as people look at our lives, we can be saying one thing and doing another. This is not pleasing to God, for one. Secondly; it really hinders our testimony because people will not take what we are saying seriously if the actions in our lives are to the contrary.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16) As the people see our good works, the works that are proceeding from faith, they will glorify God. Good works are always something that proceed from saving faith. If we are saved, there will be good works in our lives. People will start to see a difference. We will not be seeking ourselves but seeking others. We will seek to be a blessing to everyone around us. It is important that the people are going to actually give glory to God. We give glory to God by our godly works that follow our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. *“For we are His*

[God's] *workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works,*" (Ephesians 2:10) Again, these good works proceed from the saving faith that is in our hearts.

Here is what true religion is. *"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world."* (James 1:27) This is speaking about some of the good works through which we can give glory to God.

Turn to Isaiah 58 to see other works that are pleasing to God. Many times people really do not know what is acceptable and pleasing to God. That is why I have been trying to present how God wants us to come to Him in worship. I want you to know what is involved in worship so that you may be able to do that which is pleasing. We have God's holy word to give us the guideline and to instruct us in how to do it. In Isaiah 58:6 and following, the Lord gives us what is pleasing to Him, what works are pleasing to Him, what true religion is.

1) *"Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens and to let the oppressed go free and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning and thine health shall spring forth speedily: And thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward [rear guard]. Then shalt thou call and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity and thy darkness be as the noon day. And the Lord shall guide thee continually and satisfy thy soul in drouth and make fat thy bones: And thou shalt be like a watered garden and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. And thy that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: Thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the*

Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

These works are pleasing and acceptable to God. These works are a part of the good works that when we are doing them we are giving glory to God and the people around will give glory to God as a result of what we have done.

- 2) 2nd Corinthians 9 says specifically that as we give to the poor, God receives the glory out of the lips of the poor when their need is met by Him. They then in turn begin to pray for the people who have met those needs, giving glory and thanks to God. This way everyone rejoices in the Lord.
- 3) The third way of giving glory to God is found in John 15:8. This is deals with fruit bearing. *“Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples.”* In other words, fruit is coming out in our lives as a result of our life being changed by the Lord Jesus Christ and we are starting to walk in the way God would have us to, by His ability and His might, strength and wisdom and love.

We do not have to work to make this fruit happen. It is just going to come as we stay attached to the Lord Jesus. As we continue in the word of God, then that Word is what sets us free, and the life of God flows from us. God makes the changes. It is nothing we can work at or make happen. It is simply that we are yielded to the Lord, doing what He says by His ability and His power. Philippians 2:13 says that He is the one who is causing us *“both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”* At that point fruit will come, and the result is that the Father will be glorified through what is going on in our lives.

- 4) The fourth way that we can give glory to God is found in Romans 15:6 where it deals with spiritual unity. *“That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* As the people glorify God, God is pleased. Something that is really needed in the body of Christ today is unity. In other words, in the spirit, unity should already exist amongst those who have called upon the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not talking necessarily about physical unity but a bond in the spirit – where we are of one heart and one mind and one purpose – to lift

up the Lord Jesus Christ. As we are doing so, the Lord is going to draw all men to Himself and HE will be glorified as a result.

We are seeing the need for people to pull together in the Lord. We should put aside doctrines of men and commandments of men, things we have just mentioned, that are actually hindering our worship of God in spirit and in truth because we have put other things before the Lord. As a result, there is division in the body of Christ.

Now, when spiritual unity starts to happen, people come into agreement, not just saying, *“Oh, yes, I love Jesus and they love Jesus, we’re brothers.”* When it comes down to practicing unity and working together to the glory of God, they cannot because they have different beliefs. When that kind of nonsense is put aside and Jesus is lifted up in the hearts of the people, then God will get the glory and we are going to be glorifying Him. As long as there is division and bickering in the body of Christ, God is not getting any glory. The work of God is actually being hindered, and since people’s hearts are not right with God, they are not able to enter into a true state of worship. The true state of worship involves unity. When we speak of the glory of God, we are speaking of God’s presence. How important it is that unity exists if the glory of God is going to come into a place as we worship Him.

5) The fifth point on which we can give glory to God is found in 1st Corinthians 6:20. This has to do with giving our entire spirit, mind and body to the Lord for the Lord’s purposes. As we receive Jesus Christ into our hearts as Lord and Savior, our spirits are born again and we are made alive to God. Romans 12:1-2 goes another step – we are to now offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, which is acceptable to God. That is our service, our duty, our purpose, to be dedicated to God in body. Secondly, we are not to let our minds be conformed to this world but have them transformed or renewed by the word of God. Then we can begin to move in the will of God and know the will of God. In order to give glory to God, we need to have our bodies, minds, and spirits completely consecrated or dedicated to God. 1st Corinthians 6:20 – *“For ye are bought with a price: Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”* As we start to realize that our spirits, minds, and bodies do not belong to us but to God, at that point the power of God is going to come into our lives and transform us. We are no longer poor, miserable, wretched and weak sinners, separated from God,

but we are one with the Lord. He is in us, and we are in Him, and we flow together in unity.

This is what worship is all about. It is a heart that is set upon God, that is coming into His presence totally sold out to Him, not wanting to do one's own will and one's own ways but solely wanting to do God's will and God's ways. It is possible because God has said that He is the one working in us, causing us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Then as we come into that kind of understanding, as we come into worship, our life is transformed. We know *"it is no longer us that lives but Christ who lives in us and that the life we are now living in this body we are now living by the faith of the Son of God."* (Galatians 2:20)

We see, yes, our life is no longer our own, it belongs to God. We want to glorify Him in everything that we are doing, saying, thinking. We just want to live, move, and breathe the Lord Jesus Christ. This kind of attitude and these kinds of actions, as we are totally sold out to God, will give glory to God. We will also find that God's ability is going to flow in our lives to enable us to walk closer with the Lord everyday as long as we are in this world, waiting for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is very important that we be totally sold out to the Lord. Often times we might think, "Yes, Lord, I'll do that and that to keep that and do my thing with that, but the rest I'll give to you." That kind of attitude is not really pleasing to God because it isn't total surrender to the Lord. It is not really having Jesus Christ as Lord. So, I encourage you today, as I encourage myself everyday, yield every area of your life to the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not let any darkness, do not let any attitudes of this world, or any attitudes of self (pride) get in the way of being yielded to the Lord. Let God have His full reign in your life. As we do so, God is glorified. Many say the Christian walk is difficult. I do not believe that. It is the easiest thing, really, that there ever was when we are totally sold out to God because it is actually God's ability, faith, and life flowing through us. We are a new creation, a new creature. Old things are passed away and God has made everything new. We are now moving, not in our own ability, but in God's ability. That is what makes things easy.

Jesus never intended us to carry burdens. He said, *"Come to Me, you who are weary and heavily laden, and I will give you rest."* To me, when God speaks about rest, He means that it is easy. Sure, we might be persecuted for

the word of God, but it is easy to be a Christian as we think upon the Lord Jesus Christ. Even in persecution, we are not to be cast down. Paul was never cast down even through all the persecution he went through. (See 2nd Corinthians 4) He never fell to the enemy's wiles because he knew God was his strength. Yes, he had many problems going on in his life as he was persecuted for the word of God, but God took him through them all to victory. And, God will see you through them all. God will see me through them all. That is God's promise. It says, "*Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord will see him through them all.*" (Psalm 34)

I want to encourage you to give every area over to the Lord because it is those areas that we have not given over to the Lord that are actually dragging us down. They are giving the enemy an opportunity, and we do not want that anymore.

Here is a quick review. The ways we can give glory to God are:

- 1) Praise from our lips
- 2) Good works from our lives (actions)
- 3) Bearing Fruit – a product of God working in our life through our spirit. The fruit of the spirit, again, are love, joy, peace, etc. These will be produced as we walk hand in hand with Jesus.
- 4) Spiritual unity – we, God's people, are to be in oneness and unity, purposing in our lives to give God the glory and the praise, not being divided over the doctrines and traditions of men.
- 5) Being totally sold out to the Lord, giving glory to God through our spirits, minds and bodies.
- 6) Prayer – God is glorified as His people pray. (John 14:13) Just before verse 13 Jesus was saying, "*To them that believe the works I do, you will do, and even greater works you will do because I am going to the Father. So that the Father will receive glory through the Son. Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*" (John 14:13) As God's people pray in the name of Jesus, Jesus will move and do the work, and the Father God will get the glory. That is why we always encourage people to pray. Call upon the Lord in the authority of Jesus Christ and let the power of God flow into this world to touch and change someone's life. The result is that people give glory to God. It comes as a direct result of prayer. If we are not praying and believing God in the name of Jesus, nothing is going to happen. We are God's people, mighty in spirit, moving out in the name of Jesus. As

we pray, God will do something, for that is what He says. And then the Father will be glorified in the Son because we ask in the name of Jesus, and Jesus did whatever it was we asked.

- 7) A seventh way we can give glory to God is found in Jesus. *“Therefore when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him.”* (John 13:31) As we lift up Jesus, the Father God is then being glorified. Every time we speak or act in the name of Jesus, God will get the glory because Jesus Christ is Lord. This is what God has done. *“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth; and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”* (Philippians 2:9)

The Father is being glorified every time Jesus is being lifted up as Lord. This is tremendously important and exciting for our lives as we move ahead in the Lord Jesus Christ. Every time we speak or act in the name of Jesus, God is being glorified. The Father God glorified Jesus. (And, as the Father was being glorified, Jesus was being glorified, because God was doing a perfect work in Jesus Christ. He sent forth His love into this world and revealed Himself to us that we might know who the Father is, so that we might now be able to come to Him through the precious blood of Jesus. We can come to Him in boldness and in confidence with full assurance of life and salvation, of being His sons and daughters. We have full assurance that His life now resides in us and that we are one with Him as He is one with us, that we might give Him glory and praise that is worthy to His name, that we may be able to come to God in worship.)

I give God the glory today for what he is doing in your life and in my life as we move ahead in His word and promises and as we lift up Jesus as Lord.

David gave glory to God: *“Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: For all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all.”* (1st Chronicles 29:11)

Chapter 6

PRAISE AND WORSHIP

Let us look at the difference between worship and praise, how praise operates, and what the benefits that come from praising the Lord are. Praise comes from a thankful heart to God. It is different from worship. When we are praising people, we are acknowledging them. We are giving thanks, honor and glory for what they have done. In the same way, as we praise God, we are acknowledging God, giving Him glory, honor, and thanks for the things He has done, is doing, and will do in the time ahead.

Many times as we praise the Lord, we are giving Him thanks for what He is going to do in the time ahead. Worship is more of a love relationship with God. Praise often sets up worship. As we acknowledge and honor the Lord and give thanks, at that point we are setting up a relationship where worship is able to freely begin to flow in the spirit of the meeting (or in our home or wherever we are).

Often as we leave praise, we enter into worship. It is at that point that we rest in the Lord. We worship and delight in His presence – spiritually, it is a love relationship going on. Praise is a little more active and involves much more exuberance on the part of the people in what is going on physically. Here are some examples of what God’s word says concerning the encouragement to praise. *“Sing praises to the Lord, which dwelleth in Zion: Declare among the people His doings.”* (Psalm 9:11) Here is a relationship of praise and declaring His doings, the works of His hands. One way praise can be expressed is through singing to the Lord.

➤ *“Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: For praise is comely for the upright. Praise the Lord with harp: Sing unto Him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto Him a new song: Play skillfully with a loud noise. For the word of the Lord is right; and all His works are done in truth. He loveth righteousness and judgment: The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.”* (Psalm 33:1-5)

This kind of praise involves rejoicing in the Lord. Praise is comely or fitting for the upright. It is behavior that is pleasing to God. It comes from a person who has been set free by the Lord Jesus Christ. We are righteous in

God's eyes. We are put into right standing through the blood of Jesus. The praise that comes forth from us for what great things God has done in setting us free is to be our behavior. It is acceptable behavior that comes from a heart that knows it has been freed by the blood of the Lamb.

We find also that praise is to be expressed through the use of musical instruments and the singing a new song. We know that God is the one who has put a new song in our hearts. So now we sing to the Lord.

1st Corinthians 14:15 tells us we sing to the Lord either with our understanding (singing praise to God so that other people understand it), or we sing in the spirit, singing in tongues (in the spirit) to the Lord. Both are acceptable and pleasing to God. God says to do both. Why? *“For the word of the Lord is right; and all His works are done in truth... the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.”* (Psalm 33:4) This is why we lift our praise and thanksgiving to God.

Praise comes from a thankful heart to God. It is always rooted in the working and ability of God and the works He has done amongst His people. This is why we come and acknowledge God by thanking and praising Him and telling the people what great things God has done in behalf of His people, you and me. This is what praise is about – acknowledging God. It enables God to move as we praise Him.

➤ Here is another expression of praise coming forth: *“Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: Come before His presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord He is God: It is He that hath made us and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise: Be thankful unto Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations.”* (Psalm 100)

Many times when people are praising God, a joyful noise goes up to God. There is exuberance! It may be loud, and it is joyful. Praises are always rooted in joy because in the presence of God is fullness of joy. The Bible says that God inhabits the praises of His people. At that point God actually comes into the place. Then God's ability and working is able to flow. Wherever God is present there is fullness of joy. (Psalm 16:11) We serve the Lord with gladness and we come before His presence with singing.

Singing often brings the Spirit of God into a place. As we rejoice in the Lord and sing, God is free to move. As David was playing on the musical instrument and singing praises to God, the demonic spirit that was influencing Saul would leave. As people begin to sing and rejoice in the Lord, the influence of the enemy which is over a person often begins to lift and lighten as the person lifts up praise to God through singing (a confession of the mouth). We are to enter into His gates with thanksgiving (again, praise is centered in thanksgiving to God for the works He has done) and we enter into His courts with praise (that is, an expressing of thanksgiving, mercy and love of God for His goodness towards his people). As we are doing so, God is pleased. When we come with a thankful heart to Him and bless His name because of His goodness, God begins to move in our behalf.

- *“Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee.”* (Psalm 67:3) This is an exhortation for God’s people to acknowledge the great workings of God. As we do so, we are testifying to God’s greatness, which then allows God’s ability to flow into any given situation.

- *“Sing unto the Lord a new song and His praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: Let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the Lord and declare His praise in the islands.”* (Isaiah 42:10-12)

Again, we see a call for God’s praises to go throughout the world because of who God is and because of the greatness of His workings in behalf of His people who have called upon His name. God loves His people. He loves you and me today in a way that we cannot even begin to acknowledge or express. As we praise God, we are acknowledging Him with our understanding. As we praise God in spirit (in tongues), we are praising Him from our spirit by the Holy Spirit, who knows the inner most thoughts of God. (Romans 8:26-28) That kind of praise is pleasing and acceptable to God. (1st Corinthians 14:2, 17)

I fully believe that, according to God’s word in Ephesians 1:12 and other places, we are created for the purpose of being to the praise of God’s glory.

We are here to acknowledge and honor God, to give glory to Him and to love Him. Also, we are here to tell people about the great workings of our God in behalf of His people. As we do so, we are actually allowing the people to get set free. They hear about the greatness of God and His workings, and they then turn to Him. God is faithful to move towards anyone who calls upon His name they will not be ashamed.

➤ *“By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name.”* (Hebrews 13:15)
Our purpose and calling, because of Jesus Christ and the working of God’s love towards us, is to offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually; that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. This is our purpose. There are not to be any more blood sacrifices. Once and for all the blood of Jesus has paid the price to make us right with God. Now it is only our due service to give thanks to Him – the sacrifice of praise.

I get so excited when I look at the purpose that God has given to us and for us in this life. We are here, saved by the blood of Jesus, to tell people what great things God has done. This is what praise is all about. As we are acknowledging God, in praise and thanks for what He has done, He moves in behalf of His people.

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light: Which in time past were not a people, but now are the people of God: Which had not [in times past] obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.” (1st Peter 2:9)

I love this! We are a royal priesthood! The priesthood in the Old Testament offered up sacrifices to God. In the same way, we New Testament priests offer up the sacrifice of praise to God out of thankful hearts for the greatness and the goodness of God’s mercy and love towards us, in loving us and setting us free in Jesus Christ.

Our groaning, griping and complaining causes God to leave the situation. When we praise God instead, then He comes into the situation and is able to move in behalf of His people.

