

Kingdom News

The Kingdom is Yours; the power is Yours and the glory is Yours, forever.... (Matt. 6:13)

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Motto for the year of 2012

You are worthy, Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for You have created all things, and for Your pleasure they are and were created. (Revelation 4:11 *KJV adapted*)

The Chief Cornerstone



Laos ... Dike (Part 2)

Last month, the Lord began to talk with us about the *spirit of Laodicea*. Which I'm sure we'd love to believe is a distinct "end-time" church, with a physical address somewhere in Asia Minor. Whereas, it is more likely the case that these are people sitting just to the right of the person, who is sitting just to *your* left.

[14] And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; these things say the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God; [15] I know thy works, that you are neither cold nor hot: I would [prefer that] you were cold or hot. [16] So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. [17] Because you say, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and know not that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: [18] I counsel you to buy

Chief Cornerstone

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The Leadership Corner *Leadership Living, Inc.*

Maneuvering Multiple Realities

All scripture is KJV paraphrased.

Wow! Can you believe that we are in the last month of this 2011 year? It seems like just yesterday (or last week) that we were contemplating the wonderful things God told us He would do this year. We have so much to talk about. Do you even remember half of the stuff God has done in your world this year? Well I can't, at least not off the top of my head.

As usual, December is the month when we need to "Go Back to the Future." This is when we take out time to remember what it was that God was saying to us exactly one year ago (December of 2010) about what He planned to do in our lives, as well as in our communities in the upcoming year. It is very important that we document what was said and compare it against what actually happened.

Why is it important for us to "track" God's footsteps? Does it matter if He did what He told us He would do? Again, can we even recall the directives He gave us? Well, now it's "Test Time" and we need to be ready to sit with God and review the year.

Let's pause and think about what God told David as it relates to interacting with the Almighty. In Psalms 27:8 David says, "When You (God) told me to seek your face, my heart said yes Lord." God instructed David to seek

The Leadership Corner

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Son of My Wisdom



Practical: Sanctifying Man's Logos

We have talked about how man's ethos (character and authority) is supposed to be set apart unto God. At regeneration, God gives man a new heart and a new spirit. Man, out of his heart and renewed spirit, obeys God. As man continues to obey, his character is being transformed.

(At this point I want to insert a disclaimer: Man is a whole being. Man is not being sanctified in one part, and then in another part. The whole of man is being sanctified from faith to faith. The *pathos* requires the *ethos*, and the *logos*. The *ethos* requires the *logos*, and the *logos* requires the *ethos*. Man cannot walk in obedience, except he be given a new heart and spirit (regeneration). However, man cannot truly take hold of such a gift (new heart & spirit) except by obeying God. This relationship is similar to that of man and woman. I'll show you how.

Reference: 1 Corinthians 11-12

- **Scripture (v11):** Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man, in the Lord.
 - **Corresponding analogy:** Nevertheless, neither is regeneration without obedience, nor obedience without regeneration in the Lord.
- **Scripture (v12):** For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man by the woman, but all things of God.
 - **Corresponding analogy:** For as obedience is of regeneration, even so is regeneration by obedience, but all things of God.

So if there was no Adam, there would have been no Eve. But if there was no Eve, there could not have been the perpetuation, and perfection of Adam through Eve: namely Christ, who is the completion of humanity.

But on a practical basis, how are man's thoughts, words, and deeds sanctified; how is man's *logos* sanctified?

I was just asking God, "What is the nexus between



A Journey to Intimacy

The Spirit of the Lord God is Upon Me (Part 3)

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the LORD has anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, *recovering of sight to the blind* and the opening of the prison to them that are bound...⁽¹⁾

You may recall (from our last edition) that it is the clear and genuine *proclamation of the gospel* that binds up (or heals) the brokenhearted....

And in like manner, it is the clear and genuine *proclamation of the gospel* that liberates the captives." Let's have a closer look, shall we. If we're going to be delivered from captivity, it might be a reasonable thing to first have a look at captivity itself.

What does it mean to be captive?

One very intriguing (and fitting) definition of the term *captive* is *to be held under the control of another, but having the appearance of independence*.⁽²⁾ Captivity is essentially a situation where you find that your rights have been infringed upon or taken away altogether. You find yourself *under new management*. Paul winked this to us when he shared with us this cry of the heart, "When I want to do good, evil stands at the gate. I can identify within me a desire to "do good;" but how to go from "wanting to walking" is where I get lost."⁽³⁾

Captivity is the antithesis (opposite) of liberty and freedom. It can either be *voluntary* or *involuntary*. Israel engaged in *voluntary* captivity, when they disobeyed God (much like we do).⁽⁴⁾ If they remained in captivity long enough, their children were born into captivity *involuntarily*. As a result of Israel's captivity they found themselves the borrower and not the

Love and *The Truth*



Melchisedec in Laodicea - II

In the last edition of the Kingdom Newsletter, in this column, we began to wrestle with the idea that we are called to be priests after the order of Melchisedec, and yet the context we find ourselves in is Laodicean.

Just so that we're speaking the same language, I have included the full text of the message to Laodicea.

And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. (Revelation 3:14-22)

In order to truly consider what Jesus is saying, there is a key observation that needs to be made about this letter to the Laodicean church, and indeed each letter to each of the churches listed in Revelation 2-3. We will deal with this "key" first; and in the next edition we'll begin to open up the specifics of the letter to Laodicea.

The New Testament KJV translators chose the word *angel*; but the original Greek word is *aggelos*. It word *aggelos* is not specific to supernatural beings. It is a word that simply means (a messenger). It is a word that



Boot Camp

Submission - *The Sanctification of the Soul*



Milestone #4 – Follow Me

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.⁽¹⁾

The Spirit of God intends, by the human spirit, to mentor and lead the soul into sweet submission and obedience to the Word of God. Thereby we become progressively sanctified into an amazing expression of "Son-ship."

Last month, we explored our Lord's directive to "take up our cross." This month we'll receive from the Father, something of what it means to "follow" our Lord.

I do not mind telling that the follow portion from last month's article really chastened me:

REPEAT: ... One thing is certain; there will be no "taking up of any crosses;" where there has not first (and foremost) been a denying of the self life. There will be no "marching down the Via Dolorosa, where there has not yet been Gethsemane's "nevertheless."⁽¹⁾ It was true for our Lord; it is true for us. It is enough that a disciple should be as his master. For the crosses of our life are not taken up in the public trials of Gabbatha "the judgment hall." The cross is chosen in the secret place of the garden of Gethsemane. Although a few of the disciples did go with our Lord to the garden. None of them could go with him to the place of "nevertheless."

It may be the case that the traditional understanding of the term "follow me" would be that our Lord is asking us to "walk with (or walk behind; or walk like) Him" in our journey through this world. While there is some veracity to that understanding of the term, I challenge you that perhaps He means something more. The 12 disciples followed Jesus through this world; some of them went all the way to the mount Transfiguration and others to the mount of Ascension. But we see places that Jesus went that they either could not or would not

Living Waters



Repent ... Or Else

Revelations 2 & 3

The Lord gave me this article one morning, back in May 2011. He let me begin to assemble it and even gave revelation on it. But He wouldn't give me permission to publish it, at that time. I thought that was rather peculiar. This month, (after He had given directions on the other columns) I asked the Lord, what He wanted published for the *Living Waters* column; He led me back to this article.

Admittedly, back in May 2011, I sensed that approaching the churches in Revelation was quite a "tall order" for me. It unnerved me a bit. At that time, I had no clue that the Lord was going to begin to talk to us about the other churches in Revelation (no clue whatsoever). When He did not give me permission to publish this article earlier this year, I set it aside. Frankly I had completely forgotten about this article. Well, it appears that He has now given permission, so here it is.

