

# **THE ELEVENTH HOUR**

**By  
Richard E. Bieber**

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# 1

## THE ELEVENTH HOUR

**Read: Matthew 20:1-16**

The stirring of the Spirit of God which is going on upon the earth at this hour has one thing about it which makes it different from any revival or move of the Spirit that has gone before.

This revival is coming with a message heard universally by saints everywhere. The message that this is it! This is the last time around. After this visitation of grace, night will fall when no man can work – judgment will begin!

Somewhere over our heads we hear the clock strike eleven and we know that there is only one hour left.

***And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing; and he said to them, "Why do you stand here idle all day?" They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You go into the vineyard too."***

Now this crowd which is still standing idle in the market place at the eleventh hour is not exactly good looking. It's the seediest outfit the householder has seen all day. The promising types were there early in the morning. These dudes are hard and bleary-eyed and lazy. They were freaked out all night – never got up till the day was half over. They're not expecting anyone to hire them. They're just standing around – killing time.

Then it happens. The miracle! The Son of God comes into the market place and wakes them from their walking death!

This part of the parable has a special application to the hour in which you and I live. The eleventh-hour hiring is taking place

before our eyes. We are part of it.

I don't care whether you've been a good little church mouse all your life – or whether you've been a wino or a junkie for the last five years. Your life is a waste until Jesus hires you.

– You may have been busy going around in those circles.

– You may have been important in other peoples' eyes.

– You may have had power over other men.

– You may have been the most religious person on the street where you live,

but your life was a waste until you got linked up with Jesus. And if you're not linked up with Jesus at this moment, your life is still a waste.

If your life is not truly rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ the Son of the living God, you might as well lie down and be a punk 'cause that's what you are beneath your mask – and God knows it, and you know it! You may spout off beautiful ideals with your mouth but there's nothing inside you.

I'm talking to church people, I'm talking to street people. I'm talking to the Bible-toting Christians.

If your life is not rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ –

If your life is not crucified with His on that Cross –

If your life is not 100 percent given to walking in those footsteps – church or no church, your life is a waste!

Jesus is speaking to you, "Why do you stand here idle all day?" Don't argue with Him. Don't say, "What do you mean idle?" Admit it!

Admit that you've never really been hired.

Admit that you've never given yourself over to anything but your own self-indulgence and your own pet causes.

Jesus Christ is calling people to leave their wasted lives behind them and come with Him.

- Get up and leave that half-baked piety.
- Get up and leave your dried-up pleasure.

"It's eleven o'clock. There's only one hour left. Come with me into the life I have chosen for you to live since before the foundations of the world."

Now when you begin to try to live this new life, your past rises up and says to you, "Where do you think you're going?" "Why I'm going to follow Jesus." "O yeah?" Suddenly you discover that you have 500 chains hooked into your mind and body that bind you to your past – to the life you've been living.

You want to break clear but your body wants that old habit to go on.

You want to make a fresh start but your mind keeps accusing you of the things you've done.

Your guilt – how can you follow Jesus when you're chained to that load of guilt?

You want to be a different person but you're chained to that mess you've made of yourself – to that person you've been for so long.

***0 wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death?***

***Romans 7:24***

There is only one substance on earth which can dissolve those chains: The blood of the Lamb. I don't understand how it works – but it works! Of all the mysteries in God's universe this is the most wonderful.

***How much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.***

***Hebrews 9:14***

When you kneel down before the Cross of the Son of God and confess those things that have you bound to your past, a crimson river flows out from Him to you – touches those chains and they are gone; you are free!

Free from that guilt.

Free from that sick dependency.

Free from the fear of death.

Free from the claims the Evil One has placed upon your life.

***If any man is in Christ he is a new creation. Old things are passed away and behold all things have become new.***

***II Corinthians 5:17***

The householder does not walk down the line of laborers in the market place and say, "You are good enough to work in my vineyard, but you are not!" Not one laborer is worthy to enter the Service of the Master.

Yet all are made worthy by his own shed blood. All are set free from what they were – all are made new.

– If you are still struggling today to pull yourself free from those chains that have bound you to your past,

– If you are still in bondage – come to the Cross now and confess these things and let them be washed away forever in the Lamb's blood.

These are the men and women who are going to be walking free!

One more thing to notice about this eleventh-hour hiring into which every one of us is being called. Jesus is not merely calling us to "be saved" as they say. He is calling us to **work**. He didn't come into the market place to invite us to come to church. He came to give us a job to do.

***My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. And every one who follows me works. He that gathereth not with me scattereth***  
***Mark 12:30***

You may think of yourself as innocent – sitting there and being good, sitting there and staying out of trouble, having good clean fun and good clean entertainment and never drinking anything but milk.

But all the time you're sitting there being respectable,  
– you are hindering the redemptive purposes of God!  
– you are obstructing the holy thing which God is doing on the earth at this hour!  
– you're getting in His way!

There's a harvest to be brought in and the laborers are all too few.

***Pray the Lord of the Harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest (Luke 10:2)*** – and who can pray that prayer but those who are already laborers? How can you say, "Lord, send forth laborers into the harvest", while you keep lying under the tree having your tea and crackers?

People have to hear this gospel – not from some famous evangelist but from you! From somebody they see every day. Somebody they can reach out and touch. Somebody real. Somebody down to earth. Somebody who ain't gonna ask for a donation.

Those lost sheep have to be sought out and cared for and loved.

- Those sick have to be visited.
- Those hungry have to be fed.
- Those strangers have to be welcomed.

They have to see the love of Jesus and experience the power of His forgiveness in their lives not just on the T.V. screen – through down-to-earth flesh-and-blood disciples like you.

We have a lot of believers who think they're red-hot disciples because they go to fellowship three times a week.

Going to fellowships is lovely.

Sitting around and getting blessed is lovely.

Waving your hands in the air and shouting, "Praise the Lord" is very nice.

But if these things aren't equipping you for work – if these things aren't driving you out into the vineyard,

- they're doing you more harm than good,
- they're a cop-out.

Anything that doesn't get you on with the work is a cop-out.

Now all the work in the Kingdom begins and ends on your knees.

- Prayer is the basic work.
- Prayer is the labor that moves the mountains and opens the doors and prepares the way.
- Prayer is the place where we are put into shape to carry that shining grace of God out to the world.

And don't ever let anyone tell you that prayer is easy or that it's effortless, or that it's just a matter of "letting go and letting God", or that it's fun.

Prayer is work! The apostles weren't copping out when they told the believers to pick out seven deacons to take care of the social work.

***"But we will devote ourselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word."***

***Acts 6:4***

They were committing themselves to very very difficult work. And the only way you learn how to do this work is do it. Pray!... Pray! ... Pray!

And then we get up from our knees and we go out and seek the lost, and preach good news to the poor, and proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, and set at liberty those who are oppressed. And we don't waste any time. Because this is the last harvest. The clock has struck the eleventh-hour. Night comes when no man can work.

We may be the moteliest crew that He ever hired. But oh the things that are going to be done in this final harvest...

- the things that you and I are privileged now to see!

- the power the living God places in our hands!

And we haven't even scratched the surface - we haven't even begun. God help us to go out and really labor in that Vineyard.

There are people out there who are going to be touched by the finger of God - through us.

There are people out there who are going to taste the first true hope they have known in all their lives as Jesus speaks to them - through us.

Prisoners are going to come out of their cells. Blind men are going to receive their sight. Hungry souls are going to be fed.

The power of the living God is going to flow forth from the Body of His Son and a harvest is going to come into His Kingdom such as you and I have never seen before.

## 2

### BEHOLD WE ARE GOING UP TO JERUSALEM

**Read: Luke 18:31-43**

There came a point in Jesus' ministry – and each of the four gospels refers to it in some way – when Jesus knew that it was time to go up to Jerusalem. Not as He went up to Jerusalem many times before to participate in some feast and teach and heal and then go back to Galilee. This time He was going up to Jerusalem to die.