Psalms 148-150 is very good material for praising the Lord. Many times they seem to just flow together. We can praise the Lord together by simply reading Psalms 148-150. It is exciting to read God's word aloud and speak our praise and thanks to Him. We are acknowledging God, we are honoring Him, looking to Him, and reverencing Him. As we do so, His ability begins to flow.

As we noted earlier, there are different methods of praise. We see in some places in the Psalms it says, "*Clap your hands all ye people, shout unto God with a voice of triumph, shout unto God with a voice of praise.*" Other times, we see the use of various musical instruments. Clapping, shouting, praising with a loud voice, praising with a low voice, praising on the trumpets, praising in a dance (David danced before the ark of the covenant as he was bringing it into Jerusalem), and as we praise the Lord by acknowledging Him, many times the body responds by dancing to the Lord. This is acceptable behavior to God.

I have ministered in many places with different kinds of worship and praise to God. As long as it is done out of a heart that is open and yielded to God, and the people are doing it as to the Lord, then it is pleasing and acceptable to God. God looks at the heart. In some places a dance would seem to be inappropriate, but according to the Bible, in some situations and circumstances it is not inappropriate. It is a way to praise the Lord.

We are not talking about obnoxious behavior but we are talking about delighted hearts in the Lord, who are lifting up their spirits, minds and bodies to exalt the Lord God and to give Him thanks for all He has done. Praise is, many times, more exuberant than worship. Praise stirs up the people and many times their bodies jump, they shout and give glory to God this way. Worship, many times, enters more into a peaceful rest, into a communion with the Lord. Praise sets up worship. We begin by acknowledging God's greatness out of a thankful heart. Then we enter into worship—our love affair with God.

See some of the results when people started praising the Lord. See what happened in their midst as the people lifted their thoughts off of the situation and got them onto God and what God did. (2nd Chronicles 20:21) The background is that there was an army coming against Jehoshaphat and the Israelites. They were in bad straits, being outnumbered seriously. It looked like all was lost for them. As they were fasting and praying the Lord gave

them some direction. God told them to send out the singers in front of the army. They were to send out the praisers and the people with the musical instruments.

This is quite unusual battle strategy and war behavior – to send out singers and praisers in front of the warriors, but, this is what God instructed. We have a powerful lesson here to learn concerning praise.

- *“And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for His mercy endureth forever.”* (2nd Chronicles 20:21)

This is what Jehoshaphat told the people to do.

- *“And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, which were come against Judah and they were smitten.”* (2nd Chronicles 20:22)

They were brought under by the power of God. God Himself moved in behalf of the people as they acknowledged the Lord and began to praise Him, thank Him, and sing about the beauty of His holiness, about how wonderful God is, and how wonderful His deeds are. The power of God came forth and God routed the enemy Himself.

If we want victory in our lives, we need to learn how to praise the Lord and acknowledge Him rather than the situation or the circumstance. As we lift our hearts to the Lord, then the power of God flows into our situation and God is free to work.

I thank God for David as he was confronted with Goliath. David spoke out his confession. You will remember that Goliath said, “ ‘What am I, a dog, that you send some little kid out here to get me?’ And David said, ‘Today the Lord is going to put you in my hand. You will fall down by the power of God working in my behalf.’ ” As David acknowledged God, he began to praise Him, that young man slew the giant. In the same way, as we acknowledge God and praise Him, no matter how limited we may feel or how we think we are, the greatness of God will well up inside because He is in us. It will be God’s ability that will actually route the enemy, not ours, for we have no ability of our own.

That is why God says in His word, *“My grace is sufficient for you, for in your weakness My strength is perfected.”* As we learn to praise God and acknowledge Him, we are actually loosening the ability of God into the situation. God is then able to set the captives free, literally. Spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically God is able to set His people free, as we from a thankful heart and acknowledge God is greater than the situation. As we start to lift our voices to praise Him, we are then very close to entering into worship where communion and a love relationship with God begins to flow.

Worship may go from exuberant praise as we enter into His gates with thanksgiving (shouting, dancing, playing musical instruments) suddenly entering into a worship dimension where everything quiets down. It may be that we are totally still before the Lord, as He ministers to us and we minister to Him. This is a love relationship of oneness in worship, in honor to His name.

Paul, in prison, was in a circumstance where he was in bondage. He and Silas began to worship and praise God. The Bible says they were singing at the top of their lungs, shouting to God and praising Him, and acknowledging Him so that the whole prison heard what they were doing and singing. (Acts 16:25-34) At that point, an earthquake opened up every cell door in the prison, and God set the captives free. Paul and Silas were not crying, griping and complaining about their situation and how bad they had it. They began to acknowledge God in the situation, and they praised the Lord. As they did so, the power of God moved.

I know for a fact that the power of God will work and move in behalf of His people because God inhabits the praises of His people. As His people start to praise Him and get their minds off of themselves and their situation and onto God to acknowledge Him, then He moves.

When God is praised, His presence comes into the house, *“So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: For the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.”* (2nd Chronicles 5:11-14)

Chapter 7

THE GLORY OF GOD

The glory of God is usually depicted throughout the Bible as being the presence of God. Praise and worship involves coming into the presence of God. So we can begin to expect that we will see the same evidence of the presence of God that was noted in the Old Testament. In the New Testament it should be even better, or at least the same.

Let us see what happened when the presence of God came in Old Testament times. Moses went up to Mount Sinai: *“And Moses went into the mount and a cloud covered the mount. And the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai and the cloud covered it six days; and the seventh day He called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud and got him up into the mount: And Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.”* (Exodus 24:15)

We find here that the glory of the Lord, when it is represented throughout the Bible, is represented as either fire or a cloud. It appears to be just that way, as a cloud, a fog, or a kind of mist in the room.

As people worship God, there will be different manifestations of the Spirit of God. When we are talking about the glory of God, we are talking about a physical manifestation of the Spirit of God’s presence in this earth.

“Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up – for the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.” (Exodus 40:34-38)

Again, we find the glory of God being shown in the form of a cloud. Whenever the presence of God was there, there was a cloud representing it. As the cloud covered the tent of the congregation, the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, and at that point they stayed wherever they were. We also see that Moses, was not even able to enter into the tent of the congregation because of the glory cloud, the presence of the Lord that filled the tabernacle.

Another term for the glory of the Lord is called the “shekinah glory.” The Bible, in several places, talks about the shekinah glory or presence of God. A cloud or mist is present. We have seen this many times in meetings (that we were holding or were attending) where the Spirit of God was alive and moving as the people worshiped and praised the Lord. God, Himself was in their midst. Jesus says, *“Where two or three are gathered in My name, I am in the midst of them.”*

The glory cloud is where God actually, physically, comes into our midst. We know that He is there by the word of God, but as he comes in the glory, it is in a physical manifestation of His Spirit that we can actually see.

I remember my first deliverance experience, where the Spirit of God was teaching me about delivering people from demons. After the demon had left a woman, her face suddenly lit up (the New Testament talks about *“The glory of the Lord shining round about them.”*) This woman’s face literally lit up with the presence and glory of God. Another time as the Spirit of God was teaching me how to deliver people from demons, a cloud filled the room. So powerful was this cloud, that it was all I could do to kneel. The presence and power of God was exhibited as the glory cloud of God filled the room.

Ever since, when we shared that testimony, on many occasions the glory of God came into the place where it was being shared. Once we were coming back from Arizona (where we had been ministering) and began to share with another individual in the car concerning the testimony of the deliverance (just referred to) and the glory of the Lord came into the car and filled it. The anointing of the Spirit rose up strongly and we were totally overwhelmed. Prophecy began to flow as God was spoke to us concerning things of His Spirit and the work that was to be done at the next stop.

When you are in a place where the Spirit of God is flowing and ministering, many times you will see a cloud or haze come into the place. Do not be concerned; just recognize what it is and start to honor and reverence the presence of God. God is truly there! Scripturally, in the Old Testament, the cloud was the evidence of the presence of God, the shekinah glory.

The time of the dedication of Solomon's temple is recorded in 2nd Chronicles 5:11-14 and 1st Kings 8:10-11. I have taught on this many times. One time a woman who had listened to the teaching (and had always wanted to see this happen) came to our park revival and was praying out in front. The next thing she knew, was that she looked up and saw a cloud roll into the meeting. It rolled in from behind me and stayed just behind me as I ministered the Word. As I finished and began to go out to minister to the people, she sat there and watched the glory cloud of God go over the people. The power of God began to move to set the people free because it was actually Jesus ministering there that night.

It is Jesus ministering wherever God's people go out in His mighty name. Jesus says, *"Whatever you ask in My name, I will do, that the Father receive glory through the Son. Whatever you ask in my name I will do it."* (John 14:12-14) We know that as Jesus ministering, the power of God (the Holy Spirit) is there moving and ministering. We expect to see great and mighty things done by the Spirit of God. That night in particular, the Spirit was ministering in physical manifestation. People were going down under the power of God. (We will take a look at that a little later.) Falling under the power of God is also a physical demonstration of the power of God's Spirit ministering in and to His people.

"And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: For the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord." (1st Kings 8:10, 11)

Here we find a case where the glory cloud of God came into the place and the people who were the ministers were not able to stand up because of the power and presence of God.

Would that this was happening all over today as God's people are ministering. Would that their ministry would be so pleasing to God, that He comes in, in full demonstration of His presence, by power in His Spirit.

We find in 1st Kings that the men were not able to minister because of the presence of God. God was actually doing the ministering that day. This is the kind of thing we can hope for and believe God for to happen in the meetings where we are worshipping and praising God. If these things happened in the Old Testament, they can certainly happen today. Part of God's promise is that we will see even greater demonstrations of His Spirit in the New Testament than they saw in the Old.

Luke 2:9 says, *“And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: And they were sore afraid.”*

This is the account of the shepherds on the night of the Lord Jesus' birth. As the angel of the Lord came to them, the glory of the Lord was present in the glory cloud and shone round about them and the shepherds were afraid. At the presence of a holy visitation, people are filled with awe and reverence for the holiness and presence of God. This is the same way we ought to be. God will come into a place where He is being honored and revered – where He is being worshipped, praised and being given glory. Where His work is being acknowledged, where people are believing God for what He has promised He will do, all of it, not just a part.

We believe that the Spirit of God wants to minister divine life, divine health, divine provision, divine protection, and divine blessing of every kind to God's people. We have seen that as the presence of God came into a place, people were healed simply as they were sat worshipping God. The Holy Spirit rolled over the place, and the people were healed or delivered as they lifted their hearts to worship and praise God, the King of kings, the Lord God of hosts. We can expect this to happen today, just like it did back then. Praise God, it is happening today wherever the Spirit of God is moving and people are honoring and reverencing Him.

Acts 7:55 gives us the account of Stephen being stoned to death for his testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. *“And he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.”* The glory of God being, again, the presence of God. Stephen saw the glory-presence of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. We usually think of Jesus as sitting at the right hand of God, but in this account Jesus was standing. I believe that Jesus was giving a standing ovation to the first martyr to die for testifying to the glory

of Jesus Christ. Wherever God's people are honoring, reverencing Him, and standing up for what God has said, that is where God will make His presence known.

We know today that God is searching throughout the whole world, looking back and forth for someone in whose behalf He can show Himself strong and mighty. (2nd Chronicles 16:9) Would it be you? I believe it will be, as your heart is open to all that God has for you in Jesus Christ.

Leviticus 15:2 gives us another account of the shekinah presence, the glory of God. *“And the Lord said unto Moses, speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: For I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.”*

When God's presence was there, God did not want anyone in the tabernacle. One had to be prepared to go into the presence of God. We do not need to be afraid to come into His presence because of the blood of Jesus. The blood of Jesus has covered us, forgiven us; it has made us right with God.

Being in the presence of God is a “holy time.” In the Old Testament, if the priest was not prepared to come into the Holy of Holies, he would drop dead. That is why they tied a rope around his leg and had bells on him to make sure he was still walking around inside. I fully believe, if we are going to see the glory of God come into a place, the people have to be of one mind and one heart (unity), believing God, worshipping and praising God and being covered by the blood of Jesus. That means we should have our lives clean before God, forgiven. We should come as fit vessels to worship, honor, and praise the King of kings. I thank God today that the blood of Jesus has made us right with Him. Now we need to walk in that – keeping our lives clean and keeping our lives holy before the Lord.

“And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side.” (Ezekiel 9:3) Often the cloud will come down and then lift up. Therefore we need to be conscious of the working of God. When the presence is coming down, that is when the power is there. It is there to do anything that needs to be done. Just expect that will happen by the word of God. That allows freedom for God to do whatever He wants to do. If He chooses to come into

a meeting in the glory cloud, praise His holy name for it. We know that, with or without the glory cloud, God is present and He will move in behalf of His people, if we are simply believing God and taking Him at His word and taking it as true.

When you are in meetings where the Spirit of God is moving in power, you may see someone fall onto the ground floor. Many times this catches people off guard. What you are seeing is a demonstration of the power of the Spirit of God in the physical realm. Some think the person has fainted or died or something.

Look briefly at what actually has happened when a person falls down under the power. Come call it “slain in the spirit.” I do not particularly care for that term because the person is not dead. What is actually happening is the Spirit of God is coming upon them and in this human body cannot contain the Spirit of God’s power and presence. A person falls down, “appearing” to be dead.

Is there anything in the Bible about people falling down under this power? I would like to share with you a few Scriptures to get you started. You can look them up for yourself. For example, when Judas led the soldiers and mob to get Jesus, *“Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am He. And Judas also, which betrayed Him stood with them. As soon then as He had said unto them, I am He, they went backward and fell to the ground.”* (John 18:1-6)

Here was a demonstration of the power of the Spirit of God flowing over mortal bodies. The body cannot hold it so it falls down under the power of God. As soon as Jesus answered them, *“I am He,”* the power of God went forth and they fell to the ground. Someone might say, “Yes, but that was in the presence of Jesus. Jesus said, *“Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there I am in the midst of them.”* (Matthew 18:20) If people fell over backward in the presence of Jesus, then why would they not do it now? He is here; He is wherever people are ministering by the Spirit of God, in His name.

After Jesus rose from the dead, the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. *“His countenance was like*

lightning and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake and became as dead men.” (Matthew 28:1-4)

The men (in mortal bodies) became as dead men. That means they fell down. Have you ever seen a dead man standing up? Certainly not. These men fell under the power of the Spirit of God. People might think it was just an angel. Note here that the Spirit of God, the third person of the Godhead, is greater than any angel, and He is here. He is moving through the people that are filled with His Holy Spirit. He is alive and is in His people.

Here is the account of the transfiguration: *“While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.’ And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face and were sore afraid.” (Matthew 17:5-6)* They fell to the ground under the power of God.

“And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” (Acts 9:4) Saul “fell to the earth.” *“And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul why persecutest thou Me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.” (Acts 26:14)* Acts 9 tells us of Saul’s conversation on the road to Damascus and says that he fell to the earth. In Acts 26 Paul is reciting the same event, and he says that they all fell. The others did not get anything but they fell anyway. Why? They came into contact with the supernatural presence of God. God spoke to Paul, not any of the others. Note here that the others went down, too, under the power of God because they were in the presence of God.

This is what happens when someone falls down under the power of the Spirit of God. They are coming under an overwhelming power of God’s divine presence.

For example, Ezekiel fell to the ground in the presence of God. (Ezekiel 1:28) Then, *“The Spirit entered into me when He spake unto me and set me upon my feet, that I heard Him that spake unto me.” (Ezekiel 2:2)* Ezekiel fell to the ground under the appearance of the glory of the Lord, but the Spirit of God set him back up on his feet!

This is the kind of thing that happens when the Spirit of God is moving as the people are worshipping, praising, reverencing and honoring God. The Spirit of God is able to do some exciting things.

In meetings, some people think it's funny when others fall down. They do not really understand what is going on. But we know today that in many situations the glory of God comes in like a cloud and fills the temple, and the people go down under the power of the Spirit of God. We see healings happen. We see people's lives changed. We have seen alcoholics instantly changed, instantly sobered up by the power of God. We have seen people taken off of drugs by the power of God and the effect of the drugs broken by God's power. We have seen demonic bondage broken. As people are being ministered to by the Spirit of God, things really happen. People falling down under God's power appears strange to the physical eyes and the mind, but the Bible says it is spiritual, and it *is* of God.

Many people say you should not be looking for physical manifestations. What would you say to this? We ought to be believing God, that the same things that happened in the Old Testament ought to be happening in the New Testament and certainly ought to be happening today. Why? Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. (Hebrews 13:8) If He did those things in the Old Testament, He is certainly going to do them in the new. If He did them in the New Testament, He is certainly going to do them today, because we are still in the New Testament.