That morning in May, I was reading and my eyes fell on the passage of scripture in Revelations 2, where The Alpha and Omega was talking with the angels of the seven churches. As you can appreciate, these various conversations are disconcerting to one [me, specifically] whose ears are not pierced with understanding on the subject. So I had some questions ... correction I had LOTS of questions. I'll only trouble you with a couple of them, and one in particular.

[12] And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; [13] I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast My name, and hast not denied My faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. [14] But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there [among you] them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. [15] So hast thou also them [in your midst] that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans,

Nutrition, Health & Wellness



The Bible Tells Me So...

And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. (Genesis 1:29)

Nutrition, health and wellness; for the sake of this article, we will categorize these as follows:

- When we say *Nutrition* we mean practices that have to do with the consumption of food and drink or with the overall nourishment of the physical body.
- When we say *Health* we mean activities and practices that regard physical exercise.
- When we say *Wellness* we mean things that have to do with one's non-physical well-being (mental, financial, environmental, etc.).

This month, let's discover a few touch points on what the Bible intimates about health, in general.

It is, perhaps, our Western perspective that health has to do primarily with the physical component of our existence. And in a climate wrought with the tenets of atheism, humanism, existentialism and hedonism (all are a disposition to deny the True and Living God); we can see how that might be the case. We are socialized to consider health along the lines of eating, drinking, physical activity and mental therapies, etc. As you might appreciate it, the scriptures take quite a different view of things and quite a peculiar view at that.

Proverbs 3:6-8 says "[6] In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. [7] Be not wise in your own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. [8] It shall be health to your navel, and marrow to your bones."

of me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich; and white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness do not appear; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. [19] As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. ⁽¹⁾

What we'd rather not believe to be true is that we are (in very many ways) of that same spirit. Aren't we? We say that we are "rich," and it is clear that we are increased with "goods." And while we may admit that we are needful of a few things, I'd venture to say that our "shopping list" would not look anything like the "shopping list" that our Lord would write for us.

- Our shopping list (which by the way, looks much like a Chinese laundry list) would include the likes of "*houses and cars; positions and power; status and fame (of sorts), etc., etc.*"
- Our Lord's shopping list (for us) includes: "*pure gold, white raiment and eye salve.*"

Wow!! Anybody need a ride to the store?

Last month, we considered to *whom this letter was addressed*. We found that not only was the letter addressed to the body of believers at Laodicea, proper. But it was specifically addressed to the angel or overseer of a "*body of lukewarm believers.*" Ouch, that hurts! We also contemplated the disillusionment of our brothers and sisters of Laodicea. They thought it was "all good!" And it was clear, by our Lord's warning, that not only was it *NOT* "all good," but that none of it was "good." They had lost their ability to properly discern between the things of God and the things of the world. They had forgotten that our mandate is to "be not conformed to this world." They were calling "bad" good, and had completely lost sight of how to "prove what is good and acceptable, and the perfect will of God."⁽²⁾ Laodicea mistakenly thought that it was a good thing to be "increased with goods," when our Lord clearly says "lay not up for yourself earthly treasures."⁽³⁾ They were measuring their success by their portfolios and their summer cottages in the Hamptons. The problem with them [spelled "us"] was not whether the glass was half full or half empty; they were calling an empty glass *full* (imagine that).

Last month, we desired the Lord's permission to expand on The Amen's recommendations and their

application. We'll begin here, and wrap up in the next edition. Meanwhile, let's take a few minutes to muse about how awesome is a grace that would trifle with ones such as ourselves.

Recommendations and Application

So we see on our Lord's shopping list: pure gold, white raiment and eye salve. Hmm. Let's put the shopping list aside for now and focus on the procurement process itself, shall we.

That's peculiar ... salvation was FREE. But pure gold, white raiment and eye salve, we have to *buy* from Him?

Let's put the car in park, right here. Turn off the engine, please; take the keys out of the ignition and get out of the car. Take a walk with me, will you.

Now our Lord doesn't require that we "pay" for salvation, for a number of reasons. But two of those reasons are that 1) it is a gift of grace and not of works; 2) we couldn't afford it, otherwise. Okay ... okay ... got that; I am very appreciative of the FREE gift. So now are you saying to me that (somehow) I can afford the pure gold, the white raiment and the eye salve? And that I can get these items from Him? You see that our Lord counsels us to *buy* these items from Him, right. He didn't do us like the five foolish virgins; they had to go to the merchant to get oil. When they returned the door to the wedding supper was shut.⁽⁴⁾ Right now, I'll take all the grace I can get. Trust me, I need it.

To *buy*, to *procure* and to *purchase* are essentially the same things. The *purchase* transaction requires that there be an exchange of value, right. That's really what's taking place, whenever we make a purchase of any kind. We exchange values. We give the merchants something of value to them (usually, money); and they give us something we value.

Wow!! The Lord is both infinitely gracious and beyond genius!!! Follow this...

Purchase: If we perform the transaction right, we relinquish (or give up) something of *comparatively* nominal value to us [at least at the time of the transaction] for something we have placed a *comparatively* greater value upon. You'll notice that I was especially generous with the use of the term *comparatively*. The reason for this is because

there must, of necessity, be a new value appraisal placed on each item of the transaction (the item surrendered, and the item procured in its place).

Quick example: We just bought my mother a car, a Honda. Now over the weeks prior to the purchase, I drove past dealerships for Honda, Jaguar, Toyota, Highlander, Nissan, Cadillac, you name it. At that time [based on my value appraisals], they could not have talked me into buying a car; even if it came with a chauffeur. But when the Lord put on our hearts that it was time to get Mom a car, we had to make new value appraisals. In order for us to make the purchase, it was necessary for us to somehow assess the value of the car *above* the total price that we would have to pay. Right, wrong, or indifferent, there needed to be a paradigm shift (change of mind). Or we would not have gone through with the particular transaction that we negotiated.

So here we have our Lord counseling us to enter into a procurement transaction whereby we exchange something of value, for something of value. Will you allow me to personalize this? I'll be one of the Laodicean believers (that's probably more true than I'm presently willing to admit).

Whew, is it *lukewarm* in here, or is it just me?!? Oh, it's just me.

Now in order for this transaction to have real value, I need a reality check. Because, I think that I'm rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing. Under this set of circumstances, what could the Lord possibly offer me that would get my attention? Nothing (right) ... absolutely nothing. Because I just told you that I *have* everything that I need. Now, if I am right and I do have everything that I need, then "it's all good." But on the off chance that I'm wrong, I have a dilemma, don't I.

So the Lord fixes this mistake in judgment for me. He says, "JoAnn, you don't know this yet; but *you're wretched ... and you're miserable ... and you're poor ... and you're blind ... and you're naked.*" (As the tears begin to roll down my face, like rain; my knees begin to get weak), I have a decision to make. I'm not inclined to distrust my Lord's assessment of me. My whole life, He's been right about everything that He's ever told me. In the words of my mother, "His ways are equal; my ways are not equal."⁽⁵⁾ (My head begins to spin; and my heart literally and physically aches, by now). There's only one way out of this chaos. I

must buy of Him pure gold (*for my poverty*); white raiment (*for my nakedness*); and eye salve (*for my blindness*). I reach for my wallet, stumbling and dropping things out of my purse along the way; but I don't care. My blindness (or my tears) has begun to affect my sight, by this time. "My Lord!!" I ask "how much to be made whole?!?" He says, "Put our wallet back, JoAnn; that will never suffice. You must exchange something of value, for something of value. But in order to do this, you [*JoAnn*] must place a higher value on My life than on your own. Or it won't work. As long as you still value your life above Mine, you'll never make the exchange. And you'll remain *wretched ... and miserable ... and poor ... and blind ... and naked*. You will remain lukewarm; and I must spew you out of My mouth. Be zealous therefore and repent (make the exchange)."