And taking the twelve He said to them,

***"Behold we are going up to Jerusalem and everything that is written of the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. They will scourge Him and kill Him, and on the third day He will rise."***

***Luke 18:31-33***

This was the turning point – everything that went before this turning point was a preparation.

– This trip to the Cross was what He was born for.

– This is why He left the regions of everlasting light – to take away the sin of the world by the shedding of His life-blood.

From this point on, even though they don't understand it, Jesus starts teaching the disciples about the Cross. Everyday He's driving it into their heads about the Cross. One day they'll remember these things and they'll make sense – in the meantime He keeps hammering away.

***"The hour has come for the Son of God to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me he must follow me (to the Cross) that where I am there shall my servant be also (at the Cross).***

***Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? No, for this purpose I have come to this hour.***

***Father glorify thy name!***

***Now is the judgment of this world.***

***Now shall the ruler of this world be cast out.***

***And I, when I am lifted up from the earth (on a cross) will draw all men to myself."***

***John 12:23-32***

We read these words Jesus spoke about His cross and we say,  
"Thank you, Lord!" "Thank you for laying down your life."

"Thank you for taking my guilt upon yourself."

"Thank you for conquering the Evil One as I could never do."

"Thank you for breaking the curse of death."

But where so many believers mess up is that they think they can take the benefits of that Cross of Jesus,

- the forgiveness,
- the peace,
- the new life,

without ever getting near that Cross themselves!

Mail-order salvation. Salvation from a safe distance. They want to be washed in the blood without ever getting near the blood!

My friend, if you want to be clean, you have to go up there to Calvary and wash in that blood. If you want to be redeemed you have to get down on your face and take hold of that Cross. It won't happen just by singing "The Old Rugged Cross" with tears in your eyes. You have to go up to Jerusalem with Jesus.

Note carefully Jesus does not say to His disciples,

"You fellows stay down here in Jericho and lay low. I'm going up to Jerusalem to die for your sins. And when I've won the victory and risen from the dead, I'll meet you back in Galilee."

Jesus says,

"Behold we are going up to Jerusalem. I'm going to die for your sins. But you're going to go through these things with me and learn what it's all about. Then, when I'm risen from the dead, I'll go with you to your Jerusalem and your cross. If anyone serves me, he must follow me. Not just through the villages of Galilee, not just up the grassy hillsides where the birds are singing and the sky is blue, but to Jerusalem – to the Cross."

This was the lesson these disciples had to learn and they learned it. Every one of those men except Judas went up to a Jerusalem of his own – to a cross of some kind. They poured out their lives in Jesus' name and the power of Jesus rested upon them.

There will be no unity in the Body of Christ on earth at this hour,

There will be no power,

There will be no liberty and there will be no joy until the people who say so profusely that they believe in Jesus start following Jesus up to Jerusalem.

I see plenty of saints who in their living are headed toward Babylon.

They're after the money.

They're after the fame.  
They're after the power.

They call it "Kingdom work" but it's all flesh work and it will all go up in smoke with the rest of Babylon.

I see saints who are headed toward the Dead Sea to meditate and find serenity. They turn their Bible into a Dead Sea Scroll. They build a wall around themselves to shelter them against the ugly realities of this world and cover the wall with scripture verses.

I see saints who are headed with starry eyes toward Harvard and Yale and Oxford. They have theological jargon dripping out of their mouths – but no life,  
no vision,  
no insight,  
no wisdom.

They can read Hebrew, Greek, French and German but they have as much a grip on reality as a dead fish.

I see saints who are headed toward their camp meeting and their feet stomping religious pep rallies. They shout and sing and cry and wave their arms around and have a great time. But at the first sight of real blood they pass out.

I see saints wandering around the borderlands of the occult, flirting with the spirit world. Having demon hunts. Playing the old "you-got-one-leg-shorter-than-the-other-let-me-pray-for-you" game. Toying around with peoples bodies and spirits, and having the audacity to say they're doing this nonsense in the name of Jesus.

But where are the saints who are going with Jesus up to Jerusalem? Where are the saints who are following Jesus to that Cross? Where are the saints who are laying down their lives for their brothers and sisters? Where are the saints who have truly put themselves into the hands of the master to be with Him – broken bread and poured out wine for that sick, troubled,

lost,  
hopeless mass of humanity out there for whom the Son of the  
living God shed His blood?

The call of Jesus is going out to His church on earth at this hour  
with the same message that He gave to the twelve that day as they  
drew near to Jericho. He is saying to us: "Behold we are going up  
to Jerusalem."

The hour in which you and I live is a turning point for all the  
disciples on earth.

We are now entering into a time for which all our past life was  
but a preparation.

- The fun and games are over.
- The days of idleness and self-indulgence are over.

We've come around that turn in the road and the Cross, our  
cross, is in full view.

We are going up to Jerusalem with Jesus. And when we're  
heading toward Jerusalem with Jesus the world is behind us – we  
are free from our bondage to it.

Every time our mind wanders –  
Every time our eyes roam –

Every time our memory conjures up some alluring picture  
of the flesh-pots of Egypt, the Spirit of Jesus reminds us  
instantly "You don't belong to that anymore. You don't  
need that anymore – you're free!"

And we go forward praising God that we are free as we have  
never been free in our lives.

***"When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to  
righteousness. But then what return did you get from the  
things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things***

***is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and become slaves to God, the return you get is sanctification and its end eternal life."***

***Romans 6:20-22***

And the only ones who are actually free from sin, death and the power of the devil – the world – are those whose faces are set toward Jerusalem and whose hearts are fixed on their cross.

If you're still having trouble with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, it's because you don't have Jerusalem in view. You got your mind off the goal and Satan was right there to dangle some goodies before your eyes.

"Behold we're going up to Jerusalem" – we're not slaves anymore, we are free men and women bound only to that Cross up ahead.

When we are heading toward Jerusalem with Jesus we are one.

People whose sins are covered by the Lamb's blood and who are following Him unto death have to be one.

They have no rights to stand up for anymore.

They have nothing of their own to be imposing on their brothers and sisters.

They are bound together by His death and their own.

***"I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1)*** – one beautiful glorious living sacrifice – one blazing bush out of which the voice of God still speaks.

Where there is no unity, it's because there is no Cross. The saints are doing their own thing – scattered like wandering sheep upon the mountains of Israel. But when they hear that call, ***"Behold we are going up to Jerusalem"*** and they obey it, they must come together.

When we are headed toward Jerusalem with Jesus we are anointed with power to bless other lives.

***"Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." "What do you want me to do for you?" "Lord, let me receive my sight." "Receive your sight, your faith has made you well."***

It was no coincidence that Jesus' words about going up to Jerusalem to die are immediately followed by a miracle of healing. Every miracle Jesus ever performed was an out-flowing of life from that Cross to which Jesus' heart was already nailed.

***He was wounded for our transgressions.  
He was bruised for our iniquities.  
The chastisement of our peace was upon Him.  
And with His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)***

And the healing that God has willed to flow from our hands and from our lips has its source not in some cross of long ago and far away – but in a Cross on which we are nailed with Jesus now.

It's the Jerusalem-bound saints who are the healers. Watch out for those so-called healers with their private jets and their \$1000 suits. The real healers are the insignificant little saints who bear about in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus – who are continuously being given up to death for Jesus' sake so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in their mortal (dying) flesh.

You're heading toward Jerusalem with Jesus and some broken soul cries out to you for help. You can help! You have something to give. God will confirm your words of hope to that soul. God will awaken faith in that heart even as you speak.

You have a well of divine life in you. And the source of that well is the Cross of Jesus on which your heart already hangs with Him.

When we're heading toward Jerusalem with Jesus we have joy.

***Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross,  
scorning the shame and is seated at the right hand of the  
throne of God.  
(Hebrews 12:2)***

And that joy is set before every follower of Jesus who is heading toward Calvary – joy that will make you sing.

You won't need to have the right tune or rhythm.  
You won't have to wait for the right mood,

you'll sing with joy any song or hymn that glorifies Jesus. You won't have to wait for the sun to come out, you'll have joy at midnight walking through total darkness.

