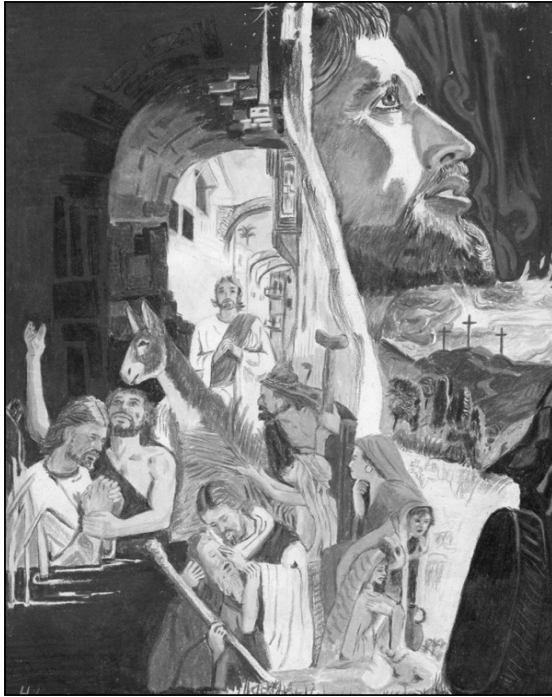


THE WORD – Part VI

Truth Makes Us Free



How many of you know what it's like to have the Holy Spirit change your direction? Well, this month He has certainly done that with this article. I had desired to continue with the teaching on the gifts and go into the details of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12. This would have continued our teaching from last month. But after contact with many of you who read this section, I realized the Holy Spirit was changing our subtopic concerning the word of God. As some of you remember, last month I had asked if anyone had an experience to share concerning the gifts of God, please email us. I got emails and got to speak with many of you. Space does not

permit me to share all that you said, but I will highlight what three of you said as representative of the whole. All of you reacted to the "Eye of the Lord in Current Events" page on this site. I got emails from all over the globe concerning the same topic I shared last month for prayer. Many of you emailed words from other ministry's sites, and I thank you all for that confirmation. I had absolutely no idea that God was speaking the same thing to many others. (Click on the 'current events' link and look at the June Update) As I read your emails and spoke with some of you, I began to realize why the Lord was giving me the epistle of 1 John to share this month in this article and why He gave me the experience that I will share this month on the 'Current Events' page for July. To keep this within the parameters set up in the Scriptures, I will share from three of you only. For those whom I do not mention, please don't be offended. Because of the seriousness of the subject matter I felt I had to choose three people whose lives I know firsthand. Their tent-making skills are retail, secretarial and labor related. I share that to let you know that these folks are not spiritual movie stars. I know them to be worshipers of Jesus in spirit and in truth while they walk among humanity. Their ages range from 20s to 50s. To keep what they shared in context, please read the June update on the current events page as well as last month's article. In response to that Faye M. writes:

Christina, Thank you very much for the email. I just want to make a small comment on the following:

"The church must repent, repent--- don't you see how far the church is falling? There are people that need real food who are dying. Repent, repent"---That is so what I feel, but I have been saying to myself may be it is just me and I need to conform. I keep looking and listening and it seems that no matter what I read in the word there is always someone there to say that is not what God means. It is as if the Bible is questioned at all turns. I for one just refuse to not stand on the word of God regardless. If I don't stand and believe the word is true then what do I have? Well, enough from me. Again, thanks! It helps to know that I am not out in left field. Love you FayeM.

In context to the articles from last month and very much like Faye, Lola writes:

Hi Chris, I believe something is gonna happen again, I feel this uneasiness inside, I don't know when exactly, but I feel this summer or fall.... I've had too many dreams about these things, and I don't know when...but it's going to happen...I know when I moved here the Lord told me this area would be a city of refuge for the end times, of God's power and anointed people would be running here.....we have to be watchmen on the wall, but who is sounding the alarm? ...Lola

I included the whole of Lola's email because what she said sounded exactly the same as many of you have said. So much so, that we believe the Lord told my husband and me

something similar about cities of refuge 8 years ago. The next writer penned a much longer note and with his permission, I have edited it so you get the general idea of what he felt led to write. Daniel V writes:

