



"A seed will serve him..." Psalm 22:30-31

The Implanter

Promised Seed Ministries PO Box 4035, Alhambra, California 91803-7035 (209) 878-3903

JANUARY 2001..... Volume I, Issue 1

WE ARE LIKE THEM THAT DREAM

Judah was in Babylonian captivity when the Lord raised up the Anointed Shepherd he promised through the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah. (Isa. 44:28, 45:1ff; Jer 25:11f; 29:10). The new world ruler was a Persian king, who had conquered Babylon and would now set the Jews free from their captivity. It was in Cyrus' first year as king of Persia that the Lord stirred up his spirit and caused him to send a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, saying, "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord God of heaven has given me. Moreover, he has commanded me to build him a house in Jerusalem which is in Judah. Who is among you of all his people? May the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up!" (2Chr. 36:22f).

The king's decree promised the finances and protection that would allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple that had been destroyed. Solomon's temple had been laying in ruin for seventy years. This proclamation also promised that the Jews would again cultivate their own ground and harvest their own crops.

It was this announcement that inspired such writings as Psalm 126, which says, "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing. Then said they among the heathen, 'The Lord has done great things for them. The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad. Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south.' They that sow in tears will reap in joy. They that go forth and weeping, bearing precious seed, will doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them" (Ps. 126).

As we take a closer look at this Psalm a nugget of truth can be discovered hidden within its words. The Scriptures are full of these precious nuggets of reality. However, if a person only scratches the surface of the biblical text they miss discovering many such hidden treasures. It is written, "The glory of God is to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter." (Pr. 25:2). Therefore, since we are kings and priest to God, let us dig past the surface and discover the glorious reality concealed within this passage. (1Pe. 2:9; Rev. 1:6, 5:10).

The meaning of this psalm looks simple enough in the King James Version of the Bible. The first portion of the psalm communicates a truly uplifting and encouraging word. It speaks of the Lord bringing a release from the Babylonian captivity that had been upon his people. This liberation from this bondage was like a dream come true. It caused God's people to express with joyful singing when they realized they could begin to sow and harvest the *precious seed*. As they displayed this sense of supreme well-being it caused even the unbelieving to recognize the goodness of the Lord toward his people. This shows us how being a true witness should work. That is the victory that the Lord brings to his people is so complete that it causes great rejoicing. The excitement and celebration of the people of God becomes so intense that the heathen even recognize and make mention of the Lord's accomplishment among his people.

FOCUSED ON THE SUBJECTION TO FUTILITY

However, in the latter portion of this same psalm the writer appears to pray for their captivity to return upon them. He says, "Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south. They that sow in tears will reap in joy. They that go forth and weeping, bearing precious seed, will doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them" (Ps. 126:4ff). Why would the writer ask the Lord to bring back Zion's

We Are Like Them That Dream.....	1
Personal Greeting.....	9
Itinerary Update.....	9
Tape of the Month Form.....	9
"f" & "ff" Explained.....	9

GOD RETURNED THE OPPORTUNITIES OF ZION

captivity? Can this be the state in which God wants his people to dwell? Does the Lord really want his sons to live in a dream world? Is the expectation of being set free from futility just a dream to keep believers pressing for an unattainable goal? Does the Lord dangle the hope of son placement in front of his children like the proverbial carrot in front of the rabbit? Many of God's people are so focused on their subjection to disappointment and misery that they have embraced suffering as the hope of being delivered from futility. Some even believe that the work of Calvary is not sufficient, but it is their suffering that brings about a finished work in their lives. (Ro. 8:20, 23).