Show me the saints who are marching up to Jerusalem to die with Jesus and I'll show you saints who have found the joy that no man can take from them. Saints – who will be rejoicing all the way to the journey's end and on into the halls of glory, across the sea of glass mixed with fire, right up to the very throne of the Most High.

So the question to every believer and every earnest seeker is this:

Are you ready this day to start going with Jesus toward Jerusalem?

Are you willing to round that bend in the road with Him and head for a cross with your name on it that stands waiting for you at the journey's end?

If you are – tell Him now. But don't tell Him unless you mean it – because Jesus will take you at your word.

### 3

## THE STARTING POINT OF THE LAST HARVEST

**Read: Mark 5:1-20**  
**II Corinthians 6:1-10**

The events that are taking place on the earth at this time and the witness of the Spirit of God among believers everywhere point to the fact that the hour of judgment is all but here. The earth is on the verge of things it has never seen. There has never been a war like the war that will break out on this planet when the Lamb begins to open those seven seals.

But before God's judgment falls, this earth is going to see the love of God as it has never seen the love of God before. Jesus is going to cover this planet with such wonderful manifestations of God's grace that one will be puzzled to understand why the whole world doesn't fall to its knees and repent in dust and ashes.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is going to go forth so mightily and is going to be attended by such magnificent signs of God's love that you'd think everyone would surrender his life into the hands of the Messiah.

***This gospel of the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations and then the end will come.***

***(Matthew 24:14)***

In fact, this last visitation of Jesus to the earth has already begun. And in many ways it is like Jesus' visit to the country of the Gerasenes in Mark 5. Jesus' landing point on the earth at

this hour is where it was that day. He always begins in the most desolate place there is.

If He cares about this place, and if He cares about this man who came to Him out of those tombs, you know He cares about everyone.

Those tombs are not like Forest Hills Memorial Park with fountains and statues and neatly-cut grass. They are caves in a bleak, wild, sad countryside. There are swine feeding on the hill – unclean beasts. Here comes this man with an unclean spirit who lives among the tombs. No one could restrain him. Time and again they chained him to keep him from running wild but he always broke away. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying and bruising himself with stones. Don't ever think that when a man is possessed by an unclean spirit his own mind is dormant.

- There is no rest for his mind.
- He lives through Hell – the nearest thing to Hell there is on earth.
- He knows what it is to weep and gnash his teeth.
- He knows what it is to sit in the outer darkness where there is no hope.

Jesus starts with such a man.

How many people on the earth right now are living in just such a state here,

- nobody seems to be able to help them,
- nothing can restrain them any longer.

They roam in a desolate world of their own. They live among the tombs of a dead past. And on the mountains of despair, they keep trying to hurt themselves, maybe not with stones, maybe

just by forever getting themselves in trouble or getting sick all the time.

These people are on every block in our neighborhood and every neighborhood across your town. They're on the street where you live. They may be under the same roof with you. Some of these tormented souls could be reading these words – and it is to these that Jesus comes first.

And it is these people who recognize Jesus before anyone else does.

***And when he saw Jesus from afar he ran and worshipped Him; and crying with a loud voice he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus Son of the most high God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." For he had said to him, "Come out of the man you unclean spirit!" And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." And he begged him eagerly not to send them out of the country. Now a great herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside; and they begged Him, "Send us into the swine, let us enter them." So He gave them leave. And***

***the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine; and the herd, numbering about 2000, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and were drowned in the sea.***

The visit of Jesus to the earth at this eleventh-hour is making its impact by healing the demon-possessed people who, like that man, have been living through all the agonies of Hell. Maybe it's drugs. Maybe it's alcohol. Maybe it's some morbid fear or some guilt that just won't leave.

They see Jesus from afar – they run and worship Him. Suddenly the demons are gone and they are sitting at Jesus' feet clothed and in their right mind.

We're seeing this. Many of us are here today because this has happened to us. And we are going to see much more.

It only took one such sign in that desolate place to rouse the whole country. Jesus didn't have to go into town to proclaim the Kingdom of God. The men who had been herding those swine took care of it.

The herdsman fled and told it in the city and in the country. And the people came to see what it was that happened (and they're doing it again).

***And they came to Jesus, and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the man who had had Legion; and they were afraid.***

If only those people had been afraid with the fear of God! If only they had fallen on their faces and worshipped as that man had done!

If only they had turned, what blessings would have come to their land!

God the Son was standing in their midst with life for every one of those people – standing among them to spare them forever the agonies that poor tormented man had gone through. Never had the love of God been so clearly revealed among them.

So what do they do? They say, "Please go away. You're disturbing our way of life. You're disrupting our economy." And that, my friends, is exactly what this world is doing now and will continue to be doing right up to the last second of this age of grace.

"Please go away Jesus. We don't want you around here."

You'd think that parents would rejoice to see their kids set free from the junk they were strung out on and following Jesus. But

again and again these parents are ten times more upset by Jesus than they were ever upset by the drugs.

"Where have I gone wrong! My kid's a fanatic!"

What were you saying when your kid was a junkie? They want Jesus to leave, so Jesus gets into the boat and leaves. He will not force His love on anyone.

After He has covered this earth with the good news and the earth says, "Leave", He will leave. And there will be such a famine of the Word of God as earth has never seen. But even in the midst of the famine Jesus will still have a witness: the man who was healed.

***And as He was getting into the boat the man who had been possessed with demons begged Him that he might be with Him. But He refused and said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you. (They won't let me tell them about God's love – so you tell them)". And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and all men marveled.***

Now there is one difference between Jesus' visit to the country of the Gerasenes and His visit to this lost generation of the sons of Adam. In that day He came as a man in a single body of flesh-and-blood. Today, Jesus is visiting the earth in the Spirit... inhabiting a Body made up of countless flesh-and-blood people from every nation, race, and tongue under Heaven. The people who comprise this Body are not those who merely profess Jesus with their lips or who are tied up with some fellowship or some church.

The people who comprise the Body of Christ which is now visiting the earth with real healing are not like the so-called Christians who have cluttered the earth and jammed up the

churches for centuries. The people who are getting the job done are people who are like Jesus – really like Jesus.

They don't have a "Jesus front." They have a "Jesus heart." They are like Jesus inside because Jesus, in fact, lives in them and rules their lives

If you want to know what these people are like, read II Corinthians 6. This is not just a description of the apostle Paul – it better be a description of you and me!

The people who are carrying the gospel to this last generation are like Jesus in that they put no obstacle in anyone's way.

***"We put no obstacle in anyone's way",*** says Paul.

The Pharisees put their self-righteousness in the way of other men finding God. The great theologians put their great learning in the way of other men finding God – they make you think you have to be a genius to find God. Respectable Christians put their respectability in the way of other people finding God – they give the impression that you have to be respectable like they are to find God.

The institutional people put the institution in the way of people finding God. The non-institutional people put their institutional hang-up in the way of people finding God. The high pressure evangelist puts his very methods in the way of other people really finding God and beautiful gifted believers often put their egos in the way.

If you want to be used by Jesus at this hour, you'd better be sure that there is nothing in your heart or in your living that stands in the way of other men finding God.

Don't make men see your righteousness or your knowledge or your hypocrisy.

Make them see Jesus!

Give them hope!

Those who are being lifted into this eleventh-hour Body ministry are like Jesus in that they are servants of God. ***"As servants of God we commend ourselves in every way"***,

not to the high and mighty –

not to the important people, but to this demon-possessed man – so that he knows that we come to him as God's servant, that he has nothing to fear.

The big-time Christian celebrities are useless in this area – their big egos frighten that demon-possessed man right back into the tombs. We need servants!

– men and women who have given up all rights to themselves and live only to serve God in God's way – in whatever crummy little place God chooses to put them, so that when this man comes out of the tombs he can really see Jesus and not our stinking flesh.

Those who are being lifted up into this eleventh-hour Body ministry are like Jesus in that they practice great endurance.