Amazing Grace

What an amazing grace!!!! Here you have One to whom we've said (in no uncertain terms), "We don't hate You, we just don't love You with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength." Oh sure, we've said with our mouths that we love Him; but it is apparent by the condition of our nation (our home, our lives) that our heart is far from Him.⁽⁶⁾ And in return He says to us "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

I admonish you; please "make the exchange!!!" <cc>

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

- (1) Revelation 3:14-19
- (2) Isaiah 5:20-21; Romans 12:2
- (3) Matthew 6:19
- (4) Matthew 25:1-12
- (5) Ezekiel 18:29
- (6) Matthew 15:7-11; Isaiah 29:13; Daniel 14:24

CHASTENING

Proverbs 3:11-12
(KJV modified)

My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD;
neither be weary of His correction.

For whom the LORD loves He corrects; even as a
father the son in whom he delights.

Him. Webster tells us that when we seek someone we “look around for him or her” and we “go after him or her.”

So, God is telling David (and us) that He wants His people to look around in our environments to see where He is and what He is doing. He then wants us to follow after Him (in a very literal sense). This is why it is so important for us to sit with God at the end of every year to find out what His goals and plans are for the upcoming year. Then, periodically throughout the year, we get an update from God on how things are going. Finally, at the end of the year we review with God what has happened during the year, allow Him to reframe what we saw and experienced, and get us ready for the upcoming year.

So, here we are. It’s time to sit with the Father and go through the year-end process. Now, if you will allow me, I would like to make a couple of suggestions. Each person is different. Some people like to write things down to keep up with what is going on. Others like to try to remember events. Whatever works for you is fine. I will, however, say that when we are dealing with God, it is difficult (at best) and impossible (at worst) to keep up with all that He does in a twelve-month period.

With that in mind, I would encourage each of us to find a way to record what He tells us, as well as what is going on in our lives. I do this in two ways. I journal every other day and I record events each night. I use a notebook to do my journaling because I will generally use five or six pages at each sitting. Then I use a small weekly planner to record the events of each day. I do this at night right before I go to bed. Before that though, I keep a small sheet of paper with me all day. And, I record events as they are happening in the day. Then, from this paper, I review with my husband (at the dinner table) what happened in my day and I listen to him share what happened in his day.

Then, I add some of the key events from my husband’s day to my sheet. I also include events that I hear about in the news and from family & friends. Then, I transfer all of this information into the weekly planner that I keep in my nightstand.

You might say that this is too much for you to do. If so, I totally understand. I use this system because God told me to “keep up with what He is doing.” This system works for me. So, because I have all of the data from the year, it is easy for me to sit with God in December and review key events that took place during the year.

When I’m spending my time with God in our review session, I literally go back to the sheet of paper from the previous December to see what I wrote down that I thought God told me He planned to do in that year. Then, I review some of my journal notes along with some of my writings in the weekly planner.

During this process, God begins to bring out patterns and make connections between seemingly unrelated events that took place. He shows me things that I missed (even with all of my recordings) that He orchestrated for me. This process allows me to truly “See God” in a way that I couldn’t see Him if I had to recall from vague memories what went on all year.

Now, you might be wondering what this review has to do with “Maneuvering Multiple Realities.” Well, now that we understand that it’s time to review the year, let’s talk about realities and how God (at times) causes us to live in multiple realities at once.

Utilizing Webster’s Dictionary again, we understand that “real” means that something (or someone) exists in fact or in actuality. This means it does not just exist in the mind or thoughts, but it actually exists in the natural environment. Now, we as Christians know that things can exist in the spirit realm that do not yet exist in the natural realm. Let’s keep this on the back burner and come back to it in a few minutes.

The word “reality” means that something is in fact real or it actually exists. Let’s work with a “real” example. Think about where you physically live at this moment. I’ll do the same. Today, as I write this article, my husband and I live on a particular street, in a particular community, in a specific city, in the state of Texas. This is our reality today. It’s not in our heads. We actually come home to this place each day. We also pay bills at this location. So, I don’t have to wonder about it.

Now, in January 2010 we lived at a different house in a different city in Texas. That was our reality at that time. But, when we moved, our reality changed (as it related to housing). Do you get the picture? Our reality is whatever is actually happening with us at a particular time in our lives.

If this is true (you say), then how can we have multiple realities? In my situation, for example, when my husband and I lived at our old house, we only lived there. Then, when we moved to our new house, we now only live here. We did not live at both places at the same time. So, in this example, we did not

have multiple realities (as it related to our housing situation). Or did we?

Well, let's go back to what you were thinking about a few paragraphs ago. I heard you say that some things can exist in the spiritual realm before they exist in the natural realm. I agree and this is what we will chat about.

When something exists only in the spiritual realm, then, we don't normally have anything to "maneuver." I mean, while my husband and I lived at our old house, God knew that we would be moving to our new home later in the year. The new place existed in the spiritual realm with God before it became our reality in the natural realm. So, we really didn't have anything to worry about. That is, until God began making demands on us that did not jive with our current housing reality.

But in all sincerity, what do we do when God wants us to behave in one reality as if our next reality were actually happening at the same time? What do we do when God tells us to do things that are associated to a future reality that we cannot see, taste, smell, or touch? Might another example be helpful at this time? Ok.

Going back to our housing situation, we had to move in 2010 because I lost my job in January 2010 and we could no longer afford to pay the mortgage on the house. Once God helped us understand that we needed to sell the house, we got a realtor, made updates to the house, put it on the market, waited several months until it sold (and paid mortgage and rent for a while), found a new place, and moved in.

But, let's go back even further to 2009. For several months in 2009 God told me to "look around in my house and in my office." He told me that my surroundings were going to change. He also told me to begin to pack up my office and take things home. He had me copy important documents off my work computer and place them on my home computer.

At home, He began to have me cancel major purchases for the house that I was planning to make. He had us streamline our spending and so on. Now, when He gave us these directives, we had no idea that I would lose my job and we would have to move. Also, He began to close the door on things I tried to do. I would make plans, set meetings, and try other activities. But, God would have people cancel on me, turn me down, and so forth.

It was a bit confusing because generally, when I make plans it's because I believe God told me to do these things and they usually come through. But, what I

didn't know is that God had my husband and I to begin to maneuver in multiple realities. Something was happening in the spirit realm that we needed to begin acting on in the natural realm (even though we were unaware of what was about to happen).

Is this starting to make more sense now? Have you ever been in this situation? God begins to close certain doors, change your schedule, or have you do things that don't make sense? If so, be on the lookout. God may be changing your reality right before your eyes.

When this happens, there are things we can do to align ourselves with what God is doing. Let's go back to the word of God for confirmation. In Romans chapter four, we find Paul rehearsing with the people how God dealt with Abraham. If we want to talk about someone living in multiple realities, Abraham would be a good choice. I encourage you to read the entire chapter at your leisure.

In verses 17 through 21 we find that God gave Abraham instructions to do things that were in many ways contrary to his reality at the time God spoke to him. Abraham was to leave his country, uproot his family and go someplace he was unfamiliar with, and make plans to have a baby. At the time God told him this, Abraham and Sarah lived among their relatives in a stable environment. What God shared with them was completely against what they were experiencing at the time.

But, scripture tells us in verse 17 that God "calls those things that be not (that do not exist in our realities) as though they were (as if they do exist in our realities)." It does not bother God one bit to tell us to do things that relate to a future reality (one that He may not have fully disclosed to us – yet). When this happens it is helpful if we can align ourselves with what He is saying, even though we can't see anything in the natural to confirm what we have heard.