I fully believe there will be a revival of physical phenomena in these days in which we are living. We are on the edge of it right now. The time is coming when it will get stronger and stronger. God's power will come into manifestation in this hour in a way that we have never seen before, as people are looking to God and believing God, and worshipping and honoring Him, before the return of our Lord Jesus!

Chapter 8

WORSHIP OVERVIEW (Old Testament)

The next few chapters will be an overview of the Scriptures concerning worship, beginning in the Old Testament. Worship is centered around (in the Bible) what is called the “Sabbath.” Sabbath is a term which denotes a resting in the Lord. As we rest in the Lord, and as we worship Him (resting and worshipping go hand), we join in union in our love relationship with God. We are one with Him and His blessings is free to flow to us as we minister to the Lord, knowing that we are in His complete care and provision.

The Sabbath was set up from the very beginning of time, before the fall of mankind. The Bible tells us that God worked for six days and then He rested on the seventh. He called that seventh day holy and blessed to Himself. It says He sanctified that day or declared it holy. It was a day to be used for Himself. It says that He established it and God Himself rested from His labor. What we are dealing with here in the Old Testament and also in the New, is a separation from the world. Sabbath involves a separating ourselves from this world and the affairs of this world for one day. It involves calling it a delight to the Lord, our thinking should revolve around God, and resting from our labors. A second aspect concerning the Sabbath is that one is resting in the Lord. A third aspect of the Sabbath is that it is a type of heaven here on this earth. It is a time, one day a week, when one day is set aside completely for the Lord and for the Lord’s use. During that time we are in fellowship and communion with God for the whole day. That is what is to be forever as we are rejoicing with the Lord, in the Lord’s presence in the new heaven and the new earth.

Sometimes when we are teaching on the Sabbath, people turn off. We do not want you to do so now. Keep your heart and mind open to at least study the whole matter. Long ago, as we were in the spirit, the Lord told us that His people were profaning His Sabbath. (They were not honoring it.) He was saying that whether they were observing the Sabbath on Saturday or Sunday, they were profaning (not keeping holy) it because they were not observing it in the way God would have it to be done. In this book we are dealing with worship, honoring and reverencing God. As we looked in the Old Testament at worship, we see that it centers around the Sabbath. We see

that God had very definite ways in which His Sabbath was to be observed. *“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,”* is a command of God in the table of the law, in the first table of the law that deals with honoring and reverencing God. As such, God had specific ways that He outlined concerning how the Sabbath was to be observed. Again, when we are talking about Sabbath here, we are actually talking about the worship of Israel in the Old Testament, for it revolved around the Sabbath.

“And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: Because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.” (Genesis 2:2,3)

God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it (declared it holy), and He rested from all His work. We note that in these last days, the call of God in the final days before the coming of the mark of the beast, will be that an angel will fly in the midst of heaven (Revelations 14:6 and following) and he will have an everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. The angel will be saying with a loud voice, *“Reverence God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come. Worship Him that made the heaven and the earth, the sea and the fountains of waters.”* What we are dealing with is that in these last days, there will be an everlasting gospel that goes forth from God’s people.

We see a marked increase amongst God’s people in teaching about worship and the importance of worship. It doesn’t take me by surprise because in these last days that is the call that will go forth, an everlasting gospel we note here, to preach to all nations. The content of that gospel is to reverence and honor God and give glory to Him. Note here also, which god it is talking about – *“And worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”* This is talking about the Creator-God.

On the Sabbath, God rested from His labor, and we are now to enter into the rest which God has provided for us in the New Testament in Jesus Christ. The Sabbath, the rest in the Lord and the worshipping of God is what we are concerned about in these last days.

Again, as the Lord was pointing out, His people are profaning His Sabbath no matter which day they are observing it (by not observing it in the way God has set down to do so).

God has very definite ways in which He wants His people to come before Him in worship. It is important to get the facts and that we understand what the word of God says and not sell it short but look closely at it. I know that your desire and my desire is to do what God has said to do. Jesus said, *“If you love Me, keep My commandments.”* (John 14:21-26) That is the desire of our hearts today, to do things the way God has set down to have them done.

“And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground.” (Exodus 15:13-_) The background here is that God said He would provide manna in the morning and quail in the evening for His people according to the cry of their hearts for food from God as they wandered in the desert.

“And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they knew not what it was. And Moses said unto them, this is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat. This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded. Gather of it every man, according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for them which are in his tents. And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, and some less. And when they did mete (measure) it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating. And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of the left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank; and Moses was wroth with them. And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating; and when the sun waxed hot, it melted.” Here comes the part we are interested in right now. *“And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said to them, This is that which the Lord hath said, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: Bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the*

morning, as Moses bade: And it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that today; for today is a Sabbath unto the Lord: Today ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep My commandments and My laws?” (God holds the Sabbath in very high esteem). “See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore He giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day.” (Exodus 15:_)

We see that God Himself reveals the importance of honoring Him and resting on His day by sending a double portion of manna on the sixth day (Friday) to supply for the Sabbath also. Normally, if the manna was stored up for the next day, it would stink. But concerning the Sabbath, we see in verse 23 – *“Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord.”* It is important to understand that God said it!

There are three miracles in this section of scripture concerning how God honored and established His Sabbath, and He intended His people to honor that day. They were to use that day to worship Him and not be concerned about the things of this world, but to spend it delighting in Him. The first miracle is that He gave them a double portion of manna on the sixth day (Friday), this being different from the normal operation. Second, on the Sabbath day no manna was given, in the opposite of what was being supplied everyday except Friday when double the amount was supplied. They had enough food so they could rest on the Sabbath and keep it holy to Him. The third miracle God worked is that the manna did not stink on the second day. As they had stored it up on the other days and kept it over to the next day, it stunk. Moses became angry because of the stink in the camp and because the people were disobedient to God.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep My commandments and My laws?” (Exodus 15:28) This means that the people disobeyed when they went out to look for manna on the Sabbath day. God had said there would be none because it was his holy day, a day to be used for His purpose and not for labor.

Exodus 20:8-11 explains the giving of the law of the Ten Commandments. Note particularly verses 8-11, *“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates [house]: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day: Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it [declared it holy].”*

Very clearly it is included in the Ten Commandments. When we are talking about the law of God in this study, we will make a difference between the law that was written by God’s own hand, and which He carved on stone (and was to be put inside the ark in the Most Holy Place), versus the ceremonial law which was only spoken to Moses and was written down by Moses, (which was to be put only on the side of the ark, outside, never inside, of the ark of God in the Most Holy place in the tabernacle).

The Sabbath law is a part of loving God, it is a part of honoring God, and is a part of the Ten Commandments which are not done away with. We will see what the Lord Jesus has to say concerning the commandments of God.

Note in particular verse 11 – *“For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day: Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”* These words, if you look closely, are almost identical to the ones which we read from Revelation concerning the last days and the call to go and worship the Creator-God. Again, when we are talking about Sabbath, we are talking about resting in the Lord, keeping oneself from the world on that day. It is designated in the Scriptures as a type of heaven here on earth as we spend that day apart from the world just concentrating and delighting in the Lord.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily [truly] My Sabbaths ye shall keep: For it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: Everyone that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: Whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall

surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generation, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed. [See Genesis 2:1-2] And He gave unto Moses, when He made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony [tables of stone] written with the finger of God.” (Exodus 31:12-18)

There is a clear distinction concerning the law of God – the Ten Commandments which were written by God’s own finger, verses the rest of the law which is contained in the first five books of the law (the Pentateuch) which were basically given by God to Moses but not of the same eternal, lasting quality and order as the Ten Commandments which were written by God’s own finger. *“Verily My Sabbaths [plural] ye shall keep: For it is a sign between Me and You [God’s people].... that ye know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.” (Exodus 31:13)*

The Old Testament sacrifices were offered which sanctified the people (forgave the people’s sins) and made them holy before God. In the New Testament we have a new covenant, based on better promises, and the blood of Jesus has paid the price to sanctify or make us holy. Those Sabbaths [plural] and sacrifices are no longer necessary. However, as we note in verse 14, there is a distinction made that is constantly made throughout the Old Testament concerning the Sabbath that is to the Lord (speaking about the seventh day Sabbath, working six days and the seventh is holy to the Lord). Verse 14 tells us the Sabbath is to be holy to us and we are to honor it as holy to the Lord. It is to be an eternal sign of promise between God and His people. It was actually established at creation. This is the way the people in the Old Testament viewed the Sabbath as holy to the Lord, the sign between God and His people forever. In other words, it was an eternal covenant and an eternal promise that was set forth.

Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together and he said to them, *“These are the words which the Lord hath commanded, that ye should do them. Six days work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord: Whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death. Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day.” (Exodus 35:2, 3)*

Again, this is the call of the Lord going forth through His servant Moses, that the Sabbath of rest to the Lord is to be observed for a time of worship and honoring God. We will look at how they actually observed the Sabbath further on in the book.

“Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant and thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: Therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day.” (Deuteronomy 5:12-15)

On the Sabbath or in their worship, the people were constantly remembering and thanking God for His wonderful works in their behalf, and delighting in the Lord.

Here are the various sabbaths for worship that were included in the Old Testament. *“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, concerning the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are My feasts. Six days shall work be done: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, as holy convocation [worship time]; ye shall do no work therein: It is the Sabbath of the Lord in all dwellings.”* (Leviticus 23:1-_)

You can see here that the Sabbath of rest (or worship to the Lord) on a weekly basis was set apart from the rest of the sabbaths which were observed. It goes on in verse 4 and following to list the different types of Sabbaths and the holy convocations, which they had to the Lord. We find that there are different kinds of sabbaths. The feast of Passover is listed, feast of First Fruits, the feast of Tabernacles, the day of Atonement, etc. We see various feasts that were given and they are all called sabbaths because they were all involved in worshipping the Lord.

There is a difference between the other sabbaths recorded in Leviticus 23 and the one that was recorded in Leviticus 23:3. They are actually set apart and are done at different seasons. The seventh day Sabbath or rest to the

Lord is done weekly, and it different from the others. The seventh-day Sabbath is the only one described in the Ten Commandments. All the other sabbaths have been done away with. Various people worship on Saturday or on Sunday and they call that their Sabbath to the Lord.

In Isaiah 58 sets down all the things that are considered true and undefiled worship before God. *“If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”* (Isaiah 58:13, 14)

Here is how we are to correctly observe the Sabbath (not how it is often observed). We are to observe it by: 1) Calling it a delight to the Lord, holy to the Lord, honorable; honoring Him in that day. 2) Not doing our own ways or works, nor finding our own pleasure, nor speaking our own words, but delighting in the entire day in the Lord and our families around the Lord. God’s promise is that as we are doing so, He will cause us to ride upon the high places of the earth and feed us with the heritage of Jacob.

We are to be in the world, but not of it. Sabbath observance calls for a separation of God’s people from the world. God promises His blessing upon those who worship him in His way. They will be above the world’s temptation and influence.

Chapter 9

WORSHIP OVERVIEW (New Testament)

In the world today, the occult and witchcraft circles have what is known as a sabbath also. It is called the “black sabbath.” This is to designate that it is not the holy sabbath dedicated to the Lord God of Hosts, but the black one dedicated to worshipping the devil. In all of the things of God, Satan comes along with a counterfeit. In the same way, when it comes to worship, in satanic worship, it is a sabbath to Satan. There is a true Sabbath dedicated to worshipping the true Lord God.

When I was a little child, I was taught the ways of God and I loved the Lord. I wanted to worship and honor Him. I was also taught His commandments. When it came to the one – *“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,”* I thought that meant going to church. I loved to go to church, and I loved to praise the Lord there. But, when it came to time after church, I would go and observe the rest of the day to my own pleasure and my own likes. I grew up that way, not knowing any differently. However, the more I have gone into the study concerning worship and what God would have us to do as His people, and what is involved in worship, the Sabbath has taken on a new meaning. It is more than just going to church on a certain day. It involves an entire day, set aside to the Lord, calling that day a delight to the Lord.

I began to understand, as I studied God’s word, that involved in worshipping the Lord on His Sabbath day is doing away with one’s own pleasure and work, and spending that whole day delighting in the Lord. This means reading and meditating in the word of God, and doing the rest of the things that Isaiah 58 talks about as true religion – ministering to the orphans and widows, to the oppressed, doing the work of God in this life; and resting from one’s own labors and work.

We are not to do our own work on God’s holy day. (Jeremiah 17:21) We are to spend it delighting in the Lord, worshipping Him in our own homes and also with other people. The Sabbath is a time of separation from the world, its affairs and hustle and bustle, and a time to rest in the Lord, spiritually and physically. It is a type of heaven right now in this earth, until the time of our Lord Jesus’ return. Then we will be before His throne

worshipping and praising our God forever. In the meantime, the Sabbath, that one day a week that is set aside to the Lord for His purposes, is just a taste or glimpse of what is to come when we will be before God forever worshipping and honoring His holy name.

Now move on to the New Testament and look at what is involved in worship. An issue Jesus dealt with throughout the gospels was the way in which He observed the Sabbath. (Matthew 12:1-11) As we go through the Scriptures, we will see that the way that Jesus observed the Sabbath and worshipped the Lord on His holy day was completely different from the way the Pharisees, Sadducees, and the religious leaders of His day observed that day. So, as a result, Jesus was constantly in conflict over the issue of the Sabbath.

Matthew 12:1-13 says, *“At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the corn; and His disciples were an hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto Him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day.”* (Matthew 12:1)

We need to look at God’s word and see what God means when He says to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

What does it mean; what is involved in it? For years I did not know. (But ignorance is no excuse.) In these last days the call of God is going forth (Revelations 14) proclaiming that we are to worship God. That is the content of the everlasting gospel. Worship the God who created the heavens and the earth. The wording in Revelations 14 is the exact same wording used in Exodus 20:8-11.

Jesus did observe the Sabbath: *“But He [Jesus] said to them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungered and they that were with him; How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the showbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are blameless? But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple. But if you had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.”* (Matthew 12:2-8)

This Scripture has been used many times to say that the Sabbath has been done away with. (Jesus, as the Lord of the Sabbath, has done away with the Sabbath). If we look at it closely, we see that this is not at all what Jesus did. Jesus did not do away with the Sabbath. Jesus is indeed the Lord of the Sabbath. This means He is the One who established the Sabbath and all the other laws to begin with. This is why Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath. Who ought to have better known how to observe the Sabbath than the One who gave the law to begin with? This is what Jesus pointed out.

He did not come here to do away with the law, He came to fulfill the law. *“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily (truly) I say unto you, till heaven and earth, pass, one jot or one tittle [speaking about punctuation marks] shall in no way pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”* (Matthew 2:17-20)

In Jesus’ own words, He said He did not come to do away with the law. He came to fulfill the law. Not one part of the law of God [the Ten Commandments, written by the finger of God] will pass away. They are still in operation until the day in which all things are fulfilled and the new heaven and new earth is established. Even then, God’s law is eternal and God’s law is good, and it will stand forever.

Worshipping God is the issue in Matthew 12:1-13. The Pharisees and the Sadducees that Jesus was speaking about had an empty form of religion that denied the power and life of God. They had made all kinds of rules and regulations which were man’s rules and regulations, not God’s. Yet they professed it to be true. For example, you could walk only so many steps on the Sabbath or you were considered to be working. There were other laws

that were senseless and useless and actually made the Sabbath a burden rather than a delight to the Lord as God intended it to be observed.

As the Lord of the Sabbath, Jesus set down rules and told these men how to observe the Sabbath, saying, “I’m greater than the temple and a form of religion. I’m actually the One who is being worshipped. I’m the One who set it down, I’m the Lord of the Sabbath; I ought to know how to observe it.”

What does Jesus say in this verse concerning Him being Lord of the Sabbath? *“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.”* (John 1:1-3) This is speaking about Jesus, the creator, Jesus, the law-giver, Jesus, the life and light to men. Who ought to know how to observe God’s law better than the One who gave it? The men were saying it was the way to observe God’s law. Jesus was saying that the way they were observing it was not the way He had it written down to begin with. It is not the purpose and intention for it to be a burden to My people.

In Matthew 23, Jesus said the Pharisees made things weightier than they were upon the people. They make it into such a burden that no one could keep it. Then, they didn’t observe it themselves the way it is written. The Pharisees were not observing the law in the way it was written down or in the spirit (or intention) in which it was given.