***"Through great endurance in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beating, imprisonments, tumults, labors....."***

day-in-and-day-out to deal with these demon-harassed souls in one form or another, and with swineherds who get uptight when their pigs run down the hill and drown, and with the people who show no awe, no gratitude, no faith, and to keep right on going even though they begin treating you as an imposter – even when they start trying to kill you,

– you can't give up because you're tired,  
– you can't give up because someone hurt your feelings.

***In honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute, as imposters and yet true, as unknown yet well-known, as dying***

***and behold we live, as punished and not killed. As sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich. As having nothing yet possessing all things.***

To keep right on going no matter what they think you are or what they do to you.

The Spirit of the Lord is gathering people for this eleventh-hour ministry. People who will go with Him to those desolate tombs and bring healing to those desolate souls – and be hated and rejected by the very ones to whom they announce good news.

If you hear Jesus calling you today answer Him with all your heart, and He will make you ready for work that you never dreamed you would ever be able to do.

One more thing;

If there should be someone reading these words whose heart is crying out for deliverance and peace, just open your heart to God now. Our prayers were said for you, and God will answer them. The crucified and risen Lord Jesus will set you free, beginning now.

## 4

# RADICAL FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST

**Read; Matthew 15:21-28**

It doesn't matter whether you've been a believer for twenty years or whether you've been a believer for six months or two weeks. The message that is clearly coming to all believers on earth at this hour from Jesus Himself is,

"I want something more than you've committed to me so far. We're going into deeper water now."

"Behold, we're going up to Jerusalem". And when you take that turn in the road and start heading up to Jerusalem it's like being lifted out of childhood and put down on a battlefield where toy guns won't do it anymore – you've got to have the real kind.

Why God put up with our half-slumbering faith for so long is a mystery we cannot fathom. But one thing is clear, He is calling us from now on – all of us – to be fully awake and fully committed – to strip our lives of everything that in any way competes with Jesus Christ.

***You know what hour it is, how it is full time now to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light .... Put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its lusts.  
Romans 13:11-14***

If this means radical surgery in your life, so be it.

If it means sell everything and give to the poor and follow Jesus with nothing, do it.

If it means disciplines in your life as you've never had before, like a serious discipline of prayer, do it.

If it means disengaging yourself from a hundred time consuming pursuits that are useless to the purposes of God, do it.

If it means that your friends think you've become a fanatic, so be it.

And the reason Jesus is calling for more and putting His finger on those things in our lives that must go is that the work which He is giving us cannot be accomplished by anything but a radical, unmixed, undiluted faith.

This work cannot be done by people who are still leaning on the flesh; whose minds are dull and flabby from living the soft self-indulgent way of this world, who are confident when the money's rolling in and scared when it isn't, happy when the sun is shining and depressed when it rains. It is going to be done by people whose lives are rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ and in nothing else .... who know that nothing in this world can be relied on but Jesus.

God is giving us a chance to be among those people of faith. If we refuse He will raise up others. There will be an army of faith to get the Word out at this eleventh hour. It's coming into being now, with us or without us.

### Radical faith in Jesus Christ.

Faith that knows who Jesus is,  
what He has done,  
what He will do, and lives accordingly and dies willingly for His name.

Every problem we are now experiencing can be traced to the lack of this faith.

If we're half-hearted it's because we don't really believe.  
If we're undisciplined it's because we don't believe.

If we're living in defeat and discouragement it's because we don't believe.

If we're fruitless.

If we're without love.

If we're being disobedient – at the bottom of it all is unbelief.

No one is going to sink their whole life into following Jesus unless they believe in Jesus all the way, unless they believe that Jesus has

conquered sin on that Cross, unless they believe that Jesus will do what He says He will do.

Until a man believes in Jesus with everything he's got, whatever relationship he thinks he has with Jesus is imaginary. The Jesus he thinks he has is not Jesus at all but an image in his mind that he uses as an emotional crutch in times of stress – an idol he drags around to give him some kind of temporary security.

And the proof that this half-baked relationship with Jesus is imaginary

- is that nothing ever comes of it,
- nothing ever happens as a result of it.

It may be less disruptive to have an imaginary wife who always smiles, never gets tired, brings me my imaginary slippers, and never disagrees with me. But the real wife who makes real demands and speaks real words is the one who calls forth real love and who gives real comfort and who bears and mothers real children. To be married to an imaginary wife doesn't involve any commitment – but to be married to a real wife does.

To believe in an imaginary Jesus doesn't involve any commitment – but to believe in the real Jesus, means total commitment, total trust, absolute surrender,

utter dependence on his promises,  
complete obedience to every word of His command.

When you're sure of Jesus, certain that you can depend utterly on everything He says, when you know that He's there doing this supernatural work in your life, guiding you, sustaining you, yea verily living in you, then things happen!

Divine things, awesome things of which this sin-blinded world doesn't have a clue.

You want to know why Saul of Tarsus bore such fantastic fruit, why his words are as alive today as ever? Because Paul was sure of Jesus!

***But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am sure that he is able to guard until that Day what I have entrusted to Him.***

***2 Timothy 1:12***

***But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength to proclaim the word fully that all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth; the Lord will rescue***

***me from every evil and save me for His heavenly Kingdom. To Him be the glory for ever and ever.***

***2 Timothy 4:17-18***

This man believed!

So the question is: Do you believe in Jesus?

Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God?

Do you believe that Jesus is the Lamb of God who took away the sins of the world on that Cross?

Do you believe that Jesus is alive from the dead and at the right hand of power?

Do you believe that this Jesus is in our midst at this moment with all authority in Heaven and on earth?

Do you believe that Jesus is able to save you from the lion's mouth?

Do you believe that Jesus is able to deliver you from that burden?

Do you believe that Jesus is willing to fill you afresh with the Holy Spirit this day?

Do you believe that Jesus is able to bring you through the fire?

Do you believe that Jesus is able to confirm your word of testimony with signs following?

Do you believe that Jesus wants to send you forth today with a double anointing of His mighty power?

Don't expect Jesus to give you showers of blessing just because you say you believe. Faith is not what you say or what you feel but what you will, what you cling to when every evidence that might encourage you is torn away.

Will you still believe when Jesus is silent?

Will you still believe when Jesus holds the blessing back?

When the master holds out the bone, the dog looks at the bone. When the master hides the bone behind his back, the dog looks at the master. When there is no bone, the dog still loves his master and trusts him. The dog that doesn't belong to the master will leave when no bones are apparent. He'll go trotting off looking for someone else to offer him bones. But the dog that belongs to the master sticks by his master bones or no bones. That dog is often more faithful than the master's own children.

***"It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."***

***"Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."***

You may think you're one of the children, an Israelite, a believer, a Christian. But the test is; where is your faith when no bread seems to be coming? Where is your faith when God's ways baffle you? Are you still sure of the Master's love? Or do you start wavering and looking around for another way?

This Gentile dog – this Canaanite woman – shows us what faith in Jesus really is. We may know this incident by heart, but oh how we need to learn and practice its lesson!

This episode located in Matthew 15 follows on the heels of a long series of encounters with unbelief. After those beautiful parables of the Kingdom in Matthew 13 Jesus goes back to his home town, teaches in the synagogue, and gets nothing but unbelief.

***"Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? Are not his brothers and sisters with us? Who does he think he is?"***

They are offended – unbelief.

Then John is beheaded and Jesus withdraws to the wilderness followed by throngs of people. "Feed them", Jesus says to His disciples and they stand there like dummies – unbelief again.

After that feast in the wilderness Jesus sends the disciples away in the boat and comes to them in the middle of the night walking on the water.

***"It's a ghost!" they cry*** – unbelief again.

***"Take heart, it is I. Have no fear."***

***"If it's you, Lord, bid me come to you on the water."***

***"Come."***

Peter starts out but soon unbelief takes over again and down he goes.

***"Lord, save me!"***

***"O man of little faith, why did you doubt?"***

Along comes the Pharisees and Scribes. Jesus offers them the Kingdom of God and they start picking at Him about the traditions of men – churchianity.

***"How come your disciples don't wash their hands before they eat?"*** – unbelief!

So Jesus tells them it's not what goes into a man's mouth that defiles him – but what comes out of it.

And His own disciples don't get it.