It is just such questioning that caused me to realize that something deeper and more profound is hidden within this passage. After all, I do not want to remain a captive to futility, nor do I know anyone else who wants to remain a prisoner to corruption. It has never been God's plan for the creation to remain in slavery, but he subjected the same in the expectation of its complete deliverance. (Ro. 8:19ff). Jesus did not come into the world to judge it. This is because the world was already judged and condemned. (John 3:17). He came to set all humanity free from the condemnation and the bondage. Yes, he came to save humanity and set the world free from the sentence of sin and death. For it was through the transgression of one man, Adam, that all became subjected to sin and death. It was also through one man, Jesus Christ, that all received justification of life. (Ro. 5:12, 18; 1Co. 15:22). Moreover, what if some do not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Let God be true but everyone else a liar. (Ro. 3:3f). Jesus said, *"If anyone hears my words and does not believe, I do not judge him; FOR I DID NOT COME TO JUDGE THE WORLD BUT TO SAVE THE WORLD."* Furthermore, the apostle Paul wrote, *"It is a faithful saying: for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: IF WE BELIEVE NOT, YET HE ABIDES FAITHFUL: HE CANNOT DENY HIMSELF."* The Greek work that is translated deny in these verses is *"arneomai,"* (Strong's number 720), which means to contradict, such as, disavow or reject. Thus, if one says, *"I do not believe that Christ Jesus is my Savior."* The Lord declared himself to be the Savior of all and he abides faithful, because he cannot contradict himself. (Joh. 3:17ff, 12:32f, 47; Ro. 3:3f, 5:6ff, 6:6; 1Co. 15:22ff; 2Co. 5:14ff; 1Ti. 4:9ff; 2Ti. 2:11ff).

Such comprehension of God's purposes should cause us to take a closer look at Psalm 126. Moreover, it should cause us to go back into the original language where God reveals a precious nugget of truth. In the original language verse one simply says, *"When the Lord TURNED BACK the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream."* This statement literally conveys that the Lord returned to his people a former state of prosperity. The New Revised Standard Version reads, *"When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream."* (Ps. 126:1, 4). Every son needs to realize that God has returned favor to Zion. That is, God has restored the divine opportunity to his company of sons and they are now able to walk in total victory. For we are not seeking to overcome so that someday we might have victory over circumstances. But we are MORE than conquerors or overcomers, right now, through him who loves us. Moreover, I am persuaded, along with the apostle Paul, that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 8:29, 37-39; Eph. 1:3; 1Pe. 2:9).

The apostle John wrote concerning this glorious liberation from bondage when he said, *"Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers."* (3Jo. 1:2). Yes, God has returned this opportunity to us and the use of the occasion will produce divine prosperity and well-being to those who use it. The word of the kingdom is filled with great riches and all creation needs to hear and see the manifestation of the Good News of the Happy God, who is Savior of all and the condemner of none. (M't. 6:33f; Rom. 14:17f; 1Co. 4:20).

WE NEED TO HAVE A DREAM

It is alright if we become like those who dream. (Ps. 126:1). This is because destiny and opportunity are similar to a DREAM in this way, everyone who wants to become a success in life has a dream. In this great nation it is possible to even dream the impossible dream, because every dream is a possible opportunity. However, dreaming about success or riches and not setting forth a plan or goal will not bring a dream to fulfillment. If the person does not have a strategy, blueprint, or goal, they can dream for a lifetime without ever experiencing its fulfillment.

PERFECTLY JOINED TOGETHER

Sometime within one's span of life they will come face to face with reality. That is, they will recognize that they have not reached their goal or fulfilled their purpose, because all they ever did was dream about it. Moreover, they will probably never become anymore than what they presently are if all they do is fantasize about the potential. Remember! For someone to have a dream is to have an opportunity. However, an opportunity needs more than imagination to develop it and give it expression. That is, it must be given the legs and path to walk on. A vision needs to be exercised to develop into reality. It is true that God has returned the opportunity to his sons, but what are they doing with it?

Psalm 126, shows us the first steps to a successful dream. It says, "Our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with joyful shouting. Then they said among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them.' The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad." The dream produces a hope within the dreamer, which produces a joyful expression. No longer is the "Woe, is me," expressed from the lips of those that dream. The focus is not on the troubles of life, but it is now centered upon the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus. (Tit. 2:13). This expression of joy filled with anticipation causes even the unbelieving to recognize what great things the Lord has accomplished for his sons. It is the world's observance of what the Lord has done for his sons that brings even a further recognition and gladness to the heart of all people.

Let us look deeper into the opportunity that has come to Zion. We will do this by looking at the apostle Paul's letters to the church in Corinth. The opportunity of God has already come to the church. The text I want to deal with is found in his second letter to this church. However, we need to take a brief survey of the first epistle to the church in Corinth to bring us up to date.