“If we want to stop our country from being abused by runaway judges, terrorist attacks and immoral laws---never mind our protests or our national days of prayer---we must mend our hearts. Never mind our pleading with senators; never mind our outraging with the media. We must protest and outrage against sin, compromise and worldliness in the church....When will the church leave this present world behind with its ‘planting, building, buying and selling’? (Luke 17:26-30) Our pursuits are not the kingdom of God but success and money....selfish ambition and temporal things.....May the Apostle Paul and the martyrs of old put us to shame! We must raise our voices, not in the streets, but in Heaven’s throne room. Let us plead for our nation, not with men who are really powerless, but with God. God stands over us and cries: ‘If my people...will humble themselves, seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and heal their land.’ It will take humility to confess that our lifestyles are prayerless, careless, earthbound and downright selfish. Jesus never raised His voice in the streets, but boy did He raise it in the temple! The real power lies within God’s people....It’s up to God’s people. Always has been and always will be.” (edited by permission)

There were many more like the three I just mentioned; and while Daniel was a little

more intense than the other two, if I remember correctly, the Apostle Peter said the same of the Apostle Paul’s writings! It may surprise some of you that Daniel is the youngest of our writers this month. I will also add that none of these three had any idea that I would be placing their comments on the web when they wrote. They wrote out of their relationship and passion for the Holy Spirit to exhort God’s people. Some of you emailed the ministry; some went directly to me, others of you I spoke with by phone and others in person. But the gift of God’s word rang out true in all of you. Some of you came from conventional church experiences, others from less conventional home churches and others of you are filled with the living word of Jesus, but in totally unconventional gatherings of the saints. The passion of the undiluted word of God made me realize God’s word to me years ago that as it was when Jesus came the first time so it will be when He comes again. There will be the church we see and the body of Christ, the unseen church. Jesus went to the temple that was made by man but He was really after the temple made without hands. After all of this dialogue and in conjunction with what I felt the Lord was saying to me in 1 John, I have to say that when we listen to all that the saints are saying to express their particular gift of the word of God---God’s word, related as His perspective of truth, will indeed make us free. Sometimes it will free us from organized religion. Sometimes it will warn of famine and other difficulties so that we are prepared. But in every case it will free us of the personal chains that bind us individually.

It is, of course, our enemy’s desire that this ‘liberating process’ is cut short or obliterated altogether. Since we know that he has no power over us, how is it that he gets us to change the work and intention of God’s truth---God’s word---by getting us distracted with other sources of empowerment, as so many of you wrote? This is where I sensed the Holy Spirit going this month with this article. I was challenged for the first time in my life with the difference between the two apostles, John and Paul. When I say ‘challenged,’ I don’t necessarily mean by their writings, but by how God raised them and the environment they grew up in. I kept hearing the Scripture verse in 1 John 4:1-3: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God; every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is the spirit of antichrist of which you have heard that it is coming and now it is already in the world.” (NASV) When John writes “confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh...” that word ‘confess’ means literally to covenant as in marriage with the word and to be one with it. The word ‘flesh’ actually means the meat of an animal; in other words not the soul or spirit, but the actual physical entity. The word ‘has come’ is not the normal application but can mean figuratively or literally. Why was the apostle so particular with his wording? The church during this time was fighting a religious

spirit within it. That principality and those who worked under its influence were trying to say that Jesus only came in 'spirit' not literally. Some even said He was also gone literally in spirit. By using the specific wording that he did, John clearly states that Jesus came within all the symbolism of Messiah both figuratively and literally and that He came in the physical flesh with the actual 'meat' or DNA of who He was. And was, quite literally, still among them in Spirit and in truth.