"Are you also without understanding?", says Jesus. And why were they without understanding? Because of their unbelief.

Finally, as they approach Tyre and Sidon this Canaanite woman comes to Jesus with the first real faith He has seen in a long time.

What joy! This woman isn't even a daughter of Israel but she calls Him Lord, Son of David – she believes!

***"Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David, my daughter is severely possessed by a demon."***

No answer. Not even a word. Jesus is going to show these stiff-necked disciples, who have seen and heard unspeakable mysteries and are still blind, what real faith is.

***"Lord, send her away. She's getting to be a pest."***

***"I was only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."***

But she came and knelt before Him saying, "Lord, help me!"

And He answered, ***"It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."***

***"Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table"***

***"O woman, great is your faith. Be it done for you as you desire"***

And her daughter was healed instantly.

This woman wasn't chasing signs and wonders. She was pursuing Jesus with her broken heart for her demon-possessed daughter, and she was sure of Jesus. Sure that no matter what He said or what anyone else said or did, Jesus would help her. And he did! And he always will!

It is to this faith that the Spirit of God is calling every person who reads these words. Calling you to repent of your unbelief and break clean away this day from the things your unbelief has enmeshed you in, and put your faith in Jesus – commit yourself to Him now.

You're wasting your time coming to church if you never get around to believing in the Jesus crucified and risen who is proclaimed here.

You're wasting your time reading that Bible if you still refuse to believe the things Jesus tells you there.

And prayer – prayer is an empty monologue and it's little short of blasphemy to end it with "In Jesus' name" if you won't believe what Jesus promises you.

And don't say you can't believe. It's not a matter of "can or can't", it's a matter of "will or won't".

The Spirit of God is now speaking to your heart bearing witness to the Crucified One. And He is giving you the power to put yourself into the hands of Jesus now if you will... will you?

There is nothing else in this world that you can be sure of – nothing. Every other anchor will let go and every other foundation will crumble.

So get your life off those other foundations and put it utterly on Jesus, the Son of the living God, and do it now. And God will confirm your faith with things you have never seen before. Fruit will flow from your ministry to the glory of God alone that will surpass your wildest dreams.

## 5

### GETTING INTO THE LIGHT

#### **Read; I John 1**

People don't smile anymore when you say, "The End is near!" for they know that this world's days are numbered. But most people think of the End of the world as a Day of Darkness. They think of nuclear war followed by silence and ashes, or they think of pollution killing off all life.

Even believers who see the End as the return of the Messiah often think of it as something happening at night. And it's true – the coming of the Messiah will be preceded by darkness – gross darkness.

The sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. But when the Messiah comes darkness will end. It won't be like watching a third-rate religious movie from your bedroom window at midnight. It won't be like seeing Santa Claus and his reindeer sailing across the winter sky.

When Jesus returns to this planet, no matter where you are, suddenly everything will be bathed in light.

If you're in a cave two miles beneath the surface of the earth hiding under fifteen blankets, suddenly those blankets and the rocks above you will hide nothing. That cave will fill with light. There will be no escape from this light. It will be like standing in a room lined with closets. The light will burn the doors right off those closets, and there, surrounding you will be your life, exactly as it was – exactly as God sees it.

***For nothing is covered that shall not be revealed. Neither hid that shall not be known. Whatever you have spoken in darkness***

***shall be heard in the light. That which you have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.  
Matthew 10:26-27***

Now, if your sins aren't washed away in the blood of the Lamb, if you aren't clothed in the robe of His righteousness, that light will visit you with terror – there will be pain, like a knife going through your heart.

When this light has finished searching every crevice of your life and found you wanting,  
– you will then experience a floating sensation,

– you will sink away from that light into what Scripture calls outer darkness and you will experience light no more.

The only ones who will be acclimated to that Light when it breaks in upon this world on the Day of the Messiah's return will be those who are already sons and daughters of light. Instead of terror, they will have peace.

They won't run and hide – their sins are gone.

They won't feel naked and exposed – they are clothed in a robe of light that matches and blends with the daylight of God.

They will lift up their hands to the heavens and praise the King with joy.

For them, this Day of the Lord is but the fulfillment of light they were walking in ever since the day they started to follow Jesus.

– All through those dark years.

– All through those shadowy valleys.

While the world was reveling in darkness, these blessed ones were carrying within them the light of God.

They carried lamps – kept them trimmed and burning.

They carried oil – so that those lamps would never go out. They avoided the ways of darkness – gave up the habits of the night and lived as children of the Day. So when the Day came they were ready.

When the Spirit says to you as He is saying to you now, "Are you ready?" He means are you ready for the day when nothing will remain covered?... for the hour when there will be no secrets?

You are ready only if you now have this light within you. If it's dark in here – you're not ready.

God wants to put His light in you now so that you won't have to stumble any more – so that when His Day dawns you will be ready.

### **JESUS IS THAT LIGHT**

***In Him was life and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. I have come as light into the world that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.***

***John 1:4-5***

Too many people say they have Jesus, but inside it's darkness. You look into their eyes and it's like looking into a bottomless pit. Their words convey the chill of death. If Jesus lives in you,

- you shine!
- you have light burning within!

To have Jesus living inside, to have that light burning and shining within you day and night, there are some things that you have to do:

1. To have light within, you have to turn from darkness.

If you're heading toward the darkness, if your mind dwells on the things of darkness, how can you have anything in you but darkness?

"Repent", says Jesus, "'Turn".

***"The time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the gospel."***

***Mark 1:15***

And Jesus doesn't just say that to sinners out there in the world. He says it to believers who have allowed their hearts to drift.

***"You have abandoned your first love. Remember then from what you have fallen, repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent."***

***Revelations 2:4-5***

Some of you reading these words,  
– your faces are set toward the darkness,  
– you're going the wrong way and you know it.

Turn toward the light that shines from the face of the Son of God – and do it now!

2. To have light within you, you have to have a single eye.

***The light of the body is the eye; therefore, when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.***

***Luke 11:34 KJV***

Sometimes our face is turned toward the light but our eye is double.

– It's trying to look at Jesus, and the things that deny Jesus at the same time.

– It wants the Kingdom – but it also wants the world.

- It wants to spread the gospel - but it wants to make money doing it.

- You tell yourself you're concerned about that girl's soul while your eye is lusting after her body.

Get your eye on the King and keep it there, and see everything else through His eye.

- Look at the world through His eye.

- Look at your enemy through His eye.

- Even your loved ones through His eye -- and you will have light.

3. To have light within you have to live a transparent life.

Stop covering things! Stop sneaking around! Unlock those closet doors! Be open with God and man!

***"There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed."***

***Matthew 10:26***

***"If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."***

***1 John 1:7***

When they brought Jesus before the High Priest - listen to His answer -

***"I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the Temple where all the Jews come together (the institution). I have said nothing secretly."***

***John 18:20***

4. To have light within you have to have a heart that listens.

***"The entrance of thy word giveth light."***

***Psalms 119:130***

God doesn't drive His Word into your hearts with a sledge hammer.

***"He who has ears to hear let him hear!"***

***Matthew 11:15***

If you're too busy telling everyone else what God is saying to them to listen to what God is saying to you, and if you're too stubborn and proud and hard to take it in, it can only be darkness inside.

***"The words that I speak to you, they are spirit and they are life."***

***John 6:63***

But how often those words that Jesus speaks to us are blocked by the noise of our own anger and pride and self-importance. Listen! If you want that midnight in your soul to give way to dawn – listen!

5. To have light within you have to have feet that follow.

***Whoever follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.***

***John 8:12***

In this world Jesus is never standing still. He's moving. And if we want His light within us, we have to move with Him. The minute you stand still, your light starts going out. You may have had a brilliant light shining within you last year, but what about now? Are you following on into that new territory with Jesus today?

The minute you go off on a side-road of your own, your light starts going out. There are people who are moving all right, but it's their own private road. Make sure that road you're moving on has the marks of those bleeding feet. Make sure you can see Jesus and His cross.

He's out there seeking the lost – are you with Him?

He's pouring out His soul in intercession – are you with Him?