“For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: All things were created by Him, and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.” (Colossians 1:16-17)

All things were created by Jesus and for Jesus. The law of God was given out of God's love for His people, that they might know what is pleasing to Him. In so doing, Jesus was here on earth observing the law correctly. Again, Genesis 2:2-3 deals with the One who created. What did He do? *“And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it [declared it holy]: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.”*

The Pharisees were saying that Jesus and His disciples were working on the Sabbath day, and Jesus said, “you don't understand the Scriptures correctly concerning this.” Exodus 29:32-33 deals with the fact that priests were able, as Jesus pointed out, to profane the Sabbath or to work on the Sabbath and they are considered blameless. In the same way, the disciples and Jesus were acting as priests in God's service and so they were permitted to eat (verse 4) and were guiltless (verse 7).

God's word is true. As we are about His business on His holy day, God honors the true observance of His Sabbath. We are not doing our own works and labors, but we are doing things in the name of Jesus such as encouraging the comfortless, ministering to the discouraged and to those who are in need. When we are about God's business it is considered true and profitable on God's holy day. Contrary to the Pharisees, who considered going to the temple on the Sabbath and sitting around in their own homes praising the Lord, we can and should be out about God's business wherever we are, in the name of Jesus. God will honor that as we do it unto Him.

“Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent Me. If any man will do His will, He shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: But he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.” (John 7:16-18) (Jesus always gave glory to the Father, He took no glory to Himself. That meant that He was a true prophet of God. In the same way today, when we as His people give glory to Jesus, in Jesus' name, the Father is being glorified and we are true).

“Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill Me? The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee? Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers; and ye on the Sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man on the Sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at Me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day? Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.”
(John 7:19-24)

Jesus was again defining what is to be done on the Sabbath day. It says in the Old Testament that they were able to circumcise in fulfillment of the law on the Sabbath day. In other words, that was a work of God. Jesus is showing that on the Sabbath day, if people are truly doing the work of God, they have the right to go forth in the name of Jesus to lay hands on the sick and heal them, because it is the work of God. Jesus was not doing away with the Sabbath but fulfilling the Sabbath and trying to show the people the true way it is to be observed as to the Lord by the Spirit of God. Jesus did the will of the Father. He performed the works of God on God's Sabbath.

Along with Isaiah 58:6-7, we see clearly that this is what Jesus is trying to get across to the people. Doing things God's way will bring God's power into the situation. That is true religion; that is true worship as laid out in Isaiah 58. Taking care of the needy, taking care of the poor, encouraging sisters and brothers, and setting the captives free is true religion. Also included in the Isaiah 58 section is the observance and keeping of God's holy day (verses 13 and 14) as a delight to Him, a day of worship and a day of honor.

In the four gospels Jesus taught on the highways and byways during the rest of the week. However, on the Sabbath day Jesus was found honoring the day in the synagogue. *“And He [Jesus] came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: And, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.”* (Luke 4:16)

It is important to understand that Jesus Himself observed the Sabbath. Jesus still moved in the old covenant, but the point is that Jesus is our example. He worshipped the Lord on one specific day and He called it a delight to the Lord. He was found doing the works of God on that day.

A different light is shed on the accounts in each of the gospels. “And it came to pass, that He went through the corn fields on the Sabbath day; and His disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto Him, behold, why do they on the Sabbath day that which is not lawful? And He said unto them, have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was a hungred, he, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the showbread which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And He said unto them, the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.” (Mark 2:23-28)

A new distinction is being made. Jesus did not do away with the Sabbath.

To the contrary, He established the true purpose and intention of God’s Sabbath was for man to rest and to honor God. A day out of a week should be set aside apart from the things of the world, set aside for a person to rest physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually, to rest in the Lord. A day was to give us a glimpse of a type of eternal rest to come in the new heaven and new earth. This was the true purpose and intention of God’s Sabbath. Sabbath was for man!

The Pharisees and the Sadducees and other religious leaders turned it around so that man was a slave to the Sabbath, which was not at all God’s meaning. As noted, Jesus did not do away with the Sabbath. He actually brought in or ushered in the true meaning (the intention and purpose) and did the true works involved in keeping God’s Sabbath. Then God’s people could

experience the rest, glory, and honor that comes with getting away from the world as far as you can. You are in this world but not of it, so on the Sabbath we get out of this world and get in the spirit. We spend that time with God and His people, thinking on the things of the Lord, not being concerned about the daily affairs or what decisions we will make during the coming week.

This is in direct contrast to the practice of the Pharisees, also made the Sabbath anything but a delight to the Lord by binding people to rules and regulations (which God Himself had not established). God made the Sabbath for man. He certainly knows what He is doing. He knows what men need. He knows men need rest and spiritual communion with Him. One day a week was to be set aside for that purpose. God Himself observes His Sabbath. (Genesis 2:1-2)

The Sabbath is not a bunch of rules, rituals and rites. It is a time of fellowship with God and His people, causing them to think on Him. It is a time to do the works of God – to heal the sick, to mend the brokenhearted, to let the Spirit of God set the people free, to rest from work in this world. Jesus went about with that purpose, and the leaders came against Him, saying he did not observe the Sabbath correctly, and He did not know how to worship God. They charged Him with being false. We know Jesus to be true!

Here is another example concerning worship and what God is looking for: *“Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders, for they wash not their hands when they eat bread?”* (Matthew 5:1, 2)

How was Jesus violating the Sabbath, according to these people? They said He violated it by outward signs. Jesus says to judge righteous judgment and not by the appearance of things.

Chapter 10

WORSHIP OVERVIEW (New Testament)

Continued – Gospels

In the Bible worship, thus far, has centered around the Sabbath and what is involved in the Sabbath. Worship is a love action towards man as well as towards God. The Lord has presented that true worship and undefiled, true religion, is that which is based on love for God. Our love for God is evidenced as we are loving towards one another. Thus, we cannot say we love God if we do not love His people. As we have pointed out many times, worship is actually our love response to the Lord in thought, word, and deed.

Jesus came to a place where the Pharisees were asking Him this question – *“Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders, for they wash not their hands when they eat bread? But He answered and said unto them, why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, honor thy father and mother: And, he that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, it is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; and honor not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias [Isaiah] prophesy of you, saying, this people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoreth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”*

The religious leaders of the day had put aside the true commandments of God and had actually instituted their own traditions and way of interpreting God’s law. Thus, they were setting aside God’s law, and Jesus said, *“Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.”* (Verse 6). In other words, they were following the tradition of men before

the commandments of God. In many cases they actually set aside the commandments of God. What we are dealing with here is that the commandments of men and the teachings of men have to be sorted through and set aside, and the true commandments of God have to be brought forth in these last days. We have to take a look at what is the acceptable and pleasing worship to God.

As the Spirit of God moved during one of our services, He taught us about worship and the Sabbath of the Lord and what was involved in it. He said to tell the people, “Whether My people are worshipping Me on Saturday or Sunday, they are profaning or violating My Sabbath and not keeping it holy.” We were to tell the people this.

The teachers of the law had put aside God’s true commandments and were teaching their own doctrines (their way of interpreting the law of God). This is not pleasing to God, for verse 9 tells us that Jesus said, “*But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*” Man fought for truth the commandments of men rather than the commandments of God. This is a sorry state of affairs in some of God’s churches throughout the world.

We really should say “church” in the singular sense, because there is really only one church. We are either in God’s family or we are not. In the New Testament, they did not have all kinds of different groups, with all kinds of different little doctrines, titles, and designations. There was only one church, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. That was His body. The only true church is the one that exalts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and acts obediently to God’s word, teaching the whole Bible and the commandments of God, which have not been done away with.

Jesus clearly stated, “*Thus (verse 6) have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. But in vain (verse 9) they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*”

People today are still drawing near to the Lord with their mouths and honoring Him with their lips, but their hearts are far from Him. Any heart that is seriously concerned about walking with God, will love God and His people and keep His commandments.

Our desire is to worship the way God has established, in the way He has set down. I thank God for your openness to His word. Many of the things that the Lord taught us went against the grain on everything that I had ever been taught, but as God opened His word, it clearly made sense that what God said was true. Sabbath is a commandment of God that is listed in the Ten Commandments. These, the Ten Commandments, are unalterable laws of God.

For men to change God's Sabbath constitutes the command of God becoming of no effect because of the tradition of a man, resulting in a loss of the Sabbath blessing because of vain worship.

Again, the Lord had pointed out that His Sabbath was not being observed correctly. The worship was not being observed correctly, whether on Saturday or Sunday. God was looking for an entire 24-hour period, set aside, as a taste of what will be in the new heaven and the new earth, as we are worshipping God. It is to set aside and separate God's people from the world and the affairs of the world. There was to be no buying or selling on the Lord's Sabbath, nor was there to be any seeking of our own pleasures or doing our own works, or any of these kinds of things. We are to set it aside solely for rest and doing God's work. It is very important for us to note that God has not done away with His commandments. Often times people today think that God has put aside His commandments because of Jesus. If people would really spend time in the Bible, they would see clearly that the law of God has not been set aside because of Jesus' coming. Let us look at Jesus' own words concerning this.

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily [truly] I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle [punctuation marks], shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

(Matthew 5:17-20) God’s blessings are involved in worshipping Him in the way that has been established by God, and He established it to be done on the Sabbath day. Jesus did not do away with or change but rather fulfilled God’s law. Jesus states that God’s law will not and cannot be changed without there being consequences to those who alter His law. God’s law still stands, even if people attempt to change it. Jesus, Himself, honored the Sabbath to the Lord.

Exodus 20 shows which Sabbath has been designated to be observed by God’s people. (Exodus 20:8-11) The one written by God’s own finger has not been done away with.

“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shall you labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall not do any work. You, nor your sons nor your daughters, your manservant nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor the stranger that is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” (Exodus 20:8)

The word of God delineates and specifies which one is the Sabbath of the Lord is included in the Ten Commandments, the seventh-day Sabbath. Jesus observed the same Sabbath. (Exodus 31:18) By God’s own finger, by God’s own anointing, by God’s own words, God carved into the stone tablet: *“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.”*

He specifies to “remember” the Sabbath day. Apparently God knew that in time people were going to forget it and not observe it in the way He said to observe it. He said to remember the Sabbath day (for what purpose?) to keep it holy. The Lord spoke to us. “My people are profaning My Sabbath.” These are the same words that were used in the Old Testament. Whether people observe the Sabbath on Saturday or Sunday, it is not merely going to church for an hour or two on that day and then going out and using that day for whatever we want. This is not observing correctly the Lord’s commandment.

Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more; but ye see Me: because I live, ye shall live also. And that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you. He that hath My commandments [it is clear and crisp] and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest [reveal] Myself to him. Jesus answered and said unto him, if a man love Me, he will keep My words: And My Father will love him, and we will come unto Him, and make our abode with Him. He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings: And the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father’s which sent Me.” (John 14:15-26)

Remember, Jesus said that “The law was not done away with, nor would it be done away with.” Jesus fulfilled it (in our place) that we might have the life of God. Our salvation truly rests in faith in Jesus Christ alone. We are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, not by our works lest anyone should boast. It is a gift of God. (Ephesians 2:8-9) This is clear and it is true. The Lord Jesus said that the commandments of God are a guideline for us now as to what God’s will is for our lives, how we are to live, and what we are to do. Jesus basically summed up the whole law in two commandments. First to honor the Lord your God, to love Him with all your heart, mind and spirit, and secondly, to walk in love towards our neighbors as ourselves. As we look at the Ten Commandments, we discover that the first part deals with loving God and the second table of the law is recorded for us to know what is involved in loving our neighbor as ourself.

Remembering the Sabbath day and worshipping God is a part of the first table of the law in honoring, loving and worshipping God. Jesus said, *“He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: (verse 21) and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest [reveal] Myself to him.” “If a man love Me, he will keep My words.” (verse 23) “If ye love Me, keep My commandments.” (verse 15) “He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me.” (verse 21)*

To honor the Sabbath is God’s command. It is all a part of truly worshipping God. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament show it clearly to be a matter of honoring God. It is a taste of what it will be like in the new heaven and new earth. One day a week set aside right now, a glimpse of what will be forever as we worship God and separate ourselves from this world.

As the Spirit of God pointed out, the Sabbath will be a point of persecution for God’s people. There will be a time when the world comes against God’s people as they observe God’s Sabbath and worship Him in a way that He has truly intended it to be done. This will be a time of separation from the world. That is what the Sabbath was all about in the Old Testament. It actually designated who were and who were not God’s people!

What the apostles? How did they worship God? *“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: And many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common: And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all*

the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved...” (Acts 2:41-47)

Here is an example of what went on with the apostles and the believers and New Testament believers. Note they continued *“daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house.”* We see a “daily” practice of praise and worship of God and a continuing in the word of God. The apostles continued daily in the temple and broke of bread from house to house. (verse 46)

“And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.” (Acts 5:41-42) They had just been persecuted for the word of God, but they continued their practice according to the next verse (verse 42). Daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ. Their program was stepped-up, for God’s people are to be worshipping and praising God every single day.

I fully believe that with all my heart. We need to be delighting in the Lord every day and encouraging His people not to fall away from the Lord Jesus but to continue to press on in the things of God’s Spirit. We need to move by the Spirit of God, encouraging one another, that no one’s faith fail in the day of testing.

The apostles taught and preached Christ daily in the temple and in every house. But, the question is, did they have a day specifically designated to the Lord where it was set aside to the Lord for worship and for practice in spiritual things?

“And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures. Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And some of them believed, and

consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.” (Acts 17:2-4)

Paul, as a continuous practice (just like Jesus, as we pointed out earlier), went in and preached to the people on the Sabbath day. This was a time the people gathered and he took every opportunity to preach the word.

Acts 16:13 tells of what happened in Philippi with Paul, *“And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.”*

This was the practice of Paul on the Sabbath day for he designates it was on that day. The Sabbath day was not out of effect and he himself was observing it. What was he doing? He was going down to the river to pray. He talked about Christian people (verse 14) *“And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.”* Others came to the Lord as a result. On the Sabbath day, Paul was observing the things that were to be done on that day. He prayed and preached the word of God. Note again, they observed it.

At the council of Jerusalem the apostles said what things to abstain from: *“But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.” (Acts 15:21)*

What the Gentiles were to do was stated in verse 20 which basically had to do basically with the ceremonial law. The preaching of the law was done every Sabbath day in the synagogue. According to Jesus’ commands, there was more to this. No Gentile or covert would have to observe the ceremonial law. There is no Christian who should observe the ceremonial

given to Moses. In the name of Jesus we have been set free from the ceremonial laws.

However, the question today is, what do we do with the Ten Commandments? What did the apostles do with the Ten Commandments? Do we or do we not observe the Ten Commandments? Jesus clearly stated that the Ten Commandments still stand. Not one jot or tittle should pass from them until the new heaven and earth are established. Those who teach and observe the commandments will be considered great in the kingdom of God. Those who do not teach and do not do the commandments of God will be considered the least in the kingdom of God. This is important! What is involved in true worship? What are we going to do with the word of God?

I thank God for your openness to His word and thank Him that you are diligently searching the Scriptures. Take a look at God's word that we are sharing with you. Do not receive it just because we are saying it, look for yourselves into God's word. Consider these things we are telling you. Do not shut them off before you check out God's word. I know that the Spirit of God will lead us into all truth in Jesus' name! (John 14:26, 16:13-14)

Chapter 11

WORSHIP OVERVIEW

(Epistles)

We noted earlier in Revelation 14 that in these last days there will be an everlasting gospel proclaimed throughout the world. It will consist of this statement, *“Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: And worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”* (Revelations 14:7) The call to everyone throughout the world in these last days will be that of worshipping God. This is the content of the everlasting gospel.

Paul established a principle, sorting out what was true teaching and what was false teaching. (Colossians 2:2-23) Whenever we talk about the Sabbath, right away that is an issue in the Christian church. It is an issue in the world also, because the Sabbath involves the separation of God’s people from the world for a twenty-four hour period. The Sabbath is tempting taste of what is involved in the new heaven and new earth, as we will be before God Himself.

As we scan Colossians 2, we note a warning found in Paul’s teaching. It is a warning to the people who are exalting and putting other things before Christ Jesus. As we have already noted in our study on worship throughout the Old and New Testament, the Sabbath was actually the day around which worship of God was centered. Jesus Himself established Himself as Lord of the Sabbath.

Notice that Jesus did not do away with the Sabbath. He was actually teaching the people how the Sabbath was to be observed. Who ought to know better than the Lord of the Sabbath, the One who actually set down the

declaration to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Who ought to better know how to observe and keep it holy than the Lord Jesus Himself?