I find this very interesting and quite relevant to our present church-world condition---for a number of reasons. Since we are discussing the word of God, and His gifts associated with that word, fivefold ministers are special gifts which expose the enemy and further God's work on the earth. Every individual Christian is a special work of God with multitude gifts inside of them to accomplish their God-given task for the benefit of God's kingdom. It is this very personal relationship of character that each person has with the Holy Spirit that gives them the ability to minister to His people. It is your special DNA, both physical and the DNA of God, that makes your covenant-confessing relationship with Christ the destiny-fulfilling factor for your particular generation. That is why I find what goes on in many religious circles of pretending to have a relationship with each other and the Holy Spirit, but actually behind the scenes denying the awesome gift of Christ that each of us is---not in word but in deed---so troubling when I see God's word being spoken. We see this in many different

organizations, from cults to mainline churches. John later goes on to talk about loving your brother. When you read about the early church fathers and mothers, the one overriding truth that hits you hard was that they were real---real in power, in love, in treating one another with such deep respect. There was no hint of pride. Humility was 'in the flesh.' It wasn't just by words but it was in deed. A religious spirit will always deny our deeds, but its words will sound fine to our natural minds. It is only when one is 'in the Spirit on the Lord's day' that you can see it clearly. It is this religious spirit that both apostles were born as gifts ordained by God to expose; and also to help God's people in warfare to defeat its sanitizing effects among our churches and destructive character within our own human nature.

Paul was born in Tarsus. Tarsus had a very influential university---not influential in the sense that it was big, but influential in the sense that it cultivated a desire for learning and integrity. Those born of legal status in Tarsus were born free. They were born as Roman citizens. This is in contrast to the Apostle John, whose upbringing would have almost certainly mirrored Jesus.' The Jews born under Roman occupation were not automatically Roman citizens. John was born into a captive religious system, held captive by its own inability to know God and where He was going. They had divine inheritance, but lacked divine eyesight. Paul would have been slightly more exposed to the Hellenizing or 'Greek' effect of his time; while John would have been raised in a far more traditional Judaizing experience

because of his closer proximity to Jerusalem and its surrounding culture. Of course neither apostle could escape the world they lived in. That is God's idea. It is the world we live in while having our relationship with the Holy Spirit developed that we learn how to deposit the gift we are. This cannot be done in sterile religious settings with a casual 'God-can-do-whatever-God-wants-to-do' attitude. It has to be experienced in the real world. This is why Paul could tell us to pray without ceasing. Literally Paul is telling us to pray everywhere, all the time, in season and out of season. When the Apostle John says in the book of Revelation that he is in the Spirit on the Lord's day, a closer examination of this passage will reveal that 'the Lord's day' he is talking about is every day the Lord makes as a new day, not only the Sabbath. This is not possible without a deep and time-consuming relationship with Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and God, the Father. I didn't learn how to pray and speak God's word in a vacuum; but in a place where city life was dangerous and the saints cried out to God, enjoyed His presence and spoke His word so He could hear it prayed back to Him (Psalm 29). I'm not remotely being critical here, but many church services today remind me of laboratory research events, not life-giving worship where a platform is fostered for God to speak spontaneously and outside of the governing leadership of the church.

I know many find this kind of service frightening, but that's what God did for our family for the first 17 years of our walk with Christ. During that time church never tugged

on our hearts, God did. As a result no one ever had to whip up a service or beg for money or strive for performance for the new program, as is so customary in church settings around the world. Why is this so important for us to foster the Spirit's relationship with His people? Because it allows the Holy Spirit to have direct access to His people so that He can develop them instead of humanizing trends, both inside the church and outside of the church. This is why Paul got into so much trouble with the Judaizers. Like all religious spirits, these folks wanted to continue the religious form without ever having to be challenged by the whirlwind, heart wrenching, soul searching experience of the Holy Ghost. They wanted God to show up on their platform, but without the messiness of casting out the devils that plague humanity, and the challenging effects of a true word coming forth from the throne of God.

John and Paul grew up in the world around them, took what God wanted taken from that experience, but never let the world color their eyesight to the true kingdom of God. Their eyes were always fixed to a place where there was no need for a temple, because God was the temple (Revelation 21:22). The fact still remains though, that there is a temple---there is order and government in God. Human thought would tell us that John would be more able to institute a 'new' temple program and Paul would be better with writing all the rules and regulations, amendments and bylaws for what was a new religion at the time. But God had a different idea. If the Christian

church were just getting started now, unfortunately, I think that's what we would do with these saints. We would structure them to how we viewed their gifts and abilities. This is why the system of old had to crumble. The priests of the temple were unwilling to allow that to happen, so God did it Himself. He allowed the Babylon of the time---the Roman world system to destroy the temple. In this environment both Paul and John developed into the mature givers of God-DNA that was in them; and between the two of them wrote 18 of the 27 books of the New Testament. (Some feel Paul wrote Hebrews, others feel John did and still others vote for someone else. I choose not to weigh into this argument with these numbers).