He's sitting in the lowest room in the house – are you there?

He's laying down His life for the brethren – are you following in His steps?

6. To have light within, you have to stay in constant prayer.

While He was praying, Heaven opened.

While He was praying, the appearance of His countenance was altered, and His raiment became dazzling white.

As Jesus prayed, Jesus the Son of the Most High God, His Father renewed Him with the light of Heaven.

You wonder why your light is flickering,  
your prayers have become tired, half-baked,  
your heart isn't in them – you're not thinking.  
If you want light, pray!

- Even if you don't feel like praying.
- Even if you think you have no faith.
- Even if the enemy has crushed you with ten tons of condemnation.

Pray! Pray! don't faint,  
don't give up. Lift up your heart to God and pray  
and soon you will have light within.

7. To have light within put on the garment of praise.

***To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.***

***Isaiah 61:3 KJV***

Every believer ought to be wearing that garment of praise – ought to be lifted into the fellowship of the angels ceaselessly praising God.

You don't praise God because things are going well with you – something wonderful has happened. You praise God because He is God. He is infinitely more wonderful than the most wonderful thing

that ever happened. Even when things are going badly, God is still wonderful! Still to be praised!

Paul and Silas are in prison covered with bruises and cuts from being beaten. Their feet are in stocks so they can hardly move. What are they doing? Moaning, groaning? They're praying and singing hymns to God. No wonder there was an earthquake! There was light shining in that prison that never shone in it before, and that light dwells in the very bodies of these two men.

We don't wait for the Last Day to see the light of God. We see it now, shining in the face of Jesus. God help us to walk in that light. God help us to live by it. God help us to carry that light within us so faithfully that as the years pass it grows brighter, not dimmer. That when this night of darkness ends and the Day of God dawns, we may be filled not with terror but with joy.

For the Spirit of the Lord is saying to Zion this day,

***Arise, shine, for thy light has come.  
And the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee.  
For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,  
And gross darkness the people.  
But the Lord shall arise upon thee,  
And His glory shall be seen upon thee.  
And Gentiles shall come to thy light,  
And Kings to the brightness of thy rising.  
Isaiah 60:1-3***

## 6

### LET IT SHINE

**Read: Matthew 5:14-16**

It's easy enough to say to a man, "Jesus is the light of the world!" But for that man to know what you're talking about, he has to see that light.

If you say, "Behold! Jesus is the light!"

"Look unto Him and be saved!", and the man still sits there in the darkness and sees no light at all, what good have you done him?

When Jesus said, "I am the light of the world", men saw that light!

He opened their eyes.

He opened their minds.

He touched their bodies.

He took away that unbearable burden of guilt.

He filled them with the love of God.

Jesus never claimed to be the light without causing His light to shine.

Jesus still causes His light to shine. Chapter 9 of John is not just the story of the healing of one man born blind 2000 years ago. It is the story of every man and woman who ever comes to faith in Jesus. When you come to faith in Jesus, you literally pass from darkness into light. You see for the first time in your life.

You no longer depend on someone else to tell you about God and hope he's telling you the truth. Your eyes open and you're looking into the face of Jesus. And you know with inspired vision that He is very God of very God. You see the path He calls you to take. The things of darkness that once looked so beautiful to you.... now you see them for what they are: an open sewer.

Jesus is the Light of the world.

Those whose hearts yearn for God are drawn to Him.

Those whose hearts hate God flee from Him.

***Everyone who does evil hates the light and does not come to the light lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does what is true comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God.***

***John 3:20-21***

Many a person who is looked upon as a pure saint turns and runs from that light, because he knows that his own goodness is false. If that light gets too close, the evil that's there will be exposed.

And many a person who is looked upon as a hopeless sinner needs only to see one glimpse of that light and suddenly he no longer gets any satisfaction out of his sins. Nothing satisfies him now, but more light. So he draws near to Jesus and leaves the darkness behind him forever.

But for the people in this world to see this Light, it's got to shine from somewhere.

It doesn't come from the angels.

It doesn't come from signs in the heavens – not in this age.

If they're going to see the light of Jesus in this age of grace, it's going to have to shine upon them through Jesus' followers.

"You are the light of the world", says Jesus to His followers.

"The light! The only light there is! If the people in the world are going to see my light, it will have to be through you."

***You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all that are in the house. Let your light***

***so shine before men that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in Heaven.***

***Matt 5:14-16***

If we are followers of Jesus then we are that light – even with all our hang-ups and weaknesses and all our problems. Here in this place where God has put us, we and all our brothers and sisters in Jesus across the city are the light of the world. And we'd better let that light shine!

He does not say I want you to strive to become the light of the world. He says you are the light of the world – right now.

He could have taken you out of this vale of tears the day you were saved but He didn't because you are the world's only light. That's the only reason you're still here.

So, what do we do? Too many of us take this light that Jesus puts into us and go looking for a corner to hide in, or a hole to crawl into. We cover it with a bushel. "Don't let anyone see it! Because if the world sees this light of Jesus in us it's going to start doing to us what it did to Him.

We're going to be persecuted!  
We'll lose our privacy!"

But Jesus didn't say, "Let your light shine in your prayer closet."

He didn't say, "Let your light shine in secret."

He said, "Let your light shine before men." Let those friends, relatives, neighbors, enemies, clearly see the light of Jesus Christ through you.

"Why can't I just go off on an island and be a believer?" "Give me the light, Lord, but let me keep it covered except when I'm in the mood to let it shine." "You know me, Lord, I'm shy. I'm modest. I'm a quiet peace-loving person. I can't go out there and be some kind of light."

***A city set on a hill cannot be hid, nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand and it gives light to all that are in the house.***

***Matt 5:14-15***

You can't hide this light. The only way you can hide this light is to put it out. That's what many are doing. They'd rather quench the Spirit of God in them than let the light shine.

Then there are those who have a beautiful 'Jesus line' when it doesn't take any risk. They can impressively talk about Jesus when those words of testimony to Jesus don't have to be backed by some inconvenience, some act of self-denial.

But when it's going to cost something to talk of Jesus – when they're going to have to back up their words with some deeds, or some hard cash for a brother in need, or a little bit of danger, the light goes under the bushel.

The next time they lift up the bushel and talk about Jesus, there is no light. The light has gone out. Their testimony may sound mellow – but it's death.

The light shines when our deeds match our words.

We don't just talk Jesus – we live Jesus.

We don't just talk love – we live love.

We don't just talk forgiveness – we live forgiveness.

We don't just talk peace – we live peace.

We embody in our own living every claim we make for Jesus Christ. That's how we let our light shine.

***"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works."***

***Matthew 5:16***

Hold Jesus up where they can see Him not just with your mouth but with your life. Not just when you're putting on your little act, but when you're home with your wife and kids. So that they see

and hear and feel through what you do as well as what you say that Jesus loves them.

Yes, and even when our deeds seem to match our words, it's possible for us still to be putting on a show for our own glory. Instead of pointing the way to Jesus, manifesting the love of God, all we're doing is putting on an act to make the world think we're supersaints.

The test of whether we're letting the light shine or merely putting on a phony act is who gets the glory.

If God gets the glory then they are seeing God's light.

If I get the glory they're caught up in my darkness.

***...."that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in Heaven."***

If the good works that you do are done in the name and power of Jesus, the glory will go not to you but to God. They will marvel and glorify God who has given such power to men. You won't let them give the glory anywhere else but to God.

If the glory comes your way -- and you love it, people pat you on the back, vote you the outstanding Christian of the year -- and you love you can be sure that they're not seeing God's light.

If men are going to know that Jesus is the light of the world, they're going to have to see that light shining in us.

We don't have the choice –

"Would we like to let our light shine or would we prefer to lay low and keep it to ourselves?"

"Would we like to be missionaries or would we rather settle for the quiet life of sticking to our pew and sending someone else?"

The command of Jesus is:

**"LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE BEFORE MEN"**

And, behind that command is the promise that He is going to be with us as we let our light shine, going to cause us to bear much fruit. Living souls are going to be brought from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God.