In verses 19 and 20 of Romans chapter four, Abraham did what we must do. He was not weak in faith (he chose to accept what God said as real). And, he "staggered not" at the promise of God through unbelief. Instead, he decided to believe that what God had promised, He was also able to perform (v 21).

Here is where the challenge comes in for us today. We have to begin to walk in the direction God tells us to go in even when it seemingly goes against our current reality. One way to make this task a little easier is to be able to see where God is coming from and where He is

trying to take us. Now, we go back to the review sessions we were talking about at the beginning of this article.

When we take time to sit with God, He will tell us what He wants to do. He will include what He wants us to do. And, as we keep track of His activities throughout the year, we can come back to Him in December to review what He has done and make preparations for what He will do in the coming year.

This process allows us to draw connections between the myriad of events that take place in our lives. If we would track God, we could see when He has us traversing multiple realities. We would also understand that when doors begin to close, appointments get cancelled, and plans are not going the way they usually go, this is a sign. It lets us know that God is changing directions. And, it's time for us to change with Him.

Dear friends, I encourage each of us to take out some time this month to sit with God. Review (as best you can) what has happened during 2011. Allow God to connect the dots for you. Then, listen and make notes about what He places in your heart for the upcoming year. It's going to be a great 2012, but most probably, God will require us to traverse multiple realities.

In order to do this successfully, we must "seek" God (look for Him in our environments). Then, we must follow Him (direct our efforts to move as He gives us instructions). This is how we maneuver multiple realities. Stay blessed! [LL]

Joyce White

DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY

Lecture LXXIII

I. What is not intended by the term sovereignty as applied to God. It is not intended, at least by me, that God in any instance wills or acts arbitrarily, or without good reasons; reasons so good and so weighty that he could in no case act otherwise than he does, without violating the law of his own intelligence and conscience, and consequently without sin.

II. What is intended by Divine Sovereignty? The Sovereignty of God consists in the independence of his will in consulting only his own intelligence and discretion, in the selection of his end, and the means of accomplishing it.

In other words, the Sovereignty of God is nothing else than infinite benevolence directed by infinite knowledge.

Charles Finney (1847)
Systematic Theology

regeneration and obedience?" What is it *in regeneration that motivates man to obey?* The Lord said, "The answer does not reference the specific question as stated "What is it in regeneration...?" The answer is better understood if the question is framed: "How is regeneration conferred (given), in such a way as to provoke man to obedience?"

Okay, we have identified the correct question (Thank you, Father). Now let's look at Lazarus; since raising the dead is the quintessential picture of regeneration. How did Jesus confer resurrection life to Lazarus? In simple terms, He spoke a word. *Lazarus, come forth* (John 11:43). Regeneration (which is a new heart and spirit) is given in the form of "a word" from God. Yep, this is the same *word* that created the worlds. Man is called forth out of darkness into light, even as the world was in Genesis; *by a Word*. Of a truth, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every *word* that proceeds out of the mouth of God. So we see that God speaks a *word* and by faith we receive and believe it; we now have the power to become sons of God.

The word of God is literally called the *word of faith* (Romans 10:8). *So then, faith is coming by hearing, and hearing by the word of God* (Romans 10:17). This is the key. Although this is a very detailed description, it is actually a split second occurrence. For clarity sake, this is not the use of the term 'word' as translated from the Greek origin *logos*. No. This is the term 'word' as translated from the Greek origin *rhema*, understood as the present voice of God, or we might say the conviction of the Spirit.

So it's like saying that "*Faith came as I heard; I only heard because God was speaking.*" This happens in an instant. If I inform you of something, the information came through your hearing. Now, you could only hear because there was something to be heard, namely my voice.

So then, we have found the nexus between regeneration and obedience. We learned from the last edition that man's ethos was sanctified by continual obedience. Now we have come to see that the sanctification of man's *logos*; or the obedience of a regenerate person is affected by the conviction of the Spirit. Let those convictions abide which you have heard. Think on them; speak them, and walk in them. This is how our *logos*: thoughts, words, and deeds, are sanctified. -SOMW-

David L. White

lender; the tail and not the head. As you can see, that door swings both ways.

Now, when Israel would go into captivity, there was no mistaking their condition. They knew that they were in captivity. We on the other hand, are not so fortunate. That's right, fortunate. Solomon prayed for Israel, saying that when they found themselves in the land of captivity (as a result of their disobedience), if they returned to God in their hearts and began to seek Him and cry out to Him; he asked the Lord to deliver Israel. ⁽⁵⁾ That is what was so fortunate about Israel's captivity. It was "*visible; tangible, up-close and personal.*" They did not "think" that they were free; they knew that they were not.

It is not quite the case with us today. We have a form of "freedom;" but are clearly denied the rights and power thereof. The types of captivity that we experience today (of which, there are many) are so elusive as to give the appearance of liberty; even providing an environment for subtle arrogance and impudence. Apart from some forms of pain and suffering, we are not yet fortunate enough to have "*visible; tangible, up-close and personal*" captivity. I submit to you that in the years to come, that will change. We are captives "in stilettos and business suits." We say that we're rich and increased with goods; completely oblivious of our prison walls and entrenchments.

The strength of this type of deception is that when we look like we're free, we often don't deal with the problem of our captivity; neither its cause(s) nor its effects. While in the earth it may *appear* that we are free, the heavens are not so deceived. It is quite clear to them that we are captives. We are clearly branded, as captives.

It is one thing to presumptuously engage in inappropriate activities. It is quite another to disregard Kingdom protocol and find yourself at the sharp end of your enemies spear.

Now, don't go to sleep on me, Israel was not the only beneficiary of these grand lessons on captivity. At one time or another (perhaps now), you and I

have found ourselves in the jaws of captivity and its resulting bondage. But there is hope.

How does the proclamation of the gospel free captives?

One of the first things we **MUST** do, is acknowledge our captivity. We **MUST**, where we can, point to our chains. Even in captivity, our heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. ⁽⁶⁾ If we do not properly identify ourselves as captives, and identify our place(s) of bondage; we miss a few very important lessons.

- 1) We miss that fact that we need God, we somehow think that we can do things ourselves. Not recognizing that it is that very self-sufficiency that has brought us to that place of captivity;
- 2) We forget that our Lord rewards those who diligently seek Him; and
- 3) In hindsight we cannot be a testimony to anyone else of the goodness of God's deliverance [because we never really believed that we were in trouble in the first place].
- 4) And finally, we miss (what I will call) the Harriet Tubman opportunity of a life time: to lead others out of that same prison. It is the case that she had to first "escape" from slavery herself; before she could lead anyone else out. In some real sense, that is true for us too.

When we genuinely acknowledge our captivity, we come face-to-face with our self and our situation, and our Savior. Blessed are the poor in spirit (self & situation), for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Savior).

It is an unfortunate case that the gospel does not free all captives. You'll see in the opening scripture that the anointing to proclaim the good tidings (gospel) is specifically focused or directed at the meek. Why? you ask. Because they are the only ones who will hear and obey. The gospel frees captives, who are meek. The proud, do not know that they are captives. The scriptures speak plainly that pride goes before destruction, not liberation. ⁽⁷⁾

The meek have a sweet receptivity to the gospel message. The gospel message is a stern and pure declaration. It says, “Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand⁽⁸⁾.” The proud are not interested in repentance, they seek to enter the kingdom, another way. They walk right past the sign that says “enter in at the strait (or narrow) gate. Any other means of entry and you will be tagged as a “crook robber.”⁽⁹⁾
[In the words of my mother]

So how does the proclamation of the gospel free the meek captives? First we acknowledge our transgressions and the iniquities that served as the source of our captivity.⁽¹⁰⁾ Then we repent (denouncing and turning from our rebellion). When we do this, it becomes more real to us that our Lord was wounded for *our* transgressions and bruised for *our* iniquities.⁽¹¹⁾ And when we receive this as personally true for ourselves; it becomes clear that the captor (enemy) no longer has a legal claim on us. It is through a child-like, faith-filled understanding that ... *time out for a commercial break.*

Let’s properly define “*repentance*,” because if we don’t get this transaction right, everything else that we attempt to build on top of this foundation, falls to the ground in a million little-bitty pieces.

