

## *The Church's Fourfold Ministry*

Israel Y. Patino Jr

When discerning the Word of God, there are many useful divine methods that can be used to help the believer better understand the scriptures. When examining the Word of God, we often time find the repeated use of numbers to represent either good or bad. God's use of numbers has a beneficial use for us. The number 8 for example represents the regenerate man, Noah being the eighth person saved in the flood. Of course the number seven used multiple times, to represent completeness. Twelve apostles and 12 tribes, imply the authoritative tribunal among God's people. The following is a focus on God's *Fourfold Ministry* and proclamation thereof.

### The Fourfold Ministry

The Church's ministry can be described as a fourfold ministry. Even in the Old Testament, God brought about mercy and atonement, through the four horns placed on the four corners of the altar. (Ex. 27: 1-2, Lev. 4: 7, 1 Kn. 1: 50). In the NT, God describes his ministry as such, **Eph 4:11-13**. It is through this fourfold ministry that God has wrought mercy and atonement through Christ and his sacrifice for our sins. It is through these four ministries that God manifests his Manifold Wisdom and the Mind of Christ. The apostles and prophets selected directly by God or Jesus and the others, including ministers and shepherds, are all keepers of the Gospel and the people of God. They are responsible for the well being of not only God's word but his people. The latter following the examples of the former, and continuing to minister God's word, work to perfect our faith, unify the Church as blameless, and perfecting praise.

### The Four Corners of the Earth

**Isa. 11:12**. God often uses the phrase "four corners of the Earth" or some similar expression to represent the uttermost separation from Him. That is, being as far away as the ends of the Earth from the truth. God uses the number *four* to coincide with his fourfold ministry teaching. The only thing that can prevent the scattering of his people is His manifold wisdom proclaimed through is fourfold ministry. How do we prevent from becoming outcast and remaining with God? Through the administration of the Gospel. The preachers of the Church use the examples set by the apostles, and the commandments of God to prevent apostasy and to bring back to the lost from the condition of resolute rebellion. **Deut. 32: 26. Isa. 43: 6**. (see also Isa. 56: 8; Eze. 37: 9-10; Jam. 1:1.)

### Jerusalem

**1 Kings 8:46-50**. This prayer by Solomon was at dedication of the temple. Our main focus, verses 46-50 deal with captivity. Solomon prays that if the children of Israel have been carried away captive because of their sin, he prays that they should be able to look towards the temple, pray to God for forgiveness and plead with him to hear. No matter where they are carried

off, and no matter how far, they would have a home to which to return. He pleads with the Lord to forgive them of their sins and remember his presence among them, in the Temple in Jerusalem; *the place of sacred assembly*. Because it is in Jerusalem that God abides; and the House of the Elect Lady represents his spiritual Jerusalem. Ergo; know this oh sinner, if rebellion has carried you to the proverbial *four corners of the Earth*, it is because you have rejected the manifold wisdom of God proclaimed through His fourfold ministry. It can cast away those that refuse its teaching and it can bring them back! I urge you to look to the house and city where the Lord dwells and allow His truth to heal your rebelliousness. Let your sojourning end here, in the House of God, and let yourself be counted among the gathered, **Matt. 24: 31**.

### Separation from God

**Rev. 7:1**. God also has the right to withhold his teachings from the Church. God can shut up the minds of the preachers and leave them without understanding as evident in Revelations. Sadly, there are some who chose not to draw closer to God but remove themselves from his presence and have suffered the same fate described here. To intentionally disregard commandments of God as articles of faith and dismiss them as matters of opinion is not respecting the ministry of God. We should tremble at the notion that not only does God bless us with revelation, he also withholds it from those who deny him. Those brethren marked apostate cannot comprehend the great matters from the mind of God and have drifted further from the gospel pattern. Their ministry is cut short, incomplete and incapable of true salvation.

There is balance in the scriptures everywhere we turn, good, evil, and all other matters whether spiritual or otherwise. It is God's earnest desire for all men to come to repentance and to know God. Unfortunately, for some, obstinate rebellion and exile from the presence of God is inevitable. Thankfully God has provided us a way to reconcile and return to him. He summons us, through his fourfold ministry, exhorting fallen brethren, and even entreating the unbeliever to come to Him. As we have seen, separation from God is the ultimate punishment, one that we all hope never to endure. Be whole, be complete, be joined to God in his Holy Place and serve him. For no matter how far you are away from him, there are means to draw closer.

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