*"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and give glory to your Father who is in Heaven."*

*Matthew 5:14-16*

**ELEVENTH-HOUR SONS OF GOD**

**Read: I John 3:2-3**

**I Corinthians 15:51-53**

There is something in the offing for this world so wonderful that those whose minds have not been touched by the Spirit of God will find it impossible to believe.

On a certain day – known only to the Father – God will break the silence He has kept in this world so long. God will cause His glory to be seen – His voice to be heard – unmistakably.

Everybody will know God has come to judge this earth.

When the old prophets came on the scene and said, "Thus saith the Lord!", most people insisted they were the words of some grouchy old crackpot from the desert.

When Jesus came to Israel healing the sick and opening the eyes of the blind – even though they knew no man ever spoke like this man – there was no way for the natural eye to discern that this

Jesus was very God of very God. So the people stood in awe and wonder for a while and then they nailed Him to the Cross.

When some man of God today speaks God's clear word, a message straight out of Heaven, the majority shrug it off as nothing at all.

But on the Day I'm talking about there will be no doubt in anyone's mind as to what's happening. Everyone from the least to the greatest will know that God has brought this present age to an end. God has come to call this world and its inhabitants to account

People who called themselves Christians – but who never lived the life – will be trying to burrow in the dust and hide under the rocks. To them the searching brightness of Divine Light will be worse than physical torture.

People who claimed to be agnostics, but who knew very well each time the merciful Savior knocked on the door of their hearts, will now be wringing their hands with anguish – falling on their faces.

But the forgotten ones of this earth will lift up their voices in praise to God for their time of deliverance has come.

***"The mourners will begin to sing.  
All nature will break forth into music.  
The floods will clap their hands.  
The hills will be joyful together before the Lord for He cometh to judge the earth. With righteousness shall He judge the world. And the people with equity."  
Psalm 98***

And the reason for all the music and joy echoing through the creation will be the appearance on this planet of a new race of beings as gloriously different from our present human race as Adam was different from the animals.

This new race of beings won't come from outer-space in flying saucers. They will come from this very earth, they will suddenly appear.

***"Lo! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the blinking of an eye at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. For this corruptible nature must put on incorruption and this mortal nature must put on immortality."  
I Corinthians 15:51-53***

Suddenly there will be a race of transfigured human beings who have taken on the likeness of the resurrected Christ – the Sons of God that the Creation has awaited for so long.

When God raised His Son from the dead He was meant to be the first-born among many brethren. Now the many brethren will appear. And through these transfigured beings – these Sons of God – the Messiah will set up His Kingdom and vindicate the blasphemed, neglected name of His Father on the planet Earth.

Many of these Sons of God who on that day will be revealed to the world, are alive on the earth right now. Today they have mortal bodies and mortal minds. They are weak and frail in many ways. But they are already Sons of God, partakers of the divine nature.

***"As many as received Him, as believed on His name, to them He gave power to become Sons of God, who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."  
John 1:12-13 KJV***

If we are followers of Jesus – if we are led by His Spirit even in our present state we are those Sons of God.

- We already have the firstfruits of the Spirit.
- The gifts.
- The power of Heaven is at work in us.

***"Beloved we are now the Sons of God. It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."  
I John 3:2***

But the proof of our sonship is not that we can snap our fingers and do mighty things – not that we can inspire awe in the world around us. The proof of our sonship is that we manifest the nature of our Father which is love.

Our faces do not yet shine with glory. We are not ready to judge the angels or rule the world. But if we really are the Sons of God every day of our lives in flesh-and-blood, in all our dealings with fellow human beings, there will be five clear marks of sonship which will make it obvious who we are.

We are merciful as our Father is merciful.

We judge not.

We condemn not.

We forgive.

We give.

If you say that you are born-again.... if you say Jesus lives in you but lack these five marks of sonship, you are deceived.

When you open your heart and you say, "Jesus come into my life", He comes in to fill you with divine love. And every gift He gives is given to teach you from within to love in these five ways.

If you earnestly follow Jesus' leading in these five ways,

- you are a Son of God,
- you are led by the Spirit.

If you ignore His leading in these five ways - if you fail to trust Him and follow Him in these commands, - you're a hypocrite. You may talk like a saint but you're a hypocrite!

1. **"Be merciful as your Father is merciful." Luke 6:36**

This is a command to us all and there's no leeway. It is given to us by the One who showed mercy to us even unto death.

Laid down His life for us. Shed His blood for us.

The Father was merciful to send Him and He was merciful to come. So now we are merciful in our hearts and in our actions,

- to poor men,
- to rich men,
- to white women and black women,
- to lazy men and ambitious men,
- mild women, mean women.

We're kind. We give them the benefit of the doubt. We take advantage of no one.

## **2. "Judge not and you will not be judged." Luke 6:37**

***Someone came up to Jesus and said, "Teacher, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me". But Jesus said, "Man, who made me a judge or divider over you".***

He wouldn't do it. The Son of God refused to sit in judgment over any man.

He called the Pharisees hypocrites. He called Herod a fox. (That's what they were) But Jesus never passed judgment on anyone.

- He never made one soul feel worthless.
- He never destroyed anyone's hope.
- He never broke the bruised reed or quenched the smoking flax.

Our old nature is full of judging.

"O, he's no good."

"You can't trust her."

"He's hopeless."

We put people in boxes of judgment and if they try to get out we kick them in the head and push them back in.

But now this stops. We do not judge. We leave all judgment to the Day of Judgment. If the living God took His judgment off us and

put it on His only-begotten Son to save us, how can we possibly judge anyone?

3. **"Condemn not and you will not be condemned." Luke 6:37**

In our old nature we go farther than judging people – we condemn them. We think of them and treat them as damned souls whom we will no longer recognize. As far as we are concerned they belong in Hell and we shall have nothing more to do with them. We blot them out of our book.

We see them on the street; they're not people, they're vermin. Their faces pass before our minds as we pray, crying for help. We let them pass. They are condemned.

But now the Spirit of Jesus comes into us – and all these old ways, these miserable attitudes, must come to an end. If there is no condemnation on us from God, there can be no condemnation in our hearts against them. None. Not against one soul.

4. **"Forgive and you will be forgiven." Luke 6:37**

We have been forgiven. So much! So now we forgive. How can we not forgive?

Forgiveness begins not in the mouth but in the heart. Is there one soul from whom you are withholding forgiveness? If you are led by the Spirit of God you know what you must do.

Listen to me –

your prayers dry up,  
your witness loses all its power,  
your very spirit shrivels and turns sour when you will not forgive.

It's not worth it! Follow the leading of the Spirit. Live out the nature of the Father which is in you. Forgive as you have been

forgiven at that Cross.

5. **"Give and it will be given to you, good measure pressed down, shaken together, running over will be put into your lap." Luke 6:38**

The nature of this world is to take

- to get
- to keep
- to clutch.

The nature of God is to give. The Sons of God give and they never lack. They give from their hearts. They want to give and it just keeps pouring back.

Where you give is between you and your Lord. How much you give will never be a problem. You'll just give because giving is the evidence that God's love is ruling your heart.

A man says he loves his wife. The proof is in the way he gives of himself and what he has to her.

A man says he loves God. The proof is the way he gives of himself and his means to others.

God so loved the world that He gave His highest treasure – His only begotten Son – up to death on a Cross.

The creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the Sons of God. And the Sons of God who will be revealed on that glorious Day are the people who right now, day-after-day, bear the marks of sonship in their living.

God grant that we may bear the marks of sonship now – throughout the hours of this day and every day until the King comes.

## 8

### Unity

#### **Read: Romans 12:1-5**

In generations past the one-man ministry was the thing. There have been prophets who have singlehandedly shaken whole nations.

One man with a fiery tongue brought Nineveh to its knees. One man stood on the banks of the Jordan River and shouted "Repent", and all Israel came out to listen and get baptized.

In the Church of Jesus Christ, the one-man ministry has never been the best way. And yet, in time of widespread apathy, God has often raised up solitary voices to proclaim the message that no one else had the faith or the guts to preach.