“Repentance” IS NOT ... simply what you say with your mouth
 “Repentance” IS ... what you do with your heart, your hands and your feet

Repentance may begin on the knees, but it doesn’t end there. To repent means to cease and desist the activities (or ways of life) that are outlawed in the Kingdom. It means to stop the thoughts, words and deeds that are an affront to our Christ and our King. How “repentance” became synonymous with “a simple apology,” I don’t know, but it has no leverage in the Kingdom. This is an imperative. If we do not repent, we cannot move forward in the things of God. Please trust me on this one.

Back to our regularly scheduled programming ... (upon genuine repentance) the one holding you captive no longer has a ground upon which to stand; for the

weapons of our warfare have thrown down his stronghold.⁽¹²⁾ And by faith, you arise, collect your things and walk away. You don’t even stop to cast a parting glance. It is finished.

“Now, now JoAnn, that’s entirely too simple to be effective,” you say. Not to the meek. There is a sense in which the meek “keep it simple.” The scripture says that “the testimony of the Lord is sure, giving wisdom to the simple.”⁽¹³⁾ The meek don’t reason and rationalize themselves out of their blessings. When the Lord says, to them “Lazarus [*put your name here*], come forth.” The meek come running; they do not contemplate that *it’s been four days now.*⁽¹⁴⁾ The meek don’t say, *Lord, if you had been here, I would not have had to die in the first place.* They simply take up their beds, and walk.⁽¹⁵⁾

Again, how does the proclamation of the gospel free captives? Here are the qualifiers:

The overarching anointing in the opening scripture is for the proclamation of the gospel to the meek; very specifically to the meek. Subsequent to the anointing is the *apostolos* (or sending) of the gospel message to the brokenhearted, to the captives and to the imprisoned. But the proclamation of the gospel will only free the meek, in those categories. The meek are the only ones who will heed the call of the gospel. The gospel begins with “*repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.*”⁽¹⁶⁾

King Solomon struck a bargain with the Lord; and you may certainly cash in on it, too. Solomon said, “Lord, if Your people provoke You and You send them into captivity and they (in their captivity) *repent* and return to You with their whole heart. He asked the Lord, “Please hear and forgive (free them from their captivity).”⁽¹⁷⁾ To this our Lord heartily agreed; for He dearly loves to receive his prodigal sons with out-stretched arms.

Summarily, the clear and genuine proclamation of the gospel will heal the broken hearted; and proclaim liberty to the captives; who are meek.
 -JTI-

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, SMHG

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

- (1) Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18
 (2) Collected 11/14/11 from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/captive>
 (3) Romans 7:28
 (4) Deuteronomy 28:41, 44-45
 (5) 2 Chronicles 6:36-39; 7:13-14; 15:2
 (6) Jeremiah 17:9
 (7) Proverbs 16:18
 (8) Matthew 3:1-2; 4:17
 (9) Luke 13:24; Matthew 7:13; John 10:1
 (10) Deuteronomy 28:14
 (11) Isaiah 53:5
 (12) 2 Corinthians 10:4
 (13) Psalm 19:7b
 (14) John 11:17, 32, 39
 (15) Matthew 9:6; Mark 2:9, 11-12
 (16) Matthew 3:1-2; 4:17
 (17) 2 Chronicles 6:36-39; 7:13-14

A General Song of Praise to God

How glorious is our heavenly King,
 Who reigns above the sky!
 How shall a child presume to sing
 His dreadful majesty?

How great his power is none can tell,
 Nor think how large his grace;
 Not men below, nor saints that dwell
 On high before his face.

Not angels, that stand round the Lord,
 Can search his secret will;
 But they perform his heavenly word,
 And sing his praises still.

Then let me join this holy train,
 And my first offerings bring:
 Th' eternal God will not disdain
 To hear an infant sing.

My heart resolves, my tongue obeys;
 And angels will rejoice
 To hear their mighty Maker's praise
 Sound from a feeble voice.

-- Isaac Watts (Divine Songs)

refers to anyone sent by another.

This letter has two types of contexts, and in each context, there is a different way to understand the word *angel*.

First, let me say that this letter is historical, and thus the context is immediately historic. There was a literal church of Laodicea when this letter was written, and to whom this letter was sent. John was writing to an actual man, who was the central messenger to the Laodicean church.

The second context, however, is prophetic. John is writing to a **type** of church, which is predominately described like the historic church of Laodicea. Now in the prophetic context he is not talking to one messenger, but likewise, a **type** of messenger. Each age of what is called the church (or church-age) has certain characteristics which dominate that age. And therefore, each age of the church has a type of messenger, bearing a particular type of message. Every messenger of God has a message that is best suited to the type of church to which he is called. This is a key to understanding the whole of what John is writing to the churches in general and to Laodicea specifically.

Lastly, I'd like this to remain with you. Each age of the church has certain predominate characteristics. However, John actually (and historically) wrote each of these letters in what we might call the "same age;" to churches which fit each description. Therefore, each type of church is likely found in each age (in some degree or another), but one of these **types** is more common at any given time (age or era).

Example: During the times of the Middle Ages, or the Medieval Age, or the Renaissance, or the Reformation, or the Enlightenment Era the "church" or the quintessential "Body of Believers" had a particular internal personality (chaste, laissez-faire, tolerant, beguiled, etc). As a result of their respective personalities (as a corporate body) the church also had a type of relationship with the world. And it made some type of impression on the world. You may recognize that the Lord places the fate of the world squarely on the shoulders of the resident Body of Believers, in each age. He does this by reminding us that we are salt and

light and that righteousness exalts a nation;
whereas sin is a reproach to any people.
(Proverbs 14:34)

Furthermore, each church of a particular dominate character, may also have people of another character in their midst. We see this disparity throughout the breadth and length of our land. In the academic arena, for example, you can find great institutions of learning, with good (and not so good) professors; and with brilliant and (not so bright) students. All of these co-exist and are familiar to us.

So we cannot assume that the message to each age is not also applicable to ours; they are only comparatively less applicable to our age. For instance, in this Laodicean age we will find some congregations which are more like Philadelphia or Smyrna. Also, in a church which is predominately like Thyatira, you may find people who characteristically Ephesian.

This month we focused on the “key” to understanding the discourses with the churches. In the January 2012 edition we will explore shocking revelation of *our* duty (as Christ-ones; as ones who are priests after the order of Melchisedec) to this Laodicean age, in which we find ourselves.

Meanwhile, meditate on this: the apostle Paul said, *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without the law, as without the law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without the law. To the weak became I weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.* (1 Corinthians 9:19-23) -LATT-

David L. White

ROMANS 7:4 (~KJV)

Wherefore, my brethren, you also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that you should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

go; or they were ill-equipped to go. Jesus turned water into wine...washed feet...healed the sick...calmed the raging sea...shall I stop here? Jesus raised the dead...cast out demons...was dragged from judgment hall to judgment hall...was wounded for our transgressions...was bruised for our iniquities...was hung on the Cross...was buried in a tomb. And after all of that “following” (or not) Jesus said to them, “... you shall receive *power* of that the Holy Ghost shall come upon you: and you shall be *witnesses* unto Me...”⁽²⁾

Power?!? “Yes!” says our Lord, “There remains yet very much land to be possessed.⁽³⁾ It’s not over until I shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.⁽⁴⁾ The enemy has been put under My feet; but he must now be put under your feet.”