Paul, having his background as a traditional Jew raised in the Hellenizing world, exposed the lie of following the Law for trusting in salvation. Very subtly today we have trusted in an outward appearance that says we are saved instead of that unseen knowing that surrounds the people of God. As a younger believer, I would be walking among humanity and all of a sudden the bubbling joy of the Holy Ghost would come up out of me in tongues and I would know that just around the corner was another believer---and sure enough, all I would do was turn an aisle or walk a few steps and I would spot them. We didn't know one another personally, but the flesh that I saw was evidence enough through the Holy Spirit that Jesus had come (1 John 4:2). As the years have passed, the sadness that I feel is that I walk into many more churches now

and instead of that joy of the Holy Spirit, I am struck with the discerning of spirits gift that the Lord has given me that I am not in the presence of God-controlling worship, but man-controlling ecstasy.

Yet recently, I have been in a few congregations, both conventional and unconventional, in which Jesus is raising up people that can spot this trauma and are doing something about it---which brings me to discussing the Apostle John. John was raised as a traditional Jew, in a temple system of life and worship that was in the throes of a death rattle. John exposed the death of that worship as loveless and cold. We know of Paul's passion, but many times we forget that Jesus called John and his brother the sons of Thunder. I doubt our Lord did that because it sounded cool. There had to be an outward manifestation of the inward passion that these men had so that the word thunder described them best. Yet God did something so profound in the lives of each man so that in person this passion was not obvious, but in spirit, it was profound. We know that Paul's appearance did not match his writing (2 Corinthians 10:1-11), but that by the power of the Holy Spirit was his gift manifested (Acts 20:7-12). The same is obviously true of John. So much so that as the aged apostle, the divine nature flowed through him to the extent that not even hot oil could kill him. Contrary to what is quite often taught, John carried the scars of this persecution and torture visibly in his body. Yet it would seem that his love to save even the sinners that did this to him never stopped him from discipling and

seeking the lost of the Roman Empire as well as the Jews trapped in the temple religious system.

I asked the question why is it so important to allow the Holy Spirit access to His people? Because only God knows the spiritual DNA you and I carry in our spirits. Only God knows what it will take to unlock that gem in order to give it to a lost and dying world. The religious system does not want that to happen. If it does happen, their game is up. This is why people are taught the gifts of the Spirit, fivefold ministry and the working of the body of our Lord in a controlled worship environment. Religion must control this type of thing or else the true body of Christ will reproduce. If the true body of Christ reproduces, all other forms will shrink. As well the world system does not want this to happen or their form of government will not be reproduced (even in the church). Paul releases the seed of true government by the Holy Spirit today in our midst and John releases the seed of the divine nature of love as life-giving sources for God's people to flow in. No true worship can take place in a man-ordained form of government unless it is acknowledged as such and repented of so that Christ is asked to control that government (even dismantling what God wants dismantled). No true worship can take place in a controlled environment where love is a form, but the power of it is denied. If we loved then we would come clean with each other and God would reveal His order of government.

When John writes about those confessing Christ, we understand that this is not just, 'Oh, I'm saved, I believe that Jesus is Lord and I follow Him,' though certainly that's part of it. The understanding here is of a covenantal marriage union---an ongoing, vibrant love relationship---a personal love-fest, if you will. Something that is so evident by the Holy Spirit that it makes many (not all) of our modern day church experiences look cheap and sanitized---certainly well documented and scripted, but void of all that makes God human in us and what makes us divine in the Holy Spirit. I have no problem with documenting what the Lord is doing. In fact, it was the documentation made by the writers of old that tells us today that something is amiss---and more importantly what we can do to get back on God's highway to His kingdom's glory. An early writer documents the fall of Jerusalem (Josephus, as well as others). It is said by them and oral tradition that not a holy man was left in the city because God had told His people to flee Jerusalem before Titus came. Saints, this is the eyesight of the Holy Spirit. From the emails I received and the discussions I had with some of you, the Holy Spirit is warning us today. Yet, many have been branded as causing strife and creating fear. To be sure, the Holy Spirit is warning us and telling us to pray because He wants to exercise mercy and fill our hearts with faith and hope. As many of you said, it is not appointed to the people of God to suffer wrath. I grieve for the blindness abides in the light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the