Jesus Christ is the center of our faith. He is the center of our worship. He is the only way we can come before the Father God in worship and praise. Without Jesus Christ, religion is void, empty and vain. You can keep all the commandments of God as you try in your own strength, but you will fall short; and you cannot have salvation through the observance of the law. You cannot have salvation through any of the commandments. Salvation and life with God is only possible through faith in Jesus Christ! Salvation through faith in Jesus is God's gift to us "*not by works lest any man should boast.*" (Ephesians 2:8-9) There is no person who can keep the law of God perfectly. That is why, God, in His love, sent Jesus that we might have life and that we might have it abundantly with Him.

Now then, why do we keep the commandments? Or, are we to keep the commandments? The word of God has established principles which we are to consider and obey as God's people. In John 14, it clearly says, if we love Jesus Christ we will keep His commandments. We also saw in Matthew 5 that Jesus said that the law of God was not done away with. Jesus came to fulfill it, not to abolish it. It was to stand until the day the new heaven and new earth was established in righteousness and holiness. We then see that the law of God *does* stand.

False teaching would promote that Jesus Christ is not the center of religion, but that other observances and traditions of men and doctrines of men are to be established before the Lord Jesus and His commandments. We center our faith in Jesus Christ alone. Because we love Jesus, according to God's word, we then in loving response will keep His commandments. These are faith works. These are works that proceed from saving faith.

As James points out in chapter 2, faith without works is dead. If we are not observing the commandments of God, then we probably do not have any true saving faith. Worship is the key which is centered around the

commandment that deals with remembering the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Why? Because we love God, and our fondest delight and desire is to spend time with Him before the things of this world, before ourselves, before anything else. Jesus Christ is to be our first love. Worship is all about our hearts being set on love. We want to do it God's way. God has set down the ways we are to show our love for Him, the ways we are to come to Him. They all center around Jesus Christ.

Without the key, this is a very difficult section in Colossians 2. It is one of the sections people used to say that we are not to observe the Sabbath any more. Even though people are observing the Sabbath on either Saturday or Sunday, these same people purport that the Sabbath has been done away with. We noted in the last chapter, however, that Paul, Peter and the other apostles observed it. What are we going to do with tests like the ones we are about to look at? I pray you will stick with us as we go through God's word together.

The Lord Jesus Christ has blotted "*out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross.*" (Colossians 2:14)

We cannot be saved by the law. The law condemned us, the law judged us. There was no salvation that could be made for us through the observance of the law because no one could keep the law perfectly (because of our fallen nature). The Lord Jesus came along and observed the law in perfection. In our behalf He fulfilled it, that we could be able now to have life with God. The law of God has now taken on a new order for us – it is a guideline on how we are to walk in His ways. God has set down how we are to love Him through His word.

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days." (Colossians 2:15) It is important to note that Sabbath days

is plural. *“Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”* (Verse 17) We will be getting back to verses 16 and 17 of Colossians 2 because these are key verses. They are used by people to say that the Sabbath day is not to be observed anymore.

Do not take it just because we say it. We want you to follow God’s word closely with us. Do not let the devil steal. Always keep an open heart and mind as you approach God’s word. Pray that the Holy Spirit will reveal God’s truth to us.

“Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not hold the Head, [Jesus], from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, [the elements of the world], why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh.” (Colossians 2:18)

As we have already noted, in many religions there are all kinds of do’s and don’ts which are traditions and doctrines of men and commandments of men that God has never established, or said. The entire basis of religion is centered around nothing other than Jesus Christ. Jesus clearly said of the Pharisees that in vain they did worship God, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, teaching as truth the commandments of men. This is an abomination before God.

It is very important to gain clarity concerning worship also. What is involved in serving God? What are we to do, what don’t we have to do anymore? As we look at these Scriptures we will see clearly, and we hold today, that Colossians 2 is referring to ceremonial Sabbath days, and about ceremonial rules and regulations. For example, it mentions what they could eat or drink and what they could not eat, drink or touch. All these ceremonial laws which were given to Moses have clearly been done away with in the coming of Jesus Christ. God has established an order which we are to follow.

Is this referring to the Ten Commandments? We would challenge you today to consider if it is talking about the Ten Commandments written by God's own finger, given by God's own command, or is this alluding to something Jesus has already taken care of for us? What are we to do with the Ten Commandments?

According to the Colossians 2 text, Sabbath days are to be done away with. Which Sabbath days are being talked about? Now look at Galatians 4. *"Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have know God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain."* (Galatians 4:8-11)

Apparently the people were observing days, months, times and years. They were still observing the old ceremonial law, rituals and rites that were set down. Paul's argument here is against people who were trying to bring the Christians (who were Gentiles) under the old ceremonial laws of Judaism. The Lord, ministering through Paul, said that we do not have to observe these things for our salvation anymore. Nor do we have to be circumcised, which was the mark in the Old Testament of God's true people. We are now in the New Testament, circumcised of heart through the Lord Jesus Christ, and God's mark is upon us. (Romans 2:28-29) Praise His holy name!

Galatians 4 notes that we are not to observe days anymore. What is involved here? Romans 14:1 and following – *"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations."* In other words, do not argue with people that have just come to the Lord, even though they have different teachings and doctrines and are still carrying the trappings of the ceremonial laws. Keep Jesus in the center of things. *"For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: For God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yeah, he shall be holden up: For God is able to make him stand."* Here it comes – *"One man esteemeth one day above another: Another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord: And he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord*

he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live to the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living. But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ."

This is very important: What is Paul speaking about? He is speaking to the Romans about men esteeming one day above another and others esteeming every day alike. Is this pertaining to God's holy Sabbath? We are speaking about the seventh-day Sabbath when we are speaking about the Sabbath, which is clearly established in Exodus 20:8-11 and in all the tables of the law as a commandment that is designated by God as the commandment that is to stand forever. Or, is it referring to the other sabbaths? There were many sabbaths, as we have already noted. We just want to point this out to you and would like you to consider it in light of God's word.

We want to note that Jesus is to be the center of our faith. We are saved through faith in Jesus apart from the works of the law. However, we know that Jesus has not done away with the law and wants us to keep the law which certainly also includes the seventh-day Sabbath.

The ceremonial system is where we need to make a distinction. The ceremonial systems of the Old Testament had many festivals, holy days and annual sabbaths. That system had passed away when Jesus paid the sacrifice for our sins once and for all. I want to show you something very closely here. In Colossians 2 we saw a very specific helpful reference: *"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of any holyday, or of the new moon or of the Sabbath days (plural): Which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is of Christ."* (Colossians 2:16, 17) The sabbath days that were done away with here and which none of us are to observe, are specifically referred to in verse 17 *"which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."*

Apparently these sabbath days, referred to in Leviticus 23, all had to do with making atonement for sin. There was a blood offering that was made for sin. The Bible says clearly that these things were a shadow of things to

come and were fulfilled in Christ. Now look at this: *“For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.”* (Hebrews 10:1) In other words, these atonement sacrifices recorded in Leviticus 23 (there were seven annual sabbaths) did not fulfill what was needed for the people. They were a shadow of the fulfillment which was to come by the precious blood of Jesus given for us on the cross – that would pay the price for our sins once and for all.

When Jesus came these sacrifices were no longer necessary. This is what Hebrews 10 is getting at. Note clearly verse 1, *“For the law [these ceremonial laws and ceremonial Sabbaths] having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.”* In other words, these atonement sacrifices recorded in Leviticus 23 [there were seven annual Sabbaths] were observed every year. Leviticus 23:4, 24, 32 and 39 deal with these sabbaths. *“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared Me.* (Hebrews 10:4)

Does this not tie in exactly in with Colossians 2:17? That is a shadow of good things to come which were fulfilled in Christ’s body. *“In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come in the volume of the book it is written of Me, – to do Thy will, O God.”* (Hebrews 10:6)

God’s word is clearly showing us that the offering of Jesus Christ’s blood on the cross paid the price for our sin, once and forever. It is done so there is no more offering for sin. There is no more need for any of these ceremonial sabbaths. No more need for the sacrifices that were done on the ceremonial Sabbaths. Therefore, we do not need to observe these anymore. But does that pertain to the Sabbath of the Lord, the seventh day Sabbath? The one that God declared Himself and declared holy to Himself? I would challenge you today to say no. I will show you why.

That old sacrifice system (for our sins) passed away in Jesus. The old system foreshadowed the coming of Christ and the giving of His body and blood for us. The believer is not, therefore, to return to the types and

shadows of the old ceremonial law. We do not need to observe its seven annual sabbaths as recorded in Leviticus 23:4, 24, 32 and 39. All of these were to be kept in addition to or besides the sabbaths (plural) of the Lord (Leviticus 23:38). As these ceremonial and ritual observances were no longer binding, the Christian believer is (in this passage of Colossians, Galatians and Romans) exhorted not to permit any man to judge him in these things. That is what Romans 14 was dealing with. None of these passages have any reference at all to the seventh day Sabbath of the Lord, because it has nothing to do with being a type for Christ paying the price for our sins. In other words, the seventh day Sabbath has nothing to do with Jesus' paying the price for our sins.

The Sabbath has to do with worshipping God, separation from the world, and resting in the Lord as a type of the new heaven and new earth to come. It is rather a type for the rest which remains for the people of God in eternity. As such, like the rest of God's law, the seventh day Sabbath will remain in effect forever.

Romans 14:5-6 has to do with people who are still honoring some of these old holy days, and we are not to judge them. This observance has nothing to do with men honoring or not honoring the old holy days. It has nothing to do with cancelling the Sabbath which God Himself established to and for Himself that His people might honor Him and rest.

The Scriptures in Colossians 2, Romans 14, and Galatians 4 are not at all dealing with the seventh-day Sabbath which is included in the Ten Commandments. They have to do with all these other ceremonial sabbaths which were set up for atonement purposes to pay the price for the sins of the people on a yearly basis. The blood of bulls and goats was involved. Now the blood of Jesus has paid the price once and for all and so we do not need to observe those things anymore.

Hebrews 4:1-11 was written to believers in the New Testament, pointing out: *“For we which have believed do enter into rest, as He said, As I have sworn in My wrath, if they shall enter into My rest: Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, and God did rest the seventh day from all His works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into My rest. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: Again, He limiteth a*

certain day, saying in David, today, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus [Joshua] had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His.” The term used here for rest is “sabbatizing.” It actually has to do with a keeping of a sabbath. The actual meaning of that term in the Greek means to have a taste of what is involved in the new heaven and the new earth. Note, a Sabbath was to remain for God’s people.

I would like now to share with you a word from the Lord. One time when I was in the Spirit, the Lord made this point clear and He gave me this word:

Worship is an endearing love relationship, like marriage. What God has joined together, let not man put asunder. God instituted and designated the Sabbath (speaking about the seventh-day Sabbath) and set down how to come into His presence. Only God’s way is acceptable worship. Man has no right to esteem one day better or less than another. It is what God esteems that matters! God established a specific day and manner of observance. (Genesis 2:1-2) Man has no right to decide, “I will do it my way.” God has set down how it will be. The two shall leave father and mother and become one flesh. In marriage man joins with woman in unity and oneness. God has initiated in love, and we respond in love by worshipping in God’s way, in spirit and in truth. Only God’s way is acceptable to Him as is evidenced in the Old Testament practice and in the New Testament practice (Hebrews 10:17 and following). God always sets down the terms for our relationship with Him.

Chapter 12

LAST DAYS WORSHIP

“Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel [good news about Jesus] preached, as well as unto them: But the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.” Hebrews 4:1-11

The author of Hebrews is speaking about the children of Israel who did not enter into the rest God had promised for them because of their unbelief. Note here that they did not profit by the word that was preached to them because they did not mix faith with it. Today we will mix faith with the word that is preached.

“For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.” (Hebrews 4:3)

The work of the Lord was being done from the foundation of the world and now God has promised rest to His people. We are seeing here what that rest is *“For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, and God did rest the seventh day from all his works, and in this place again, if they shall enter into my rest.” (Hebrews 4:4)* God has actually provided rest for His people through the Lord Jesus Christ, and that rest is provided.

As we have been studying about worship, we have seen how communing with God and worshipping God brings rest to His people. Throughout the Bible, God has promised and provided a Sabbath rest. The purpose of that rest was to cause God’s people to separate from the world and to delight in God’s presence in worship and in praise to Him. Setting apart one’s own pleasures and works (as stated in Isaiah 58), and just delighting in the Lord for one entire day a week. God, on the seventh day, rested according to the word in Hebrews 4. Note that this is New Testament.

People often think the Sabbath was just in the Old Testament, but as you can see through the Scriptures about worship and what is involved in worship, the Sabbath continued throughout the New Testament even into the epistles.

In the book of Hebrews, it is still being talked about. This is something for us to consider.

“And in this place again, if they shall enter into my rest, seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: Again, He limiteth a certain day, saying in David, today after so long a time; as it is said, today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.” (Hebrews 4:5)

Here there is a certain limiting of a day. That day, as the call goes out concerning Jesus, is today. Today is the day of salvation, today is the day of healing, today is the day of deliverance, today is the day of our God. However, throughout the Scriptures, God set aside a specific day that He declared a delight to Himself. He declared it the Lord’s day.

By faith in Jesus Christ alone we are saved. God in His word has set down principles that we are to follow. As we earlier noted, the Lord has told us that worship which is pleasing to Him is worship that is done in the way that God has set down to do it.

“For if Jesus [Joshua] had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day. (Hebrews 10:8) Now the key verse: “There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.” (Hebrews 10:9) The Greek for “rest” is “a sabbatizing,” which actually means in this particular case “a type of heaven.” This is what we have been noting in our study about worship. The Sabbath is actually a type of the rest which is to be ours in heaven as we worship God before the throne forever. Throughout the Bible each of the texts separates the seventh day Sabbath (which is also included in the Ten Commandments) from all of the other ceremonial sabbaths which we know have been done away with through our Lord Jesus Christ. However, the seventh day included in the Ten commandments is separated from those other Sabbaths. We still, according to God’s word, are to be observing it.

“For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.” (Hebrews 10:10)

Let us take a closer look at what is involved. Is the Sabbath to be observed in these last days also? Revelations 1:10 shows us John (speaking about

himself), *“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.”* What is meant by the “Lord’s day?”

The Lord told us before that, *“My people are profaning My Sabbath, whether they are observing it on Saturday or Sunday.”* Apparently there was a profaning of the Lord’s Sabbath. This means that people were not keeping it in the way in which God had set down for it to be kept. Notice that as far back as the time of the book of Revelation the Lord’s day was still being observed by John.

What is the Lord’s day? People today have taken some things for granted because of what others have said, and this has been passed down from generation to generation. Let us take a close look at what the Lord’s day is. What day was actually set aside by the Lord as the Lord’s day?

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it [declared it holy]: because in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.” (Genesis 2:1) Here is a designation of calendar in the Old Testament and New Testaments which is different from ours today. The Bible cites a seven day week. The days were not named as we know them today. They were named: first day, second day, third day etc., down to the seventh day. The seventh day was the conclusion. That was the day God rested from His work. It says there specifically that He did not declare the first day holy. He did not declare the second day holy, nor the third, etc. He declared the seventh day holy, and He then rested on it. God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy. Concerning which day is the Lord’s day, it should be evident that God declared the seventh day holy to Himself.

It is very important that we substantiate everything with two or three witnesses (scriptures) if we are to establish a principle. God’s word will do so if it is one of God’s truths.

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” (Exodus 20:8) “Day” is a singular noun. It is to be kept holy. The term “profane” means to violate something that is holy. We are to look closely at God’s word ignoring what we do not think rings true. Putting all of these Scriptures together, we would

conclusively see that there still remains a Sabbath for God's people.
(Hebrews 4:9)

The correct Sabbath day to be observed is designated in Exodus 20:8-11. Note that these are the Ten Commandments that Jesus says have not been done away with. *“Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them is, and rested the seventh day: Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”* (Exodus 20:9)

Which day is the Sabbath day? The Lord blessed and clearly specified the seventh day as the Sabbath day (the Lord's day).

“Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord your God has commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall not do any work.”
(Deuteronomy 5:12-14) That is the Lord's day!

John said, *“on the Lord's day...”* There is only one Lord's day throughout the Bible. That day is the day which God Himself set up to be declared holy and to be a rest day to Him. We have noted there is only one such day. There is no Scriptural evidence that any change has happened so that God has done away with His Sabbath, nor the way that it is to be observed.