Witnesses?!? We probably fancy the historical definition of the term *witness*, which is to simply, maybe, accidentally, chat with someone else about “Jesus Christ,” or hint the address of our local church and tell someone that if they don’t have a-n-y-t-h-i-n-g else to do on Sunday, they could stop by. We prefer this type of witnessing, because it’s non-committal; and not extremely demanding.

Unfortunately this is not the type of “follow Me” command that our Lord was giving. Because we don’t have to “deny ourselves” or “take up our cross” to give someone the address to our church, do we? I ran across a unique definition of “*witness*” that is so descriptive of our Lord’s command to “follow” Him.

Definition (Witness) – is one who after our Lord’s example, proves the strength and genuineness of their faith in Christ by being willing to undergo a violent death.⁽⁵⁾

I’m sorry, what’s that you say? You didn’t sign up for this? Of course, you did.

In the corporate environment when a leader has been assigned a protégé, the protégé is supposed to learn to imitate the leader. The leader is supposed to “clone” himself/herself in the protégé. Thereby the leader is establishing/fulfilling succession planning.

While it has its merit, this is not the “succession planning methodology” in the Kingdom.

When the Lord likens us to branches of the True Vine, He is not saying that we are to simply be “like” Him. We were created to be a perpetual extension of Him, throughout the spectrum of time, and for the ages to come. The scriptures teach that if the same Spirit be in us that raised Christ from the dead, shall he not also quicken *us*?⁽⁶⁾ A son is not an imitator of the father; he is a perpetuation of the combined DNA of his parents. It is not intended that we should be imitators of our Lord. As revealed to one of my sons in the gospel, “the Holy Spirit is given that we might be *perpetuators* of our Lord in the earth.”

Fortunately (or unfortunately) depending on how you look at it; many of us will never be required to be publicly nailed to a cross. Whew!!! But the dying to the flesh that we must undergo, will nevertheless, be excruciating. This is the walk of the Via Delorosa, with all its pomp and glory. The bringing of the soul under the submission and leadership of the Spirit of God will make great demands upon us, literally daily (and at times hourly). It is the hope of the enemy of our souls, to daily “trip us up.” But, it is the standard of the Living God, to daily sustain us; but only to the degree that we are willing to mortify the deeds of the flesh and take up our crosses, etc. Now is a good time to prepare our minds and hearts for this journey. What’s that?? Someone told you that it was going to be all “howdy, howdy and never good-bye?” Sorry, wrong army.

Once more, off we go, down the Via Dolorosa realizing that the way of the sanctification of the soul is a HIGHway. It employs this amazing dynamic of both the “putting off” and the “taking up.” So, if “die” we must; then “die” we shall. For in three days we get up. -bc-

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

- ⁽¹⁾ Matthew 16:24
- ⁽²⁾ Acts 1:8
- ⁽³⁾ Joshua 13:1
- ⁽⁴⁾ 1 Corinthians 15:24-28
- ⁽⁵⁾ Collected 11/15/11 from <http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg3144&t=KJV>
- ⁽⁶⁾ Romans 8:11

BASIC MATH

Your short-term actions multiplied by time equal your long-term accomplishments.

Anonymous

which thing I hate. [16] Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.⁽¹⁾

When “The First and the Last” talked with the angel of the church of Pergamos, of all the things that He said, this caught my ear. He said, “Repent, or else I will come to you quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.” Why??

Allow me a moment to set the stage (in a somewhat dismantled format):

The Lord had mentioned, regarding Pergamos, that He had a few choice contentions with them. And as a result of these contentions He warned them to “repent.”

Disclaimer: My use of words *here* are specific to this discourse; for the purposes of painting an intricate picture of the situation. Be careful of extrapolating the analogies across the whole of scripture. While their application may fit in other places in the exposition of truth, they will not fit snugly everywhere.

He said, “... with the sword of My mouth ...”

When the Lord introduced Himself to the angel of the church of Pergamos, He entitled Himself as “*he which hath the sharp sword with two edges.*” Interesting way to introduce Oneself, isn’t it. It’s like someone walking into your office and introducing himself, as “the one who has come to take your job away from you;” or as “the one who has come to repossess your house ... or your car.” It’s just not the type of introduction one takes “sitting down.” And rightly so. The last time the Lord introduced Himself, in relation to a double-edge sword, He was “dividing asunder soul and spirit.” He was separating “the joint from the marrow.” He was “discerning between the thoughts and intents of our heart.”⁽²⁾ These are not the types of things one chats about over a grande, double-dutch-fudge-mocha latte. These are words indicative of “Warfare.” So here our Lord has introduced Himself to Pergamos, as a “Warrior.”

Now you’ll remember that I am “dismantling” this text, so we won’t necessarily go in order. But I promise to say only what the Lord has said to me.

He said, “Repent ...”

The Great I AM warns the church of Pergamos to “repent” aahh, what an antique word. Huh? We don’t hear (or use) that word “repent” much these day (although it is desperately needed). Perhaps it is the case that it has fallen “out of vogue.” Alast, truth is never “out of vogue.” They needed to repent, so He said to them “repent.”

But why?

- Hadn’t He just said to Pergamos, “*you hold fast My name*”
- Hadn’t He just said to them, “*you have not denied My faith*”
- Had He not just said to them, “*I know thy works, and where thou dwell, even where Satan’s seat is*”

So now he says “Repent?” What did they need to repent of?

They needed to *repent* because of all the things they did, that accorded with their “Christian duty” they also “allowed in their midst” ... “welcomed” ... “endured ... “tolerated” those who held the doctrines of Balaam and of the Nicolaitans; which our Lord HATES. He said to them (and to us) ...

- The fact that you have “*held fast My name;*” (GOOD)
- The fact that you have “*not denied My faith;*” (GOOD)
- The fact that you have “*endured in a place of strong spiritual opposition;*” (VERY GOOD)
- H-o-w-e-v-e-r, the fact that you have “*allowed or given place to doctrines of devils*” (NOT GOOD, NOT GOOD AT ALL!!)⁽³⁾

To receive one who is “weak in the faith”⁽⁴⁾ is one thing. But to allow ones to abide among you, who “oppose the faith,” is quite another problem. Pergamos was in some sense an *accessory after the fact*, to those who held the doctrines of Balaam and of the Nacolaitans. The particular rendering of the phrase *accessory after the fact* is that of one who harbors, gives assistance to or comforts a known criminal.⁽⁵⁾ Paul chastised Corinth for a similar infraction. Corinth knowingly had in their midst, those who were fornicators of such a gross sort, as that a man would approach his father’s wife. Paul asked them, why have you not mourned that such an offender would be removed from among you?⁽⁶⁾ And our Lord says to Pergamos, “I don’t like it, *repent.*”

He said, “... I will come unto thee quickly...”

Do you remember the last time our Lord, told us He

would come “quickly?” He was talking to the angel of the church of Ephesus. This warning was preceded by an injunction “... Repent, and do the first works ...”