PROMISED SEED MINISTRIES

Web sites:

<http://www.sigler.org/wood>

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Sparta/8459>

Audio site:

<http://www.hisremnant.org/wood/list.html>

Email us:

Promised@aol.com

In the first letter Paul deals with the problems that would make the opportunity unfruitful. His writing begins by showing that God desires unity in his church. He says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you. **BE PERFECTLY JOINED TOGETHER IN THE SAME MIND AND IN THE SAME PURPOSE.**" (1Co. 1:10).

Yet, the first thing he needed to deal with was division in the church. The people were saying, "I am of Paul; I am of Peter; I am of Apollos." There were even those that said, "I am of Christ." However, Paul retorts, "Is Christ divided?" More literally he says, "You have divided the body of Christ!" Let us hear what the apostle is saying. He says the body of Christ became divided by focusing upon personalities and forms of religion. This church was also being tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of teaching. (1Co. 1:11ff; Eph. 4:14).

God's people have a tendency to follow after magnetic personalities, ceremony, and doctrine. They continue on these paths of futility until they become completely disillusioned. Then they run after some new charismatic personality, only to come to the same end. Schisms and divisions, that are much like these of Paul's day, exist in the church of today. They arise because of ethnic difficulties, as well as, preconceived opinions. Every group thinks that it has a little more truth than anyone else. However, there is one body, one church, one Lord, and one baptism. Furthermore, one God is the Father of all and is in us all. (Eph. 2:13ff, 4:4ff). The apostle Paul went on to say, "Did Paul go to the cross and die for you? Who am I?" Clearly we are not to follow personalities. There is one that we should follow and his name is Jesus. Those whom God has set into leadership are to only be followed as they follow Christ. (1Co. 1:11). Thus the first thing we learn from the church in Corinth is to correct our focus. We must be centered upon the Lord Jesus Christ and not another. Remember! Jesus is the author and the finisher of the faith. (Heb. 12:2). He, as no one else, obtained the promise and is the essence and the theme of the gospel. He is the beginning, ending and confirmation of all that God purposed. Jesus is all in all!

LEARNING TO USE THE MIND OF CHRIST

Next, Paul tells us that no one should really need to tell

us these things. This is, because in God's provision he gave us the mind of Christ. Think of it! We can think with the same mind as Christ Jesus. Some folks may have difficulty with such a statement. However, this is only because they have not learned to use the mind that God gave them. Long ago the prophet Isaiah asked, *"Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, or as his counselor has taught him? With whom did he take counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of justice? Who taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?"* (Is. 40:13f). The apostle Paul gives an answer to Isaiah's question when he writes, *"Who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST."* (1 Co. 2:16). It is true that in the former covenant it is written: *"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him."* (1Co. 2:9). However, *"God has revealed them to us through his Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God."* (1Co. 2:10). Thus, we who have received the Holy Spirit of promise have received the mind of Christ. Now we are learning how to use it. This is necessary so we can truly interpret spiritual things with spiritual things.

Paul told the saints at Philippi to let the same thinking be in them, which was also in Christ Jesus. That is, we need to recognize since we are in the form or inner character of God, we need not consider it robbery to be one with God. This understanding should not cause us to make ourselves of any reputation, but taking the inner quality of a bond servant, let us willing identify with the likeness of humanity. Moreover, being found in outward appearance as a human being, let us humble ourselves and become obedient to death, even the death of the cross. (Ph'l. 2:8). By embracing the cross of Jesus Christ we will be found in him, not having our own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ. That is, the righteousness which is from God by faith. *WE DO THIS SO WE MAY KNOW HIM and THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION, and THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS, BEING CONFORMED TO HIS DEATH, if, by any means, we may attain to the resurrection from the dead.* (Ph'l. 3:9ff).