If one reads Colossians 2, Galatians 4, and Romans 14 without any understanding, it would appear that the sabbaths have been done away with, but we noted the distinction. The ceremonial sabbaths have been done away with in Jesus. It is clear they were a shadow of what was to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ. When Jesus came, those ceremonial sabbaths that were used for blood offering purposes were done away with.

However, the seventh day Sabbath is a type of heaven, which is used in Hebrews 4. It deals with the fact that those things ought to be considered as we are involved in worship. The Sabbath still stands by God and ought to be observed in the way God instituted it. Again, the Lord is concerned about the correct day, and He is concerned about the way in which it is being

observed. God's people will be observing the Word of God the way He intended it to be done.

I believe it is important, before we make any conclusions on God's word, to check everything out (and check it thoroughly). This needs to be done in order to see if this is really and genuinely the case. I was not raised in any understanding about the Sabbath as it is being presented in this book. I was taught these truths by the Spirit of God. He taught me the truth as I was studying worship. He revealed these things to me by His Holy Spirit, and I am now sharing them with you.

Let us check it out together. If it is not true, let us reject it. If it is true, let us take it and run with it, observing it in the way that God set it down. In Matthew 24 Jesus was speaking about the last days: *“And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.”* (Matthew 24:19)

Note that the Sabbath day is still being observed here at the end because it says, *“But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day:”* “Day” is singular, meaning the seventh day Sabbath which is still to be observed. Let us take a look at what is involved in the last days.

Is the Sabbath still to be observed in the last days? I have been searching through God's word because I want to know what it has to say. I don't want someone's opinion or mere tradition; I want what God says, and I know you are of the same heart and mind.

“Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: For my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.”
(Isaiah 56:1)

This is the word the Lord gave me one time when I was in prayer. He said, *“My son, My people are profaning My Sabbath whether they are observing it on Saturday or Sunday.”*

He gave to me understanding concerning what He meant by polluting the Sabbath, as well as how to keep it holy. As a child, I was taught to *“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,”* but no one ever taught me what was involved in keeping it holy. God pointed out that there is a way to keep it holy. There is a way to keep from polluting it. The people who do so are going to be blessed of Him.

“Also the sons of the stranger...” (Isaiah 56:6) (When it says the sons of the stranger, it means the Gentiles which include all of us who are not Jews.) According to Isaiah 56:4 and 5 the eunuchs and others who were keeping the Sabbath chose to do those things that pleased God and take hold of His covenant. They were the ones who entered into everlasting life. Verse 6 also deals with Gentiles. Isaiah 56 is not talking about something that happened back when. It is actually talking about what is coming up in the new heaven and new earth.

“Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, everyone that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of My covenant; Even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer: Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon Mine altar; for Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.” (Isaiah 56:6)

Whenever the Bible says “I bring to My holy mountain” it has to do with the New Jerusalem, in the new heaven and new earth. People that observe the Sabbath (even Gentiles) and keep from polluting it (and take hold of His promises) are the ones who will be brought in. How tremendously exciting and important this is as we get closer to the day of our Lord Jesus’ return, which we are all awaiting.

Will the Sabbath still be observed in the new heaven and the new earth? Let us look at what God says rather than what people say.

“For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of men that have

transgressed against Me: For their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.” (Isaiah 66:22-24)

(“Gehenna” is where all unbelievers will be going with Satan and the demonic host.)

What does it say will be going on in the new heaven and new earth? *“And from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord.” (Isaiah 66:23)*

Throughout the Bible the Sabbath involves the worship of God – and where God’s people enter into rest. It is more than going to a church for an hour or two. We are talking about observing the Sabbath God’s way (the way He has established it.)

So many people think that the commandments of God have been done away with so I needed to have some evidence. I asked the Lord specifically, “Lord, I want some Scriptures to show if this is true, that would show me and your people that You have not done away with Your commandments in these last days.”

My God gave me three Scriptures. The first one was Revelations 14:6-7 *“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: And worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”*

In these end-time days there will be a message going forth. I believe it has already started and I believe that we are a part of it. It will spread throughout Christianity, even though at this point people have no understanding concerning the Sabbath. By the Spirit of God and the spirit of worship God will communicate to His people that the body of Christ will come into a unity concerning the matters of worship. This is what the everlasting gospel that is to be preached is all about. That worship centers around the Sabbath. We are speaking here about the seventh day Sabbath which God has clearly set down in His word.

What has this to do with anything? Notice this text comes just before the mention of the mark of the beast. It is a point in time which we have not yet come to, but we are coming very close. Those that take the mark of the beast upon themselves will not enter into the life of God.

“And the smoke of their torment [those who have taken the mark] ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.” (Revelations 14:11) Involved in that mark is worshipping the beast, the power of Satan.

Another one of the Scriptures God gave me was, *“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they [note this closely] that keep the commandments of God [note the Sabbath is there in amongst the commandments of God], and the faith of Jesus.”* (Revelation 14:12) This shows the importance of keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Jesus says, *“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”* (John 14:15)

In answer to the question, are we to keep God’s commandments even though we are saved by faith in Jesus Christ? Another scripture that God gave me at that time was: *“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”* (Revelation 12:17)

According to God’s word, we need to have both the testimony (or the faith) of Jesus Christ and keep the commandments of God. We are saved by faith in Jesus Christ alone, not by our works lest anyone should boast, (Ephesians 2:8-9) but today if we say we love God (and we are Christians) we will do and keep His commandments. (See James 2:14-26).

The final one that was given was: *“Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.”* (Romans 3:30-31)

The law of God has not been done away with. To the contrary, the law of God has been established by Jesus forever! Who are we as men to say that the law of God is done away with and not do what God has established to do in worshipping and honoring God on His Sabbath, the Lord’s day?

Chapter 13

HOW TO OBSERVE SABBATH THE LORD'S DAY

The Lord revealed that His people, you and I, are not observing His Sabbath in the way He intended, in His holy word, even though we may be worshipping on Saturday or Sunday. Whenever we start to talk about Sabbath, a red flag goes up for most people. It need not be. People have no trouble in observing “Thou shalt not steal” or “Thou shalt not kill” or “Thou shalt not commit adultery” or “Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother.” These commandments have not been done away with, as is well noted throughout Christianity. However, God has also given “Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy” which is included in the list. As such, it is still to be observed.

We want to observe it, however, in the manner in which God has set it down and not the way man has. The Sabbath involves more than just going to church for an hour or two on Saturday or Sunday. What is actually involved in the Sabbath (the time framework)? The first Sabbath began at the close of the sixth day at dusk and went to the close of the seventh day at dusk. In the Scriptures the designations for time is that Saturday dusk through Sunday dusk is the first day. The seventh day is actually from our Friday dusk to Saturday dusk. This is the Sabbath day.

“It shall be unto you a Sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: In the ninth day of the month at even, from even to even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath.” (Leviticus 23:32) This set up the evening to the evening as being the Sabbath. God’s time schedule is a little different than man’s schedule. Man begins with the morning and continues to the evening. In Genesis 1:5 we find the evening to the morning is the first day, etc.

If we are follow God’s way, we need to see from God’s perspective. The evening always begins the day, and dusk of the next day always closes the day. We find the same thing in Deuteronomy 16:6.

“But at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the Passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou comest forth out of Egypt.”

A day begins at sundown and ends the next day at sundown. We see the same thing in Mark 1:32.

What is the purpose of the Sabbath? One, we observe it because God says, *“Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.”* The three major purposes are 1) a separation from the world and the affairs of the world. 2) Enter into rest in the Lord, communing with Him in worship (both public and private) and centering our family’s life on that day around the Lord Jesus Christ, and rejoicing in our God for all He has done for us. 3) It is a type of heaven where we will be rejoicing before the throne of God. *“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.”* (Hebrews 4:9)

It is God’s purpose that man observe the Sabbath because He Himself rested on the seventh day. We are to rest from the labors of this world and simply concentrate on our God.

We know we should do that every day. We can rejoice in the Lord every day, but I don’t know too many people that set aside their labors every day. There is to be a total separation from the world on that one day.

“If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day.” [God says it is His holy day], *“And call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words.”* (Isaiah 58:13)

In other words, we are not to be doing our own work or any kind of work, nor are we to be doing our own pleasures. This would involve watching TV, going to movies, picnicking, doing all kinds of different things that involve our own pleasure. We are not to be speaking your own words – we are not to be speaking about the affairs of the world, the affairs of the day, what we will do on Sunday, Monday or Tuesday. We are to be spending our time thinking on God and speaking God’s Word to one another and encouraging one another in the Lord.

Here is the promise that goes with it: *“Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob, thy father; for the mouth of the Lord*

hath spoken it.” (Isaiah 58:14) This promise of God is true for those who delight in God by observing His Sabbath.

We are to prepare our food and other things that are needful upon the day before. We are not to be spending all kinds of time in preparation of the food on the Lord’s Day. We are to eat, or if you want to fast, that is perfectly fine. Do what you are led to do, but we are not to spend hours in preparation of the food. This should be prepared ahead of time, so the whole family is able to enjoy one another and the Lord, and rejoice in God.

We are to cease from secular or earthly employment and devote ourselves to sacred and heavenly things. *“And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seeth; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.”* (Exodus 16:22, 23)

The day of preparation, or the day before the Sabbath, is needed so that the people can rest and enjoy things on the Sabbath of the Lord.

Obeing God can actually be something delightful! God says His commandments are not grievous. (1st John 5:3) They are grievous to those who do not want to do them. We have found such a great blessing as we seek to worship God and observe His day in the way He has intended, calling the day a delight to the Lord. We have found the week orders out the way God has intended. There is a refreshing and strength to do what needs to be done. Our family is being blessed, and our family is growing even stronger in the Lord together. We look forward to the day we call a delight to the Lord, and we rejoice in our God.

“And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.” (Luke 23:54) it says, There was apparently a preparation day before the Sabbath so people can finish up all our affairs so we do not have to trouble ourselves with them. Grocery shopping and other kinds of shopping should not be done on the Sabbath day. These things should be done on the day before or the day after.

This principle is established in Nehemiah 13:15-22 and Jeremiah 18:21-27. There is not to be any buying or selling done on the Lord's day. We are to separate ourselves from the affairs of the world for that day to delight in the Lord. What are we to be doing on the Lord's day? Jesus told the people, *"Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?"* (Matthew 12:11) This question is put to Jesus for the purpose of catching Him in a trap. So Jesus said unto them, *"What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days. Then saith He (Jesus) to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other."*

The principle Jesus set down is that if there is an emergency on the Sabbath day, one has to deal with it. Most importantly, people are to be healed in the name of Jesus on God's holy day. People are to be baptized on God's holy day. People are to be visited in the nursing homes (Isaiah 58); because God is concerned about the widows and orphans and the people who need to be ministered to. In other words, the works of God are to be done on God's holy day.

We are to put aside all the other work such as cutting the grass or our regular employment. We put aside all those things, and we concentrate on doing God's work on God's holy day. This is not a day for ordinary labor, nor for being lazy or idle, nor for our amusement, but is intended to be for rest both spiritually and physically. It is a day to be spent in meditation or thinking on God's word, sharing it in the family as well as individually in public worship.

We believe this is a wonderful time for families to come together in the Lord and to rejoice in Him.

How often now-a-days does the family have time to get together for anything? There always seems to be one scurrying here and the other scurrying there. God has provided, in His infinite wisdom and love a day which God's family can come together in Him. What a blessing it is to God's people when they begin to realize this and do what God has set down.

God has said He made the Sabbath for man, and not man for the Sabbath. God knew man had a need for rest, physically as well as spiritually in Him.

He knew that people needed time as a family to get together in the Lord, to rest in God, and to communicate the Lord to one another. We are simply to take that time out of the world with all of its hustle and bustle and evil, and, as a type of heaven have a time to rejoice in the Lord.

God knew that we needed this rest, this is why He said, *“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.”*

Again, our salvation is not based on keeping the Sabbath. Our salvation is based on faith in Jesus Christ alone. However, God had set down the Sabbath to be observed. Jesus said, If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. You do what I have given you to do. The Sabbath is a time for holy joy and a time for mutual helpfulness as we go and encourage one another in the things of God.

There has been a change in the Sabbath observance. Have you ever thought about how that came about? If you are like me, you were probably never taught anything about the Sabbath being on a different day than when most of us have observed it. Sunday was always the day that we were taught was the Sabbath day, and we were to observe it and keep it holy. This was passed down from generation to generation.

I wonder, today, how many have actually taken the time to do some research into the Sabbath to find out what day actually is the Sabbath. The Bible says the seventh day is the Sabbath. I had never taken too much thought about that fact. I had always assumed that Sunday was the Sabbath. The reason people gave was that Jesus rose on Sunday, and so it was set down by the apostles and others as being the Lord’s day. I took that idea hook, line, and sinker and just believed it as being true. However, as the Spirit of God started to deal with my heart, God showed me that the seventh day Sabbath still stands. And it will stand forever!

How do we then account for a change of the day? If we are to observe the Sabbath correctly, we also need to get in on the correct day. People are not observing the Sabbath today as the Sabbath that God intended. God intended for a 24-hour period to be set aside for Him, not one or two hours and we go out afterwards and do whatever we want to do after church. We also want to deal here with the fact that there has been a day change. The question is, why was it changed? How did that change come about?

Let us look first at why the day was changed. Jesus said, *“In vain ye do worship Me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.”* He was speaking to the Pharisees. He was saying that the way they observed the commandments was in this way, putting man’s ways and man’s teachings before the commandments of God.

As we look around us we see a breakdown happening in family situations and I would just like to pose this thought to you. In 150 to 200 years, if people do not think that marriage is the standard but think that living together is the standard, how would people ever think that marriage ever was a standard? They would not! Grandpa did it this way, daddy did it this way so “I can do it this way.”

People are taught down through the ages this way. In the same way, if we were to go back, we would see that actually the Sabbath was changed from Saturday to Sunday. I had never done any looking at this but simply took it for granted that as soon as people mentioned the Sabbath, they would not want to hear any more.

I believe in doing things God’s way. I believe in searching the Scriptures and proving things out whether they be true or false. I know you are of like heart. So that is why we are taking a look at this.

Why was the Sabbath changed from Saturday to Sunday? It is clear from the Scriptures that the seventh day is the Sabbath. Friday dusk to Saturday dusk is clearly the Sabbath as God has set down. I want to pose to you today that over these centuries this change has happened and people have so taken this tradition of men, as you will see it is, and they have programmed it to be a commandment of God. But it is not so and if you were to search the Scriptures you would actually find no evidence to support Sunday worship. There are only two places, in fact, that deal with this.

Acts 20:7 is one of the Scriptures used to substantiate that a change was made by the apostles from worshipping on the Sabbath (Saturday) to worshipping on Sunday. In this passage Paul was there preaching, so let us see what happened.

“And upon the first day of the week” (the first day is in our designation today, Sunday). We know that Jesus rose on Sunday, the first day of the

week. This is Scripturally substantiated and is a common, accepted fact among Christendom.

In Matthew 28:1 it is made clear – *“In the end of the Sabbath,”* In other words, as the Sabbath ended at dusk, *“as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week”* (in the early morning), *“Come Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher.”* As we know, Jesus was already risen from the dead.

“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.”

This is where Paul spoke late and the young man fell out of the window. Paul, by the Spirit of God, raised him up in the name of Jesus. Verse 7 clearly says that they broke bread, Paul preached to them so he could depart in the morning, and Paul continued his speech until midnight.

Scripturally this was actually no longer talking about Sunday but Saturday night, a Saturday night meeting because the day designation always began at dusk.

Scripturally a day is dusk to dusk. Therefore, upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them ready to depart in the morning and continued his speech until midnight. This cannot be used to establish Sunday worship but was in actuality a Saturday night meeting!

The fact that their meeting was held on the first day of the week does not establish a precedent for Sunday worship, in the place of the Sabbath. It simply states that they were meeting on that day. The first day of the week actually begins Saturday night at dusk and continues through Sunday at dusk. God’s Sabbath or Lord’s day begins Friday dusk to Saturday dusk.

It is more than likely that this final meeting of Paul’s which went past midnight actually occurred just following the close of the Sabbath (at dusk Saturday night). Thus it was a Saturday night meeting, not Sunday worship at all.