For the record the term “first works” expresses (or “implies,” whichever you prefer) the bringing forth of “fruits meet for repentance.” You’ll recall John the Baptist asking the Pharisees and Sadducees, this question. The concept of “bringing forth fruits meet for repentance,” plays off of the edicts given to Israel, in the Law, regarding what were acceptable objects (behaviors and postures of heart and mind) of sacrifice and offer.⁽⁷⁾ Here it is being said to the church at Ephesus (and to us), *proclaim or declare* your repentance, and then *walk out* your repentance. This introduces us to the *Baptism of Repentance* (but that’s another jewel for another crown, God permitting.)⁽⁸⁾

So to the church at Ephesus, was the first time (in the book of Revelation) that He warned of “*coming quickly.*” After Pergamos, the next time the Lord said that He would “*come quickly*” He was talking to the angel of the church of Sardis, and had just spoken about judgment.⁽⁹⁾ The book of Revelation is replete with this warning. So imperative is this warning that it is contained in the last few words of the whole of the canon of scripture. “Surely, *I come quickly.*” But more specifically, it is the last thing that our Lord says to us, period. The words following are “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus” which (we understand) are spoken by John the writer.⁽¹⁰⁾ When someone tells you that they are coming quickly, (if you believe them) there is a posture of mind that clicks in; whereby we tend to prioritize our activities. And the things that are most essential to their arrival, we focus on. Other things we resolve to leave undone. And so it is with us today. If our Lord is scheduled to return “tomorrow,” what would you do differently today? Good do that now, and don’t stop until He returns for you.

He said, “... or else ...” Now, in both His admonishments to the church at Ephesus and to the church as Pergamos, this injunction to “Repent ...” is followed by an “OR ELSE.”⁽¹¹⁾ You were a kid once, right. When your parents used the phrase “or else” following an injunction (or command), did it sound like to you that they were making a suggestion? Or were they saying (in the words of Moses, as he calls upon so great a cloud of witnesses) “I call heaven and

earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you, life and death ... for the sake of my grandchildren ... choose life.”⁽¹²⁾ I don’t know about you, but if our parents followed up an injunction with “or else” it was pretty much an open and shut case. We were not the least bit *unclear* about our next steps.

He said, “I ... will fight against them ...” So we see that our Lord has introduced Himself to the church at Pergamos, as a Warrior wielding a two-edged sword. He tells them that He will personally come and fight against those who hold the doctrines of Balaam and of the Nicolaitans. Which of course is more than reasonable, given that these doctrines are an abomination to the Living God.⁽¹³⁾

Let’s take a closer look at the two doctrines that the Lord so loathes. A few (of many) reasons we want to look closely at them is because if these doctrines are in our midst, we have an obligation to discern them and to deal with those who espouse them. Another reason is because our Lord’s enemies are our enemies; we’re on the same team, remember. So if He hates them, then we are obliged to hate them too. The Lord hates the world. He says to us that if you befriend the world, then you are My enemy.⁽¹⁴⁾ Is the smoke starting to clear up, now?

Glossary – *The two doctrines*

The Doctrine of Balaam

Historically, Balak, king of Moab, feared Israel and their God (Numbers 22 & 23, etc.) the king tried to hire the prophet Balaam to curse Israel; for fear that they would do to Moab what they did to the Amorites. Although Balaam was intrigued with the king’s offer, Balaam did not have permission/authority to curse Israel.⁽¹⁵⁾

Here’s what we REALLY need to see: Israel could not be cursed **because** the Lord “had not beheld iniquity in [them] Jacob, neither had He seen perverseness in Israel....”⁽¹⁶⁾

Quick sidebar: If the Lord stopped Balaam from cursing Israel because of their integrity and obedience before God. How might our integrity and obedience to God, stay the hand of the enemy in our lives? I’ll leave that with you, for now. (Trust, it will come up later.)

Since Balaam could not curse Israel, he counseled Moab on how to, otherwise, ensnare Israel.⁽¹⁷⁾ (I

repeat NOT GOOD, NOT GOOD AT ALL!!!)

Israel did with Moab, what Lot did with Sodom. First Lot pitched his tent in the plains of Sodom. When we returned from the commercial break, Lot was sitting in the gates of Sodom. Likewise, Israel pitched their tents in the plains of Moab. After “a word from the sponsors” Israel had gotten into bed (literally) with Moab and had been seduced into the worship of Baal Peor.⁽¹⁸⁾

Baal Peor was one of the Moabite idols, whose worship involved grossly obscene rituals, involving sex. Enough said. To get an idea of how abominable this was to the Living God, He had some 24,000 men killed (slaughtered is more the case). Now you could easily drop some 24,000 men as casualties of war [*that’s one thing*]. But to wink and come up missing some 24,000 men because you turned up on the wrong side of God’s two-edged Sword [*that’s quite another thing*].

It has been said that this is how Balaam counseled Moab to seduce Israel: Israel knew that they were a chosen people. Their arrogance in this mindset led them to believe that they can do whatever they choose, because (after all) their “preferred nation’s” status could not be revoked (or otherwise taken from them). Don’t look at Israel, here’s a mirror. We do not want to find ourselves with this particular posture of heart and mind. Thinking that we can never be brought down by our sin and lifestyle of disregard to the holiness of the Lord God.

In the words of one gentleman: “The doctrine of Balaam is one of the most widely taught doctrines in the Church today. Christians know — as their counterparts in the church in Pergamos — that they have been saved by grace through faith, and nothing can alter that which has been brought to pass through the birth from above. They now possess spiritual life, which can never be taken from them; and because of the unchangeable nature of the life that they presently possess, they reason that they can conduct their lives in any manner which they choose, and it *would* make no difference.”⁽¹⁹⁾

This error in thinking cost Israel the lives of 24,000 of their brothers. And it cost Moab, almost everything, except their virgins.

The Doctrine of the Nicolaitans

The following is a quotation: “The word “*Nicolaitans*” is a transliterated, compound word from the Greek text (*nikolaites*), derived from *nike* (“a victor,” “a conqueror”) and *laos* (“people”). Thus, the word simply means, “to be victorious over the people,” “to conquer the people.”

Using the meaning of the name itself after this fashion, the Nicolaitans would have to be identified as individuals (leaders) in the Church who had subjugated the remaining Christians to their self-imposed authority — individuals comprising a ruling, priestly class (the clergy over the laity), *something condemned by Scripture in no uncertain terms.*

Authority within the Church (or a local church) must *always* be based *solely* upon *service*. Those occupying positions of leadership (elders, deacons) must *always* minister (serve) within this sphere of activity, which is to bear no relationship whatsoever to authority exercised by those in the world (cf. Matthew 20:25-28; 1 Corinthians 16:15, 16). “Nicolaitanism” is simply a *corruption of delegated authority within the Church (or a local church), exercising this authority after a forbidden pattern — after the pattern set forth by those in the world.*”⁽¹⁹⁾

Earlier on, I mentioned that I had a couple of questions about this portion of scripture. Now that the scaffolding has been safely constructed, here are my curiosities ...

Why did the Lord say to the church at Pergamos, “Repent, or else... [I will come and fight against them]?” Now this question comes from the fact that the Lord had just commended Pergamos (in general) for their strength and purity of conversation (walk). Our Lord does however mention that there were those among them that did not walk in that same integrity (they held blasphemous doctrines). He was extremely displeased with them. Now I understood why our Lord would be *put out* with the infiltrators. But what caught me by the ear, is that our Lord said to Pergamos, “**you**” repent or else ...” I wondered that He didn’t say, Pergamos, “step aside” for I will come quickly and deal with the infiltrators.

In the KJV, His command to “repent or else” is clearly *conditional*, and seemed to imply that ...

If Pergamos **did** repent, He would not have to come and

fight with the infiltrators, however

If Pergamos **did not** repent, He would swiftly come and deal with the idolaters

This was a very strange discourse, to me. Since our Lord so vehemently hates the doctrines Balaam and of the Nicolaitans, why wouldn’t He simply come and deal with them? What was the purpose of admonishing Pergamos to “repent or else?”

Yawn ... it’s past my bedtime, I’m sorry.