darkness and does not know **WHERE HE IS GOING BECAUSE THE DARKNESS HAS BLINDED HIS EYES.**" (emphasis mine, NASV, 1 John 2:1, 4, 5, 6, 8-11). Could it be the reason that we have to develop the people of God instead of God developing them as the source is because like Adam and Eve we are covering the fact that we truly do not walk in love? Again, I'm not trying to be critical, but I hear very little in our mainline churches of the eyesight of God. I hear lots of words and prayers of man, but very little of the true eyesight that would save us from destruction. Two years ago the Holy Spirit had me go to everyone that had falsely accused me and ask them if I had offended them. Saints, that did not bode well with my flesh, but I knew it was the Holy Spirit. I knew the lies and falsity, but the love of the Holy Spirit constrained me to go to them. Surprisingly after that, a door in the Spirit closed and the Lord basically said, (to me personally and through a prophet who knew nothing of what was going on) from now on, if anyone accuses you, you can walk away, love them, but leave them and do what I have called you to do. I sensed in my spirit, and it was confirmed by two others (who also knew nothing in the natural), that from then on, it was up to my accusers to come to me (if they claimed Christ), to walk in love and expose whatever the enemy was saying. Since then I have had accusers, and where I have been able, I have tried to talk to them. Yet there have been others that I can only grieve over and walk away. I don't know if the love of Christ is in them; that is not for me to judge the body of our Lord, it is for

Him only. But I have observed that many did not see nor have the eyesight of the Holy Spirit to understand what was coming down the highway. Some were thrown off guard to world events and events around them. Again, I cannot judge, but I have to wonder was it because their vision was man-love dominated, not Holy Spirit-love dominated? There is a difference. When we are Holy Spirit-love dominated we love even those that hate us. When we are man-love dominated, we love only those that love us.

Was it only the persecution and hardships and trials that turned the sons of thunder and the threatening, firebrand Saul into God-reproducing arsenal weapons of love and martyrdom? Was it their mothers or fathers, or education or hobbies and love interests? Was it their church experiences and leadership mandates? I have to say none of that is complete without understanding that it was Christ and His undying love---and that crucified in them in an ongoing union--- Yet not crucified only, nay, but also resurrected in love and fervent passion for those souls that hated the lovely Lord in them, that they knew intimately and served passionately. I encourage myself daily in the Lord and encourage you also that grieve that it is not appointed for God's people to suffer wrath. Before accusations and trouble come, the Lord warns us. This is how one knows that it is God speaking: LOVE. Love would warn me in truth, though I did not know in fact. Love would tell me exactly what was afflicting trouble and accusations, but love would constrain me to pray for those that were but pawns. And it was love that would

eventually win over even my own flesh that 'wanted to make it right'---to suffer as My Love had suffered and to share as My Love had shared and to praise as He had praised His Father, and my Father in heaven. Christ must needs be 'fleshed' out among us, having already come in the flesh. Thus penitence and love toward one another go hand in hand.

The Lord has encouraged me, and so I encourage you with these words from the Apostle Paul, though they were written for the time that they lived in and for a future time also, they are written for our time now as well: "But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. (1 Thessalonians 5: 4-11) I feel very strongly that the Holy Spirit has made it clear to me for a very long time that the only thing that will draw people to the cross in hard times is the love that the brethren have for one another. That is probably the

greatest gift that the word of God gives us. For prophecies shall one day cease and all the marvelous gifts that are given to us for this life will one day pass away. This is because we are in an imperfect world and we do not see Jesus physically face to face, so these gifts are needed. But one day we will see Him face to face. And when we do, all of the greatest of our faith and hope will be summed up in one word---LOVE. Blessings of faith, hope and love for all of you. Until next month.

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