People would be drawn to that man and cling to him as to a New Testament Moses – until the man would either be corrupted by all this acclaim, or killed by his enemies.

There are church buildings all over your city which are monuments to the strong personality and driving ambition of some gifted preacher or some lady with healing charisma. And there are still assemblies and evangelistic enterprises that are held together by the drive of one man.

But the day of the one-man show in the Church of Jesus Christ is over. The real move of God which is stirring on this planet at this hour is by-passing the one-man ministry. It's working in those places where believers give up trying to be one-man shows, give up the false security of leaning on one shining flesh-and-blood leader, and start functioning together as a Body with Jesus Christ as the Head.

The apostle Paul was a fantastic man – a man anointed with great power from God. But Paul was not a one-man show. Paul went into Corinth, preached the gospel, disciplined believers for eighteen months and left. Paul wasn't there to supervise, make decisions, nurse their wounds, or blow their noses for them.... they got along..... Every

ministry that they needed in Corinth was in that flock, if Paul never came back. When Paul wrote his letter to the Romans, he was writing to people he had never seen. Paul had never been to Rome yet, but there was a flourishing church there for which Paul had done nothing but give thanks.

The boss of the Church at Corinth was not Paul. And the boss of the Church at Rome was not Peter. The boss of those churches and every other church on earth was the Holy Spirit who took His orders in turn from the glorious Lamb of God – Jesus, who submitted in turn to the Father.

These churches had pastors, elders, deacons, evangelists, teachers, healers, helpers; but the real Shepherd was the Lord Himself. And there wasn't a single believer in the flock who didn't have a divine ministry to perform. The Church functioned as a Body held together not by the personality of a chaplain, but by love flowing between brothers and sisters, driven forth into the world not by the program of some fleshly mastermind, but by the Spirit of God.

The Spirit gathered them to Jesus.

The Spirit enlightened them concerning Jesus.

The Spirit filled them with the love of Jesus and the power of Jesus

...built them into a living temple of God, transformed them into a literal Body of Christ on earth. And through them all together the Word of God went forth and the grace of God was made manifest to the world.

They were the Alpha Age.

We are the Omega Age.

It's all happening again. The Spirit is doing this same beautiful thing again. But this time not just in a few cities around the rim of the Mediterranean Sea, but across the entire surface of this planet. This time not to get the Church Age started, but to end it. To get out the good news of the mercy of God in Jesus to the whole earth before the hour of judgment strikes.

The work of getting the final call to the Banquet of God out to the whole world with power,

– is not given maverick preachers,

– or to lone-ranger evangelists,

### **but to the Body.**

And we see the Body being drawn together before our eyes. We are all hearing the call of the Spirit to give up our private spiritual enterprises and to enter into the mind and will of Him who has set us in the Body, made us members of each other.

***So that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love.***  
***Ephesians 4:14–16***

The message of the Spirit at this hour is that we must no longer be children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men. We are to grow up into the Head – into Christ. To give up our own pet things and our own hang-ups and prejudices and come together, under Jesus, and be one!

Not everybody is responding to that message. There are many who are going on in their own private way, reserving the right to rule their own lives, to obey Jesus when they want to, and disregard Him when they want to.

But these are not the ones who are going to get the job done.

- They may be gifted.
- They may be brilliant.
- They may be eloquent.

But they are being by-passed as the Spirit draws together those who will practice their faith and exercise their ministry as part of the Body.

And who are these people who are taking their place in the Body? Romans 12 tells us exactly who they are.

1. They are those who have presented their physical bodies to God as a living sacrifice.

How do you worship God? You worship God by making Him an offering.

- The Israelites would kill the best animal in their flock and put it on the altar.
- The wise men brought gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

You say you're worshipping God today with words of praise – that's beautiful. God loves to hear those words of praise, provided they're backed by something real. What are you putting on the altar of God to back those words of praise?

Money? That's a start if it's serious – and not a half-hearted tip.

But money is not enough.

Fasting and prayers? That's beautiful if it's coming from your heart.

But fasting and prayers are not enough.

If you really mean those words of thanks to God for the gift of His Son,

- you're going to go all the way,
- you're going to put your body on the altar...
- your flesh-and-blood body as a living sacrifice.

***I appeal to you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God which is your spiritual worship.***

***Romans 12 :1***

Your body is offered up. It's still alive, but it's alive now only to God. And all it does is now for the glory of God and whatever does not glorify God, please God, honor God, it does not do anymore.

Your body was once a house of lust and a temple of vanity.

Your body is now a house of prayer and a temple of the Spirit of God.

If you haven't presented your body as a living sacrifice to God do it now!

"Lord, today I lay my body on the altar. I present it to you as a living sacrifice. Accept it, O God. Cause the fire of your holiness to come down and rest upon it like that bush on Mt. Horeb that burned but remained green, that men may turn aside to see it and hear your voice speaking out of it!"

When we present our bodies to God we become together one single living sacrifice, one glorious burning bush from which one voice speaks. That's the first step toward actual unity among believers – the laying of our physical bodies on the altar of God.

2. The Body of Christ is made up of those who have given up their citizenship in this world for the citizenship of Heaven.

***Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.***

***Romans 12:2***

So the mind is wrenched out of its old conformity to the ways of this world ... gives up its citizenship and becomes a citizen of Heaven. It's a new mind, a heavenly mind, a mind that is set on God, a mind that's aimed at doing God's good and acceptable and perfect will.

You don't give up your earthly citizenship with externals like refusing to vote or pay taxes. People refuse to vote and pay taxes and think they're really something and they're still bound to the earth. It's an internal thing. It's a matter of where is your mind? What is it set on, where is its comfort, its delight?

A thousand influences will try to make it turn back to Egypt and think the way the world thinks.

Be not conformed.  
Be transformed.

God won't do this for you, you have to do it constantly ... always breaking conformity with that lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride of life. Always being renewed in that River of Life that flows

through the desert of this world, so that your mind is filled with light instead of darkness, truth instead of lies, reality instead of vain dreams and paranoid suspicions.

3. The Body of Christ is made up of those who have quit climbing.

***For by the grace given to me, I bid every one among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think but to think with sober judgment, according to the measure of faith God has assigned him.***

Prestige, status, importance do not belong to the Body of Christ – they belong to the world. Whenever these things creep into our fellowships, we've got the world not the Kingdom.

If you're worried about your image in the eyes of other believers – still sulking because you haven't been accorded the recognition you deserve – swinging back and forth between feelings of inferiority and superiority, you've brought the world with you. You're conforming to the world and not the Kingdom.

When you really enter into the Body of Christ, with your heart, the climbing stops because God has turned everything upside down.

In the Kingdom you don't climb ... you descend. You don't put yourself above your brother ... you put your brothers above yourself. You don't seek honor ... you give honor.

4. The Body of Christ is made up of those who fit in where they've been put by God.

– They don't sulk because they haven't been gifted to do some great thing.

– They don't itch to be somewhere other than where they are.

They start where they are with what they have and they fit in.

– They fall in step with their brothers and sisters.

– They fill the gaps.

– They reach out with their hands and lift where things are

sagging.

***"For as in one body we have many members and all members do not have the same function, so we, though many are one body in Christ and individually members one of another."***

***Romans 12:5***

When you fit in you don't wait around to see if somebody will come up and talk to you, you open your eyes and head for the loneliest soul you can find and you talk to them! You don't stand against the wall waiting to see who's going to clean up the mess; you clean it up! Next thing you know you've found the place God has for you – the work God wants you to do. And you do it!

When God wants you somewhere else on some other task, He'll let you know. Meanwhile, that's where you belong, that's where you fit, that's where your joy is. The Body is strengthened and you are blessed.

The one-man ministry is not going to do the job. The job is going to be done by the Body; and the Body is being drawn together right now from every nation, race, kindred, and tongue – together (not in compartments).

Every one of us is being called to leave our safe little fortresses of individualism and fit in where the Spirit of Jesus puts us and work in harmony with brothers and sisters – knit together with them in love.

God help us to do this today,

**for time is short and there's much to be done**