Let’s deal with that next edition, shall we (smiling).
LW

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

(1) Revelation 2:12-16

(2) Hebrews 4:12

(3) 1 Timothy 4:1

(4) Romans 14:1

(5) Collected 11/17/11 from

<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/accessory+after+the+fact>

(6) 1 Corinthians 5:1-2

(7) Matthew 3:8

(8) Mark 1:4

(9) Revelation 3:11

(10) Revelation 22:20

(11) Revelation 2:5; 3:16

(12) Deuteronomy 30:19; Hebrews 12:1

(13) 1 Kings 14:23-24

(14) James 4:4

(15) Numbers 22:9-11

(16) Numbers 23:20-21

(17) Numbers 25:1-3; 31:16

(18) Genesis 13:12

(19) Collected 11/16/11 from

<http://www.bibleone.net/BF07.htm>

Hungry

If our lives are shortened, because of exposure to difficult climates in the Lord’s work, or other unavoidable factors, or because of persecution, we can die with honor.

But if our life is shortened because of an epicurean palate, what will we say when we stand in the presence of our Lord?

Collected 11/19/11 from

http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=22890&forum=34

Proverbs 4:20-23 says “[20] ... attend to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. [21] Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart. [22] For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. [23] Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”

Proverbs 12:18 says “[18]... the tongue of the wise is health.”

Proverbs 16:22-24 says “[22] Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that has it [23] The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, and adds learning to his lips. [24] Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.”

The aforementioned items may be somewhat easy to swallow. But the prophet Isaiah has heard something else from the Lord about our health.

Isaiah 58:6, 8 says “[6] Is not this the fast that I have chosen? [8] ... your health shall spring forth speedily... ”

I’m sorry Isaiah, what’s that again? Are you saying to us that *fasting* (and its accordant behaviors and activities) has something to do with our health? Let’s camp out here for a moment. I know ... I know ... we don’t like to talk about anything that touches our ability to eat. For we so love the epicurean adventure (one who appreciates fine food and drink). That’s fine. As I was saying

There is a transcendent glory conveyed upon genuine, God-ward, God-honoring fasting. The type of fasting that seeks another’s wealth, and not one’s own. And health is one of the many, wonderful outcomes of Godly fasting.

It appears that our overall health (in general) and our physical health (specifically) are inextricably connected to an upright and chaste lifestyle. It will be amazing to find (at length) that our physical health is governmentally under the jurisdiction of our spiritual disposition and posture towards God

and the things of God.

Proverbs 17:22 says that “A merry heart does good like a medicine: but a broken spirit dries the bones.”

So as we move forward and the Lord gives us direction on the proper maintenance of our nutrition, health and wellness ... please keep in mind that these all come under the veil of a chaste and God-fearing way of life.

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

7 Habits of Highly Effective People:

Powerful Lessons in Personal Change



Identify and apply the principle or natural law that governs the results you seek. ...

Success in any endeavor is always derived from acting in harmony with the principles to which the success is tied. ...

You will increasingly find that principled solutions stand in stark contrast to the common practices and thinking of our popular culture.



Steven Covey

Psalm 15

Two essential questions

LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?
Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

Three godly imperatives (love for God)

He that *walks* uprightly
And *works* righteousness
And *speaks* the truth in his heart

Three ungodly imperatives (love for neighbor):

He that does not backbite with his tongue
Does no evil to his neighbor
Does not take up a reproach against his neighbor

Three postures of heart

In whose eyes a vile person is contemned
But he honors them that fear the LORD
He that swears to his own hurt, and changes not

Two financial dispositions

He that does not put out his money to usury
Does not take reward against the innocent

Consummation

He that doeth these things shall never be moved

Are You Sure?

There is a healthy contemplation that drives us to check our commitment to our various relationships with others. While I have your attention may I ask another question? Do you ever wonder if you're really saved? I don't mean to intrude ... okay maybe I do intend to intrude. Do you contemplate your loyalty and commitment to your relationship "with Christ" very specifically? Respectfully, we are not talking here about your relationship with a religious institution. We're asking about a very up-close and personal relationship with the Person of Jesus Christ.

The scriptures encourage us to periodically check our "fruit." We are admonished to work out your own soul's salvation with fear and trembling. ⁽¹⁾

I can just imagine Jesus standing before the fig tree, asking "Hey guys, what type of tree is this?"

His disciples replied (almost snickering), "My Lord, it's a fig tree."

And Jesus asks again, "How can you tell, that this is a fig tree?"

His disciples reply again (almost bursting at the seams), "Teacher, we can tell by the leaves."

Jesus once again, "Okay, let Me ask you guys one more question ... what is the purpose of a fig tree, if it won't bear figs." They all fell silent.

Jesus cursed the fig tree saying, "Any branch in Me that does not bear fruit, My Father will remove. It will not be allowed to continue to make demands of (or trouble) the ground." ⁽²⁾ He looked at the disciples and walked away en route to Bethany. ⁽³⁾

So I ask again, how do we know that we have a personal covenant with God?

May I make a few suggestions on ways to discover the truth? ⁽⁴⁾

- 1. How does your covenant with Jesus Christ affect your concept of God and your attitude towards Him?**
- 2. How does your relationship with God affect your attitude towards Jesus Christ (Him as a Person and His Lordship over your life)?**
- 3. How does your covenant with God affect your attitude towards the Holy Scriptures?**
- 4. How does your relationship with Christ affect your attitude towards your "self-life" or your "flesh"?**
- 5. How does your covenant with Christ affect your relationship with and attitude towards your fellow Christians?**
- 6. How does your relationship with Jesus affect your relationship with and attitude towards the world?**
- 7. Last, but in no way least, how does your covenant with Jesus affect your attitude towards sin?**

Perhaps we should take the next couple of weeks or months and grapple with this? Try to answer each question thoroughly in light of the scripture's mandates on each of these respective relationships. Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. ⁽⁵⁾

Be Sure!

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

(1) Philippians 2:12

(2) John 15:1-2; Luke 13:7

(3) Matthew 21:17-19

(4) Gleanings and adaptations from A.W. Tozer's Man: The

Dwelling Place of God, p.62-68

(5) Hebrews 13:20-21

~ SUMMARY ~

The Chief Cornerstone



We say that we are “rich,” and it is clear that we are increased with “goods.” And while we may admit that we are needful of a few things, I’d venture to say that our “shopping list” would not look anything like the “shopping list” that our Lord would write for us.

Son of My Wisdom



The answer is better understood if the question is framed: “How is regeneration conferred (given), in such a way as to provoke man to obedience?”

Boot Camp



It may be the case that the traditional understanding of the term “follow me” would be that our Lord is asking us to “walk with (or walk behind; or walk like) Him” in our journey through this world. While there is some veracity to that understanding of the term, I challenge you that perhaps He means something more.

Nutrition, Health & Wellness



We are socialized to consider health along the lines of eating, drinking, physical activity and mental therapies, etc. As you might appreciate it, the scriptures take quite a different view of things and quite a peculiar view at that.

~ SUMMARY ~

The Leadership Corner

The new place existed in the spiritual realm with God before it became our reality in the natural realm. So, we really didn’t have anything to worry about. That is, until God began making demands on us that did not jive with our current housing reality.

Journey to Intimacy



It is an unfortunate case that the gospel does not free all captives. ... Why? you ask. The gospel frees captives, who are meek. Because they are the only ones who will hear and obey.

Living Waters



The Lord had mentioned, regarding Pergamos, that He had a few choice contentions with them. And as a result of these contentions He warned them to “repent.”

Love and the Truth



Lastly, I’d like this to remain with you. Each age of the church has certain predominate characteristics. However, John actually (and historically) wrote each of these letters in what we might call the “same age;” to churches which fit each description.

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