Also there is no mention there of the sacredness of the day. As we noted in Revelations 1:10, it actually designates the day to be the Lord's day. In other Scriptures when God is talking about the Sabbath, He is talking about the Lord's day: "*My day, My holy day,*" the Lord says. There was but a simple statement as to the day of their meeting. In other words, there was no sanctity about this first day of the week as there is when God is talking about His Sabbath or as even John says in Revelations 1:10. When it is talking about the Lord's day it is clearly talking about the Sabbath.

1st Corinthians 16:2 is often used to substantiate Sunday worship. Let us take a close look at that. When you examine Scriptures, make sure what God is actually saying.

Is 1st Corinthians 16:2 actually talking about establishing first day worship? It says there, "*Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*"

I want to propose to you that this is not talking about worship at all nor is it talking about an offering at a public worship meeting on the first day (Sunday). This is not dealing with Sunday worship at all! It is dealing with each believer being responsible to set aside privately the money for their offering on the first day or Sunday so that when it came time for the public offering they would not have spent the money.

Note, this is not even referring to worship! A public church collection would eventually be taken for the famine victims in Jerusalem. However, this passage states specific guidelines for each individual in how they are to privately set aside (note, privately set aside) and determine what their offering will be. In other words, this Scripture cannot be used to support Sunday versus God's Sabbath (Friday dusk – Saturday dusk) worship.

Chapter 14

HOW SABBATH CHANGE OCCURRED

Why was the Lord's Day changed from Saturday to Sunday? How did Sunday worship evolve? Did God declare such a change?

I would like to encourage and exhort you today to search the scriptures for yourself on this issue and not just believe what has been taught for so many years. Search the scriptures and find out what God has to say.

Many people, and I was the same way at one time, do not even know what it means to "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." I was always taught that Sunday was the Sabbath of the Lord. I was to remember it and keep it holy. Many people today have not been taught any differently. However, as I studied the word of God, I saw that it clearly shows the Sabbath to be the seventh day, beginning Friday at dusk and ending on Saturday dusk.

I have found absolutely no scriptural evidence to support a change from the seventh day (or Sabbath) worship to a first day (Sunday) worship.

Three Reasons

There are basically three reasons that have been given in the past for such a change. One of these reasons was opposition to and separation from the Jewish faith. We find this to be inconsistent with the word of God in that all of us as God's people are now spiritual Jews. According to the word of God we have become children of Abraham through the blood of Jesus Christ and heirs to the promises which belong to God's chosen people, the Jews. Opposing the Jewish faith is to go against God.

The second reason that was given for the change from Saturday to Sunday worship, and this is the one most commonly cited today, is that Sunday (or the first day) is the day of Jesus' resurrection. As such, we are now to celebrate and worship on the day Jesus was resurrected. According to God's word, there is no evidence to support this. We find that none of the apostles (in their epistles) dealt with changing to a first day or Sunday worship.

Another argument often used today for worshipping on Sunday instead of Saturday is that we are not under the law anymore. The Scripture used many

times to support that we are not under the law is Acts 15, which deals with what the apostles told the Gentiles to do: "That they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood." (Acts 15:20) The Gentiles did not need to be observing all the ceremonial laws.

Note here that we are not under the law; we are saved by faith in Jesus Christ alone, apart from the works of the law. However, we see an inconsistency in using this argument, "We are not under the law now." If the Gentiles were only to "abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood," then why did Paul exhort the believers at Corinth not to commit adultery, not to be involved in fornication or drunkenness, and not to be involved in other things such as gossip? In Ephesians 4 believers were warned about lying and stealing. Through Paul and other teachers of the day, God is explicitly exhorting the people to keep His commandments. They have faith in Jesus, and now they are saved, but as James puts it, "Faith without works is dead." What are the works? The works are the keeping of God's law. God is explicitly exhorting the people to keep His commandments.

The argument goes on to say that there are only two commandments now -- one is to love God and the second is to love your neighbor as yourself. It is true that Jesus said that, and it is fine to point it out. However, we see that Jesus was quoting two Old Testament scriptures -- Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18. In Matthew 5:19 Jesus clearly says that the commandments of God have not been done away with; they still stand.

Established by God

The seventh day Sabbath is specifically the one that still stands; all the ceremonial sabbaths have been done away with. The seventh day (Saturday) is to be observed (unknowingly observed by most Christians on the first day [Sunday]). At creation the seventh day Sabbath was established before the law was given. The Lord, by His own finger, also included it in the Ten Commandments. Exodus 20 No scripture supports a change from Saturday to Sunday worship. If so, how did the change come about? You will find this very interesting!

Flying was not considered possible 200 years ago. People would have thought it ridiculous, but it is a common thing today. In a similar way, if marriage was done away with, in 200 years it would not even be considered.

In such a society, people would do whatever they wanted because their granddad did it that way, their dad did it that way, and now they are doing it that way. They don't know any differently.

People don't know how the change from Sabbath worship to Sunday worship happened. I think it is important for the body of Christ to study the history of how the change came about. How did it come to be that we now worship God on Sunday?

We have noted that there is absolutely no evidence in the Old or New Testament for the change from Saturday to Sunday. In fact, we see the apostles and everyone else observing the Sabbath. If God did not change it, who did? If we were to go back through history, we would find the answer simply and clearly. We are not condemning any people today who are involved in any particular fellowship. However, we want to get to the truth about how this change came about. The change from the Sabbath (Saturday) was not made by God but by the Roman Catholic Church.

Observations by Socrates, Sosaman and Webster

Socrates, a Greek church historian of the fifth century, wrote, "Almost all churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the Sabbath of every week. Yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome on account of the same ancient tradition have ceased to do this."

In other words, this change was not made by the apostles. In fact, the early church was observing the Sabbath (Saturday) up and through the fifth century. The Christians of Alexandria and Rome had ceased to do it. This is found in Ecclesiastical History, verse 21 and 22 in a select library of Nicene and post-Nicene fathers, the second series, volume 22, page 132.

Sosaman was another church historian of the fifth century. He wrote, "The people of Constantinople (or the Eastern Catholic Church) almost everywhere assemble together on the Sabbath as well as on the first day of the week, which custom is never observed at Rome or at Alexandria." We see a division even within the early church at that point. The Eastern Catholic Church observed worship on the Sabbath as well as the first day of the week through the fifth century. In other words, they observed a Sabbath worship on Saturday as well as a worship on Sunday. "Which custom (writes Sosaman) is never observed at Rome or Alexandria." The Western Church had divided, stopped what they had been doing, and made a change.

This is found in Ecclesiastical History, in a select library of Nicene and post-Nicene fathers, second series, volume 2, page 390.

How did this change come about? The early Christians had at first adopted the Jewish seven day week with its numbered weekdays. "By the close of the third century A.D., this began to give way to the planetary week. This is what we now know as -- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, etc. In the fourth and fifth centuries the pagan designation became generally accepted in the western half of Christendom. The use of the planetary names by Christians attest to the growing influence of astrological speculations which were introduced by converts from paganism. During these same centuries, the spread of the oriental solar worship (especially that of Mythra, the Persian sun worship) in the Roman world had already lead to the substitution by pagans of the day of solas for day of saturny as the first day of the planetary week. Thus gradually a pagan institution was engrafted into Christianity." We find this on page 220 and 221 of Rest Days, by Hutton Webster. Apparently up through the fifth and sixth centuries, Sabbath was still being observed in the eastern part of Christianity. However, in the western part (centered around Rome and Alexandria) the change had come. They had already dropped the Sabbath and were worshipping solely on Sunday.

What was the motivation for such a change?

Confusion Produced

It was a compromise of God's word in order not to disturb the practice of pagan people. Sunday was the day of pagan worship. In addition, it was hoped that they would simply change from worshipping false gods to worshipping Jesus. Did it work? No. In fact, it created confusion about whether the Christians were now worshipping the sun god.

Another early historian, Tertullian, wrote, "Others with greater regard to good manners, it must be confessed, suppose that the sun is the god of the Christian because it is a well known fact that we pray toward the east and because we make Sunday a day of festivity. What then, do you do less than this? Do not many among you with an affection of sometimes worshipping the heavenly bodies likewise move your lips in the direction of the sunrise? It is you, at all events, who have even admitted the sun into the calendar of the week and you have selected its day, Sunday, in preference to the preceding day (which we know is the Sabbath) as the most suitable day of the week. Now by resorting to these customs you deliberately deviate from

your own religious rites to those of strangers [or the pagans]." This is found in Ad Nations, i-13, in the Ante-Nicene fathers, volume 3, page 123.

We see that the Christian practices were confusing the pagans. The pagans thought the Christians had now become pagans because they had taken Sunday as the day of festivity and worship, and they had changed the calendar so that instead of going with God's order of the first day, second day, third day, fourth day, etc., they had now changed to the pagan designations of Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, etc., all in benefit of pagan gods. The tactic of changing the day made the pagans think that the Christians had become pagans.

Decrees by Constantine and the Catholic Church

If it created confusion, why did the change to Sunday continue? It was put into civil law by Constantine in 321 A.D. and into church law by the popes of Rome. "On the venerable day of the sun, let the magistrates and the people residing in cities rest." This is the civil law that was set up by Constantine in 321 A.D. "Let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits because it often happens that another day is not suitable for grain sowing or for vine planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost. (Given the seventh day of March, Crispus, and Constantine being consuls each of them for the second time.)" This is found in the Codex Justinianus, library 3, Title 12-3, translated by Philip Schaff, D.D. It is found in The History of the Christian Church (the 7-vol. edition), 1902, Volume 3, page 380.

Constantine was the emperor of Rome from 306-337 A.D. He himself was a sun worshipper in the first years of his reign and later professed a conversion to Christianity. However, it is noted that in his practices it was apparent he was still an admirer of the sun god, Apollo. He made into civil law, or public law, that Sunday was declared to be a day set aside for rest.

Who gave the Catholic Church authority to change God's Sabbath to Sunday? God did not. They did it themselves! On this subject The Converts' Catechism of Catholic Doctrine, which received the Apostolic Blessing of Pope Pius X, on January 25, 1910, stated -- "Questions: Which is the Sabbath day? Answer: Saturday is the Sabbath day. Question: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday? Answer: We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church in the Council of Laodicea

336 A.D. transferred the solemnity or the holiness from Saturday to Sunday." Second edition, page 50.

A Doctrinal Catechism, by Rev. Kennan, approved by Most Rev. John Hughes, D.D., Archbishop of New York, states, "Question: Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept or commandment? Answer: Had she not such a power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her. She could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority."

In their own writings, the Catholic Church says it had the power to change the worship on Sabbath to Sunday by papal decree. It is substantiated here. They even said that there was no scriptural authority to do so. The only way they could do it was because they (the church) had the right to change the authority of scriptures.

In An Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine, by Reverend Henry Tuberville of Douay College, France, the following, "Question: How prove you that the church has power to command feasts and holy days, or establish new laws and regulations? Answer: By the very act of changing the Sabbath to Sunday which Protestants allow us. And therefore, they fondly contradict themselves by keeping Sunday strictly and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same church. Question: How do you prove that? Answer: Because by keeping Sunday, the (Protestants) acknowledge the Catholic Church's power to ordain feasts and to command them under sin. And by not keeping the rest of the feast days, by her commanded, they again deny in fact the same power." Page 58.

We see that all of the reformers recognized that the commandments of God still stood. Yet when it came to the issue of the Sabbath, the fourth commandment, to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, there was a change.

Compromise Revealed

Even the Catholic Church, who made the change by the pope's decree, say they hold the Protestants in account on this very issue. Here is a quotation from a document entitled, "Why Don't You Keep the Sabbath Day?" from the Library of Christian Doctrine, pages 3 and 4. This was written by the

Catholic Church in response to the Protestants breaking away from the Catholic Church, as to what was going on in the Protestant movement. "If the Catholic Church, and not an ordinance of God, made the change from Saturday to Sunday, why did the Protestant movement not change it back to the seventh-day Sabbath in accordance with God's law which all Protestant reformers stand by as not being done away with?"

(That is the question. Why didn't the Protestants change it back to the way it was supposed to be?) Answer: They did not want to change the people's way of thinking and pattern of life even though God's word called that change to take place. They compromised in the Sabbath area what they fought so hard for in other areas -- to get back to doing what the bible says. The Catholic Church noted the fallacy of the Protestant thought in this area concerning the Sabbath.

"You tell me that Saturday was the Jewish Sabbath, but the Christian Sabbath has been changed to Sunday. Changed, but by whom? Who has the authority to change an express commandment of Almighty God? When God has spoken and said, 'Ye shall keep holy the seventh day,' who shall dare to say, 'no, you may work and do all manner of worldly business on the seventh day, but you shall keep holy the first day instead'? This is a most important question." (This quotation was from the Catholic Church, who had changed the Sabbath to Sunday, speaking to the Protestants. They were showing their disregard for the Protestant movement because the Protestants said they professed "Bible, bible, nothing but bible" and yet in practice they did not go back to establish the Sabbath the way God had set it up originally. Instead they went with papal decree.)

Back to the quotation: "This is a most important question which I know not how you can answer. You are a Protestant, and you profess to go by the bible and the bible only, yet in so important a matter as the observance of one day in seven as a holy day, you go against the plain letter of the bible and put another day in the place of that day which the bible has commanded. The command to keep holy the seventh day is one of the Ten Commandments. You believe that nine are still binding. Who gave you the authority to tamper with the fourth? If you are consistent with your principles, if you really follow the bible and the bible only, you ought to be able to produce some portion of the New Testament in which this fourth commandment is expressly altered." This is from the article, "Why Don't

You Keep the Sabbath," from the Library of Christian Doctrine, pages 3 and 4.

The Catholic Church wrote to the Protestants holding them accountable for what they were doing concerning the Sabbath. The Catholic Church viewed themselves as being the only ones with the authority to change a command of God. The Protestants had no right. If the Protestants were going to go on with this change from God's clear commandment, then the Catholic Church figured that they should go with all of the other papal decrees, instead of casting them aside.

General Observations and Conclusions

The seventh day Sabbath is God's holy day by God's command, and He has not changed it. No man or church body has the right to change God's commands. Any alteration by man is an abomination before God. Even today's Sunday worship is not pleasing to God when people are not setting aside the entire day for God's word, worship and rest. Instead they are using the day for their own pleasure as soon as they get out of church. For us, as God's people, to be obedient to His call to holiness and to receive the fullness of His plan for us, we need to honor the Lord of the Sabbath on His Sabbath.

Our salvation is not dependent on keeping the Sabbath, but our salvation is depended on Jesus alone. However, Jesus said, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." We can worship God every day, but God has established the seventh day and declared it holy. A Saturday or Sabbath rest to Him is God's command to us. In Matthew 15, Jesus said, "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." Teaching for doctrine that Sunday is the Sabbath day on which to worship instead of going back to the way God intended it to be is vain worship.

We believe that the Sabbath is going to be a point of contention in these last days. It will be a point of contention among God's true people, the world, and carnal believers.

The question always comes, "Why is no one in the Christian Church really acting upon this yet?" This question is answered in Revelations 14:6-12, where the Lord tells us that this will be a message just before the coming of the beast and the mark of the beast. We are in the last days, and the message

concerning worship and holiness has already begun in the body of Christ. Even now this message will play a part in the move of the Holy Spirit of God, drawing God's people into that which God considers to be true worship before His return, at which time we will worship God forever.

Chapter 15

‘SHOULD WE TODAY KEEP THE SABBATH’

Should We Keep the Sabbath Today?

“These people draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.” (Matthew 15:8-9).

"For to obey is better than sacrifice," (I Samuel 15:22). Obedience is the key to true life and worship of God. Obedience to what? The commandments of the bible which is how God's people are to obey Him in what He wants accomplished. God always sets down the directions. Man has no right to determine or alter God's commands.

Concerning worship and God's holy Sabbath, it is important that we realize that the Sabbath (seventh-day) is an eternal creation principle of God. Like the tithe, the Sabbath was established long before the law was given to Moses. In fact, the seventh-day was established by God before Adam fell away from Him. The Sabbath is also established by the law which is eternal and holy. (Exodus 20:8-11; Romans 7:12-14). It will be observed in the new heaven and new earth. (Isaiah 66:22-24)

God established the Sabbath immediately after He had made His creation. In Genesis 2:1-3, we find that God Himself observed, blessed, and declared holy to Himself the seventh day. We note: God declared holy and blessed the seventh day (Friday dusk to Saturday dusk). God did not bless and declare holy the first day (Saturday dusk to Sunday dusk), nor the second, third, or other days. The seventh day He blessed. Who is man to change what God has blessed?