LEARNING TO PUT OFF CARNALITY

Just after Paul tells the church that they possess the mind of Christ he deals with their carnality. In chapter three Paul tells the church they are too flesh centered to

hear spiritual things. Thus we see the church has to grow up past its emphasis on fleshly things to find the mystery. I trust no striving or jealousy exists within us this day. If so, put let us put them aside, **BECAUSE THEY WILL PREVENT US FROM BEHOLDING THE SACRED SECRET OF GOD.** Striving and jealousy will prevent one from seeing what God wants to reveal. When Paul speaks of striving and jealousy, he is referring to one becoming envious of a brother or a sister's fellowship with the presence of the Lord. They possibly even see something different from the way we see it. So we strive with them, wanting to show that our understanding is every bit as good, even better than their revelation. Possibly we think our revelation is even more accurate than theirs. Remember! The only thing that truly counts is our comprehension of Christ Jesus. It is not *what* one knows, but *whom* they know that makes the difference.

Later in the book of Corinthians the apostle tells us that differences of opinion must be among us. The church is not the building but the assembly of the people of God, joining in fellowship and worship and oneness is the common goal. Confession, forgiveness, and acceptance must be practiced for the church, which is the body of Christ, to become what Jesus intended. Differences of opinion are normal among God's people. Each member must seek God's will in the doctrines and issues of the church. Yet, ugly disharmony is not normal, for we must agree to disagree, agreeably. Nasty disagreements reveal that the wrong attitude prevails and God does not approve unpleasant behaviors. However, healthy disagreement will cause those opinions that God approves to become manifest within the church. (1Co. 11:19). Just because we develop an opinion that is different, we do not leave to start another group. For if what we incorporate into our faith actually comes from God, he will illustrate his approval of it. We need to affiliate with brethren who look at things differently than we do. Even if we hold to our own opinion and perceive things a little differently than others do. However, if we see God coming forth in their life let us give the recognition due to the Lord. That is, we need to acknowledge that God is changing and creating in them the likeness of Christ. We should all be willing to change our opinion as we see the conviction of others manifest the reality of Christ. When this happens we need to go to them and find out what they have that works. That is why we need to stay together even when we hold to a different opinion.

LEARNING TO PROTECT INTEGRITY

In chapter five and six of First Corinthians the apostle notices a flagrant abuse, winked at by the Corinthians. A party spirit and a false notion of Christian liberty seems to have saved the offender from correction. Spiritual pride and false doctrines tend to bring in and to spread such scandalous activity. Corrupt principles and examples, if not corrected, could destroy the character of the whole church. So Paul deals with the problem of sexual immorality in the Corinthian church. He said the nature of the problem was such that even the Gentiles or unbelievers would not have tolerated it. However, the church was puffed up and did not mourn because of this flagrant abuse of the grace of God. Some folks probably thought that it was not the business of the church to deal with such things. Others possibly thought since grace abounds the believer could continue in sin. (Ro. 6:1ff). However, God would have his church thoroughly purged from all such pollution of flesh and spirit. (2Co. 6:14ff, 7:1).

The time for judgment begins at the house of God. Since it first begins with the church, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? If the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear? (1Pe. 4:17ff). True judgment should never lead to condemnation or excommunication. This is because godly judgment is the making right of all that is wrong or out of God's order.

In this particular case Paul instructs the church to *"deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."* (1Co. 5:5). This has been a long misunderstood passage of scripture. However, when we understand Satan to be **"THE ACCUSER OF OUR BRETHREN,"** it shines a completely different light on this thought. (Rev. 12:9ff). For in dealing with the religious minded Jesus said, *"Do not think that I shall ACCUSE you to the Father; THERE IS ONE WHO ACCUSES YOU; Moses, in whom you trust."* (Joh. 5:45). He was not speaking of the man Moses, but of the covenant of the law. God gave the law, as a schoolmaster to bring one to Christ so they might become justified through faith. The commandments were a lamp, the law a light and reproofs of instruction the way of life. (Pro. 6:23). However, this same law brought about wrath, because where there was no law there is no transgression. (Ro. 4:15). Moreover, the law of God cannot make one righteous, because through the law is the knowledge of

sin. What the law does is provide a mirror to reveal our sin. The more law we know the more we are conscious of what we have done wrong, not of what we have done right. (Ro. 3:20f, 7:12; Gal. 3:11ff).

The law became the *"rule book"* by which one lives until they come to Christ and receive the faith. Then, they are no longer under the schoolmaster. (Gal. 3:24f). However, until the faith of Christ that sets one free from the sinful condition arrives the law is good if one uses it lawfully. (1Ti. 1:8). *"Knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God."* (1Tim. 1:8ff).

Paul was simply telling the church to instruct this young man in the law of God. For the law will sufficiently accuse him and reveal his sin to him. After all the law of Moses says, *"The man who lies with his father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them."* (Lev. 20:11).

Paul's instruction was accepted and followed by the majority of the church at Corinth. It proved to be sufficient for correcting this young man. This is seen in the second letter of Corinth, where Paul writes, *"Now you need to forgive and comfort him, lest he become swallowed up with too much sorrow. Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him. Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive lest Satan should take advantage of us. After all we are not ignorant of the accuser's devices or purpose."* The law only holds the power of accusation until one truly comes to the faith of Christ. (2Co. 2:6ff).

The church needs to protect its character so it will have the authority necessary to proclaim the gospel of Christ with liberating power. At the same time it must accept those outside the fellowship with compassion without accepting the practices of the world. Remember. Everything done in darkness God will bring to light. For his church will be without spot or wrinkle or any such blemish. The righteous must not sit back and tolerate any wrongdoing to remain in the body of Christ or in individual lives.

Remember. God does not judge humanity by forsaking

and condemning it to unending despair. Neither does he pass a sentence of eternal separation from his presence and hopelessness upon those that sin. He perfects this good work that he began in us by revealing the problem and righteously dealing with it. (Ph'l. 1:6). When God reveals and deals with a missing of the mark, one can expect it to be justly corrected. *"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."* (Heb. 4:16). When we acknowledge our missing of the mark, God is faithful and just to cleanse us from every blemish. He graciously forgives our sin, cleanses us from all unrighteousness. (1Jo. 1:7ff).

In seventh and eighth chapters of First Corinthians, Paul writes concerning some cultural issues of his day that deal with the place of men and women in the church. There are some wonderful spiritual thoughts hidden in parabolic form within these chapters. They have to do with the rightful place and relationship of the spirit and soul within each of our lives. I will not deal with these at this time.

LEARNING ABOUT SPIRITUAL THINGS

Next, we go into chapter twelve where some specific manifestations of the Holy Spirit are mentioned. Paul did not want the church to be ignorant concerning spiritual things. So he tells them there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. Also there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each believer for the benefit of the whole body. Then he goes on to mention nine manifestations of the Spirit in this chapter. These include the believer speaking or interpreting different languages without the need for training. Also prophesy, gifts of healing, the gift of faith, and working of miracles. Moreover, words of knowledge, words of wisdom, and the discerning of spirits all work through the same earnest. In the realm of Pentecost these manifestation are often referred to as the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These became a part of the believer's life after they heard the good news of salvation and believed. They were then sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. This is the stamp or signet of security or preservation on the one who receives this private mark of God. It is also the earnest or guarantee of the believers inheritance. (1Co. 12:7ff; Eph. 1:13f).

Why is it that *"tongues"* operate more often in Pentecostal circles than all the others manifestations of

the Holy Spirit put together? Does not the church realize that it is the same Spirit that operates and demonstrates in all the afore mentioned areas? It appears that the church in Corinth had a problem similar to the church of today. That is, everyone spoke in tongues, but where were the rest of these nine gifts, or manifestations of the Spirit? It is time that the church wakes up and realizes that tongues are one of the lesser of all the manifestations of the Spirit. That particular gift is better used in the closet for the edification of oneself. It is this form of spirit communication that builds one up in the most holy faith. (Jude 1:20). However, when it comes to the body, the best gifts are those that build up, stir up and cheer up the church.

We have the Holy Spirit in our lives and it is this same Spirit that distributes the gifts as the church needs them. This happens in whatever way God wants it to happen. Everyone that has been sealed with the Holy Spirit can expect the Lord to flow from them to different members of the congregation who need healing. It is the Holy Spirit that does the healing, not gifted men or women. If a word of knowledge needed, it is the same Holy Spirit in the believer that meets the need. God can work through each and everyone to meet another's need.