Only one entire day a week, according to God's word, was set aside by God Himself and declared holy to Himself. Man, before falling away from God, observed the seventh-day Sabbath. Why is it that the Spirit-filled Church in these last days is not observing it to the Lord? The Holy Spirit of God certainly will not violate His own principles!

True, we can and should worship God every day. However, it must be made clear, that when God is talking about His holy Sabbath being kept holy, He

is not merely talking about remembering to go to church! The Lord has definitely set down in His word that there be a twenty-four hour period, set aside for man to rest from his own work, pleasure, buying and selling, and to worship and delight in the Lord. (Isaiah 58:13-14) The Sabbath involves a total separation of God's people from the world, a foreshadowing of the new heaven and new earth to come.

When the Lord was teaching me about worship and His holy Sabbath, He said, "My son, My people are profaning My Sabbath whether they observe it on Saturday or Sunday." At the time, I did not understand what "profane" meant, until the Lord showed me Isaiah 56:1-8. It used the same words about His people profaning, violating, desecrating, and not keeping holy His Sabbath. They were not observing it in the way He declared it to be observed as being holy. To keep it holy means to observe it God's way! "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." (Exodus 20:8)

The Law Was Not Abolished

Let me give you more information for your consideration.

The major reformers and men of God throughout history and today acknowledge that the commandments of God are not done away with by faith in Jesus. (Romans 3:30-31, Revelations 12:17; Revelations 14:12; I Timothy 1:7-11; Romans 7:10-14; I John 5:3; Romans 7:22; James 2:17-26, John 14:15, 21-24.) Jesus Himself stated that He did not come to do away with the law, and that the law stands until the new age. (Matthew 5:17-20)

Sin is the transgression of the law. (I John 3:4 and Romans 5:13). It is willfully expressed rebellion against the holy law of God; as such, rebellion against God Himself. To deny God's law is to deny God's right of authority over one's self. To a person walking in the Spirit, the commandments of God are not grievous and burdensome, but rather a delight. Jesus is truly their Lord. (I John 5:3, Romans 7:22, and Romans 8:4).

The commandments of God are only a problem to those who are carnally minded and who do not want to obey God, rather desiring to serve their own flesh. (See Romans 8:1-14). For the person who is led of the Spirit of God, keeping the commandments of God is a delight and comes naturally in the spirit. The people led of the Holy Spirit are truly sons of God because they are obediently displaying the righteousness of the law being fulfilled in them

through God's Spirit that lives and works in them in Jesus. (Romans 8:3; John 14:15, and 21-24)

The person who is led of the Holy Spirit is not under the law. Why? Because the law is for transgressors (to turn them to Jesus and to fulfill the law). (I Timothy 1:7-11) The person who is walking in the Spirit does not violate the commandments of God. He obeys God's commandments, and because he fulfills the law, he is not under the law, nor does condemnation come by not doing the law. (Galatians 5:16-18; Romans 8:1-4; and I John 5:1-3).

If the law of God is done away with, then why do John, Paul, James, and Peter spend so much time discussing the concern for sin and the need for holiness in peoples' lives? Sin is the transgression of the law of God (I John 3:4). If the law of God is done away with, then there would be no more sin to talk about. (Romans 5:13) Apparently, in the letters included in God's word, since sin and the need for holiness are discussed so much, the law of God must still stand to drive commandment-breakers to Jesus for life; and to provide God's standard for true holiness. (Romans 7:12; and Galatians 3:19-26).

One of the early Church heresies or false teachings, which even Paul was dealing with, was called "Anti-Nomianism." This was the teaching that in Jesus we are no longer under the law, but under grace; so we can now go and sin, living however we want in violation of the commandments of God. Paul in response to this type of thinking stated, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue to sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:1-2).

Our salvation comes by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone, not by works lest any man should boast. Our salvation is God's free gift. (Ephesians 2:8-9). However, if we are truly sons of God, we will obey His commandments. We will live holy by keeping His commandments because of the life of God in us. (James 2:17-26; Hebrews 10:26; I John 3:1-10; I Peter 1:13-25; and Philippians 2:13-14).

Jesus said, "Not everyone who calls to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Read Matthew 7:15-17). You will know the true sons of God by the fruit of obedience to God in their lives. God's true children love to know

and obey their Father's commandments. It is a lie of the devil to say that we do not have to keep the commands of God.

The True Commandments

If the commandments of God have not been done away with and those who walk after the Spirit are to be observing God's commandments, then it is vital that we know in truth what God has set down to be His commandments so we can obey them! Is this not true?

From a little child, I was taught the commandments of God. In my catechism, and in all major catechisms (teaching materials of the church), you will find that the commandment about the Sabbath is listed as the third commandment and reads, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

Are you aware that the devil has violated and counterfeited the commandments of God through the ignorance of men and the doctrines of devils? If this is not the case, why is the fourth commandment, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," called the third commandment in most religious circles' teaching materials?

Take a look at Exodus 20:1-17. Here we find the Ten Commandments of God which were written with God's own finger. You will quickly discover that the true commandments of God, as recorded in Exodus 20, have been altered by the religious world.

This is the order in which they were written in Exodus 20:

- (1) v.3 no other gods;
- (2) v.4-6 no graven images;
- (3) v.7 no taking the Lord's name in vain;
- (4) v.8-11 remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy;
- (5) v.12 honor father and mother;
- (6) v.13 no killing [murdering];
- (7) v.14 no committing adultery;
- (8) v.15 no stealing;
- (9) v.16 no bearing false witness; and
- (10)v.17 no coveting neighbor's house, wife, etc.

Let me show you what the devil, working through religious leaders, has done to the commandments. Check this information with any catechism or teaching guide of any religious organization. You will find these changes:

First, they have omitted the second commandment. This was done so the church could sell, for great financial gain, little images of various saints for people to pray to, in direct violation of the second commandment of God -- "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven images..."

Secondly, they have completely omitted verses 9-11 concerning the fourth commandment and shortened it to read, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy (v.8)." The purpose of this omission is so that they could change the day and purpose of God's true seventh-day Sabbath to any day they wanted, and no one over the centuries would know the difference. The emperor and the pope decided to make the Sabbath on Sunday, which was the pagan day of worship to the sun god.

God specifically spent four verses discussing the Sabbath commandment and how to observe it. What did the Church omit in verses 9-11? If you search the word of God, you will find they omitted which Sabbath day is still to be observed. It is not done away with as were the ceremonial sabbaths. Verses 9-10 reads, "Six days shall you labor, and do all your work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, your God..."

Now you can understand why they had to change God's holy commandment. They could not deceive and change God's holy seventh-day Sabbath to any day they wanted unless they first altered the commandment itself as they taught it to people. They could get away with this because many people, to their shame, do not take the time to know what God really says in His word.

The Lord showed me one time that the teachers of His word are held accountable with a greater responsibility. (Matthew 18:6; James 3:1). However, people who do not search the word of God themselves, to find out and check out what the teachers are saying, are not going to be able to say when they stand before God, "He taught me wrong!" God will also hold the people responsible for believing and acting upon a lie.

The third change that the "church" made was to add a commandment. Since they had dropped the second commandment, they had to add another one in

order to have ten. They split up Exodus 20:17 into two commandments -- "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house," and "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, manservant, etc."

Are you able to see clearly and hear the empty counterfeit that Satan has presented to God's people? This happened through spiritually ignorant and unholy people, who had a form of godliness but denied the power of God. When you change the day of the Sabbath, the blessing of God is removed. The seventh day is blessed, not the first day, because there is no first day Sabbath in God's eyes. He did not command a first day Sabbath; man did.

"In vain you do worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:9) You might say, "But I can worship any day." Friend, you have missed the point! One, the seventh day Sabbath is a command of God. (Exodus 20:8-11) Two, if you are truly going to "Remember to keep the Sabbath holy," there is more to it than going to church an hour or two on a certain day. (See chapter on "How to observe the Sabbath God's way," in our Everlasting Gospel book.) God wants the entire day to be kept holy as a delight to the Lord.

True Believers Can Keep the Commandment

When the Lord taught me about this, line upon line, precept upon precept, He revealed that the Sabbath was going to be an issue of great importance in the last days. The Lord said that great persecution would arise over this issue against God's true believers. The persecution would come from unbelievers and from carnal religious people.

Most of the time, unbelievers couldn't care less what believers are doing, and in many cases they cannot tell the difference between believers and themselves. This is often why they do not want Jesus. However, people who have kept true religion, as the bible says, "...keep themselves unspotted from the world." (James 1:27) People who observe God's holy Sabbath are keeping themselves unspotted from the world, interestingly, on the world's busiest day. Unbelievers will persecute you for this because you are different from them.

Carnal believers, the Lord showed me, have one foot in heaven and one foot in the world. They want the best of both worlds. Jesus said, "Would that you were hot or cold, but since you are lukewarm, I will spit you out of my

mouth.” (Read Revelation 3:15-19) If we are believers, we cannot just do what we feel like doing; we belong to God. (I Corinthians 6:19-20)

The Lord told me to tell the people who are carnal that they had better repent and get both feet planted in heaven, because only the true believers, who have the faith of Jesus and keep the commandments of God, are going to enter into life with Him. (Revelation 14:12; Rev. 12:17; Rev. 3:15-19) We have to have both feet planted in heaven. We are in the world, but not of it. (John 17:15-16, Ephesians 2:6, Colossians 3:1-6)

The Lord said that carnal people would not be able to observe His holy Sabbath because they love the world and because it involves total separation from the world and one’s own desires for a twenty-four hour period. The Sabbath is to be a taste of the “heavenly” on this earth now. (Hebrews. 4:9) Carnal believers love the world and their own pleasures and affairs too much to let go of it and obey God’s commandments. They do God’s commandments only when it is convenient. The Sabbath is not convenient to a carnal believer.

Permit me to show you what God’s word says concerning carnal people who live after their own flesh rather than the commandments and Spirit of God. In Romans 8:1-14, we find this information. First, carnal believers who walk after their own flesh rather than by the Holy Spirit, and do not keep God’s commandments, are under condemnation (v.1). Second, through Jesus, the righteousness of the law or commandments of God are fulfilled in those who are not carnal but spiritual (v. 3-4). Third, carnal people spend their time thinking about and doing the things of the flesh. Spiritual people do the things of the Holy Spirit. They obey the commandments of God (v.5). Fourth, carnally-minded people are going to die. Spiritually minded people are going to have life and peace (v.6). Fifth, carnally-minded people are at war against God. (James 4:4) Those people are rebellious against God by being disobedient to His law and commandment. They deny God or His law to have any authority over them because they have set themselves up as gods (v.7). Sixth, carnal or fleshy people cannot please God. God’s wrath will be shown to them (v.8).

However, those who are true believers walk in the Spirit, obeying the commandments of God and not fulfilling their own fleshly desires. If the Spirit of God lives in us, and we are true sons of God, then we will daily put

to death our own desires and do what His commandments say. We are led by His Spirit (v.9-14).

True worship is a matter of simple obedience to God in all areas of our lives. Jesus has given us new life and the ability to live as God's sons and daughters, fulfilling the law of God in our lives. (Romans. 8:3-4) We as God's true people delight in our God and in His word and commands. (Psalm 119)

In the Christian church today, nine commandments are recognized and followed to the letter. However, the fourth commandment also needs to be recognized and observed. We need to "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt not do any work..." (Exodus 20:8-11)

Are people saved who do not observe God's Sabbath? The issue is not that of salvation, but a loving and thankful obedience to our God and His commandments. We know from His word that a true child of God will not willfully, knowingly, continue to sin or violate God's commandments. (Read 1 John 3:2-11)

"Everyone who commits (practices) sin is guilty of lawlessness; for [that is what] sin is, lawlessness (the breaking, violation of God's law by transgression or neglect – being unrestrained and unregulated by His commands and His will). No one who abides in Him (Jesus) [who lives and remains in communion with and in obedience to Him – deliberately, knowingly, and habitually] commits (practices) sin. No one who [habitually] sins has either seen or known Him [recognized, perceived, or understood Him, or has had an experimental acquaintance with Him] (Jesus). Boys (lads), let no one deceive and lead you astray. He who practices righteousness [who is upright, conforming to the divine will in purpose, thought, and action, living a consistently conscientious life] is righteous, even as He is righteous." (1 John 3:4, 6-7 Amplified Bible)

It is quite clear from God's word, especially if you would continue to read further in 1 John 3:8-11, that a person who is truly a child of God will keep God's commandments. Ignorance is no excuse. We cannot even claim that the twenty-four hour seventh-day Sabbath is not required by God for us to observe in the manner He has instituted as one of His commandments.

A true child of God, according to God's word, will not continue to willfully, deliberately, knowingly, and continually practice sin. (I John 3:9) When a person willfully and deliberately continues to sin, after having knowledge of the truth, will bring God's judgment upon himself. (Read Hebrews 10:26-31)

The body of Christ in these last days is coming into an understanding concerning worship and holiness. Loving God and holiness, in God's understanding, involves obedience to His commandments. (I Peter 1:14-16; I John 5:1-3) "If you love me, keep my commands." (Read John 14:15, 21-24.)

"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy..." is one of God's commandments. To keep it holy means that we are obedient to observe God's day in the way in which He has said to observe it.

As stated before, the Lord told me, "My son, My people are profaning (not keeping holy) My Sabbath, whether they observe it on Saturday or Sunday." The Lord proceeded to show me that not only were we observing His Holy Sabbath on the wrong day, but we were not keeping it holy because we were not observing the twenty-four hour day completely to the Lord. (Isaiah 58:13-14)

A true, loving heart worships in obedience to God's commandments. The Lord Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy (do away with or undo) the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For truly I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or one tittle [punctuation points in Hebrew] shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break (does away with or relaxes – Amplified Bible) one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: BUT WHOSOEVER SHALL DO AND TEACH THEM, THE SAME SHALL BE CALLED GREAT IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN." (Matthew 5:17-19)

The Choice Is Yours

The time of the end of this age is rapidly approaching. God is seeking for His true people to worship Him in spirit and truth. (John. 4:23-24) Truth means in obedience to His ways.

What will you do with God's Holy Sabbath now?

- “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, ‘Fear God, and give glory to him: for the hour of His judgment is come: And worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea and the fountains of waters.’ And there followed another angel, saying, ‘Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.’ And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, ‘If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.’ **HERE IS THE PATIENCE OF THE SAINTS: HERE ARE THEY THAT KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD, AND THE FAITH OF JESUS.**” (Revelation 14:6-12)
- “Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints, who shall not fear (reverence) thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only are holy: For all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.” (Revelation 15:3-4)
- “For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: For their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.” (Isaiah 66:22-24)
- “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear (reverence) God, and keep his commandments: For this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.” (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14) (2 Corinthians 5:10)

As the Spirit of God ministered to me from His word concerning what He considered to be true worship and His holy Sabbath, my heart and mind were convicted by the truth. I realized that for all those years the body of Christ, myself included, had been teaching and living contrary to God's word.

I felt like Josiah when Hilkiah the priest discovered the book of the law which had been lost in the temple archives. When they read God's word, Josiah wept and tore his clothing in repentance. He knew that they were not teaching and living according to God's standards. Josiah repented and initiated a major reform for godliness in his nation based on God's standards. (Read 2 Kings 22-23.)

The truth of God's word concerning true worship and His holy Sabbath has been lost and buried for centuries by religious traditions, commandments of men, and doctrines of devils. However, in these last days, the Spirit of God has again restored the truth. The truth of God demands a decision. What will be your decision?

Josiah acted on the word of God and began a reform to restore God's principles. I believe that God's true people, who have faith in Jesus and desire to keep His commandments, are rising up in response to the Spirit of God's reform in the body of Christ today.

After honestly examining God's word in the area of worship and His holy Sabbath, I believe that those of us who are genuinely committed to Jesus as Lord are going to respond in obedience to God's word. I believe that you and I desire to have all that God has for us because we love and trust our heavenly Father.

I believe that because of your love for God and His people, you who are teachers of His Word are going to seek to continue to lead His people in the truth of God's standards. I know that it is our delight to be faithful to His word and to His people in communicating His word.

“Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:19)

True worship involves obedience to God. God has said, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: In it thou shalt not do any work...For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day: Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” (Exodus 20:8-11) (also Isaiah 58:13-14)

God has drawn the line and said to us, “Which will it be? Will you worship me in the way I have declared, in spirit and in truth, or will you continue to worship me in vain by following the traditions and commandments of men?”

“The choice is yours!” saith the Lord. “If you love me you will keep my commandments.” (John 14:15) Do you love me?! (Read John. 14:23-26)

NOTES