This is what the charismatic movement was all about. I appreciate knowing that the preacher is not the only one who can be used by the Holy Spirit to disperse these gifts. I get excited when I see little five and six-year-old children prophesying along side adult ministries. We do not often see this happen, however, we have witnessed it in places where the people come together to experience the Lord. These say, *"The Holy Spirit is with us to stir us up, to build us up and to cheer us up."* The children then get excited and start prophesying and singing songs in the Spirit.

When my son and daughter were young, they probably did more healing than their father ever did. They amazed me. They would pray for warts and the warts would disappear. My daughter was so concerned about some warts she had on her hand that she asked me what she could do to get rid of them. Some people she knew had them burned off. She asked me if she could go get hers burned off. I said, *"Honey, why not pray for the Lord to remove them, it's cheaper."* She went off to her bedroom prayed, *"Lord, Daddy says you can heal these warts. I believe what he said. So Lord, heal them, thanks Lord for doing it. Amen."* The very next

morning when she woke up every wart that had been on her hand was gone. From then on every time she saw a friend with warts, she said, *"We will pray and the Lord will heal those warts. Be healed, in Jesus' name!"* She has knocked off more warts than anybody I know. I want everyone to know that these manifestations of healing will also work through each of us

THE GREATEST OF THREE REMAINING THINGS

In chapter thirteen of First Corinthians Paul shows what is lacking in spiritual function of the church. Displaying all of the gifts of the Spirit, as well as possessing all knowledge, understanding, and faith, is nothing if it is void of love. He is not saying love is the greatest gift, but that spirituality without love is nothing. He also says when maturity comes everything that flows out of the earnest or installment of the Holy Spirit will become as nothing. The earnest is as if we inherited an estate that was worth ten million dollars, but could only have use of five hundred thousand dollars until we proved ourselves mature and capable of handling such wealth. I do not know anyone who would not find the earnest to be a great blessing. However, when they finally became fully approved and received the whole inheritance that earnest or installment would become as nothing in light of the whole. Thus, as children, we think, understand and speak as a child, but when we reach maturity we put away immaturity. The earnest of the Holy Spirit enables us to perceive spiritual things as looking into a foggy mirror. We see dimly, as though we are looking into a riddle or enigma. However, upon coming to maturity we perceive face to face or presence to presence. Realizing with the deepest clarity that as he is so are we in the world. (1Jo. 4:17). Now, we know out of the installment or earnest, but then we will fully know just as we are also fully recognized. There are three things that remain throughout the entire process of our growth to maturity: faith, hope and love. The greatest or the fullest manifestation of these three is love. (1 Cor 13:1ff)..

LEARNING TO FLOW IN GOD'S ORDER

In chapter fourteen of First Corinthians Paul deals with church order. Since the church was not flowing decently and in order he dealt with the problem. He instructed the church saying, *"Brethren, do not be children in understanding. However, in maliciousness and spitefulness be as innocent babes, but in understanding be mature."* (1Co. 14:20). The church

has lacked understanding even until this present day. This is mostly do to a lack of diligence in the believers lives to present themselves approved to God as workman who needs not to be ashamed. Remember. *"The glory of God is to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings is to search out a matter."* (Pro. 25:2). This can be accomplished by learning to *"correctly divide the word of truth."* Moreover, by keeping away from profane fruitless discussion, which only increase to more ungodliness. (2Ti.15f).

The lack of understanding in the believer has been encouraged though lack of orderly worship when the church gathers. Instead the church functioning as a body and speaking the truth in love, so every member may grow up in all things into him who is the head, even Christ. It is from Christ that the whole body is joined and knit together, through what every joint contributes. This joining is according to the energy that every part supplies when does its share. The growth of a healthy body necessitates the function of every member within its God given order. (Eph 4:15f). One might ask, *"How is it that the church should function when it comes together?"* The apostle Paul said, *"Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification."* (1Co. 14:26).

THE MESSAGE SUMMED UP IN THREE POINTS

In chapter fifteen, Paul sums up the entire gospel message that he taught in three points: 1) Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 2) He was buried, and 3) He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. Salvation rests completely on our faithfulness to keep in memory and hold fast the truth revealed in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. Every other teaching or manifestation, apart from this good news, will only produce failure. (1Co. 15:1ff).

The apostle went on to deal with some teachings that questioned the truth of resurrection. Error that removes the hope of resurrection has crept back into the church. The teaching of resurrection is foundational to our standing victoriously in Christ. We are thankful our hope is not only in this life, but we also have the hope of resurrection. One teaching that is gaining momentum in this hour is the doctrine of reincarnation. No hope exists in the teaching of reincarnation, just a endless recycling into human vanity. However, look out! The teaching of reincarnation is a most deceitful

thing. It tries to slip in the back door as a mystery, or secret of God. Then before anyone suspects, God fearing people are saying, *“Well, I don't have anything to fear anymore. If I don't make it this time, I'll make it in my next life.”* Thus, Paul establishes the resurrection and the power of the resurrection of Christ. He says, *“As in Adam all died, so also in Christ will all be made alive. Everyone in their own order, or classification, Christ, the first fruits.”* This speaks of Christ Jesus, the Head, and the many members of the Christ body or the sons of God. Next, God enlivens those who belong to Christ in his presence. These are the *soulish* church, or the bride of Christ. Next, the final order, when Christ puts all things under his feet. All principalities and powers and dominion, even the last enemy, death (1 Cor. 15:22ff).

Now we move onto chapter one of Second Corinthians. Thus far, Paul has spent very little time dealing with the mysteries. He has simply dealt with the practicalities in the church. The second letter comes seven to eight years after the first letter and Paul is ready to present the mystery to the church at Corinth. An opportunity has come. The whole book of First Corinthians tells us of our opportunities. The opportunity to be the healer and the deliverer of creation is ours. Moreover, we have the opportunity to give a word of wisdom, a word of knowledge, or to impart faith. We have the opportunity to manifest the Christ and to set creation free from bondage to corruption. The occasion to put all enemies under our feet manifestly also belongs to us now. That is, to declare openly what the Lord already accomplished at Calvary. Yes, we must stand up and be a part of this great first resurrection

Then we come to chapter two of Second Corinthians where the apostle Paul revealed the basis for having such opportunities in Christ. Verse fourteen says, *“Now thanks be to God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ, and makes manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place. We are to God a sweet odor of Christ in them that they are being saved and in them that are perishing. To the one we are the savor of death, to the other we are the savor or odor of life, and who is worthy or sufficient of these things?”*

More to Come . . .



Beloved:

The door has closed on the year 2000, and so much could be said about this transitional year. Yet, as God promised, *“during all days of the earth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, do not cease.”* (Ge. 8:22). The dawn of 2001, brings with it a fresh expectancy, a sensing that the winter is past and spring is about to break forth. We believe the Father is speaking that this will be the beginning of the manifestation that we have been waiting to see. It is the time for the sons of God to begin stepping out from behind the unproductive veil of religion and shine forth as lights in this darkened world. To manifest in the biblical sense is to become an exhibition, such as an expression of all that we know. In other words, not just talking the walk, but walking the talk.

A simple pattern that produces a beneficial and life giving manifestation is found in the first psalm. It says, *“How happy is the person who walks not in the advise of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the precept or statute of the Lord, and in His precept or statute he meditates or ponders day and night. **HE SHALL BE LIKE A TREE PLANTED BY THE RIVERS OF WATER, THAT BRINGS FORTH ITS FRUIT IN ITS SEASON, WHOSE LEAF ALSO SHALL NOT WITHER; AND WHATEVER HE DOES SHALL PROSPER.**”* (Ps. 1:1ff).

Pamla and I pray that you will find this to be the fruitful and prosperous year for each of you. May your leaves spread healing to all whom you come in contact with during this year.

We thank each of you for your continued and generous faithful support of this ministry throughout this past year. We are looking forward to this New Year with great expectancy. We do not put a price on God's Word because we believe the Word to be invaluable or priceless and we can not put a price on the teacher, because this will vary with every individual's need and relationship. Pamla and I are thankful for your help in defraying the costs of sending out this publication. We are so grateful for those of you who find value in the word and the messenger and have sent a *“love offering”* to help in the support of this ministry.

In “christed” love,

Stacy & Pamla Wood