

Walk The Walk

Volume VII

The Way of Enoch



by

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The Way of Enoch – Volume VII – Walk The Walk
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Walk With God Ministries adopted these Chinese characters that are part of a course created by Pastor Archie Parish as a symbol of the message that is at the heart of our vision. Over the years these characters have been used by many believers to introduce the Gospel.

2500 years before the birth of Christ and 2100 years before the first recorded crucifixion, the Chinese language gave us the secret of how to live forever... *the secret to eternal life*.

Cross The first character depicted is a cross.



Man Next is a man placed on a cross... a great man dying.



Two Men Two men are crucified along side of this great man. The full character depicts Jesus dying on the cross with the two thieves crucified alongside Him. One thief rejected Him (Luke 23:39) and the other one believed Him (Luke 23:40-42). This is the character Lai, which means *Come*.



Mouth



The second character begins with a man's word coming out of his mouth.

Standing



This character represents a man standing by his word. Combined this is the character Xin, which means *Believe*.

Lai Xin



When these two characters are taken together they represent *Come and Believe*. The circle surrounding them represents eternity.

2500 years before the birth of Jesus the Chinese language clearly stated the Gospel message and depicted the only road to eternal life... Jesus. Come to Jesus and Believe that He died for your sins, that you might have eternal life. Here we are some 4,500 years later and His Word is still true:

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

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PREFACE

The will of God is not like a magic package let down from heaven by a string. The will of God is far more like a scroll that unrolls every day. The will of God is something to be discerned and to be lived out every day of our lives. It is not something to be grasped as a package once for all. Our call, therefore, is basically not to follow a plan or a blueprint, or to go to a place or take up a work, but rather to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul Little

The old axiom regarding Walking the Walk rather than just Talking the Talk certainly applies in the church today. We have a lot of the bride of Christ running around, just going through the motions but never really getting anywhere. In my opinion, this is one of the biggest challenges facing the bride. If each and every believer were to get in his or her place and start walking out God's perfect plan for their life there would be such an overwhelming change in the bride that those on the outside couldn't resist finding out what it was all about.

The most noticeable change would be the confidence believers would walk in. Have you ever been around someone who really had that kind of confidence? I don't mean the ones who are trying to make themselves believe something, but the ones who truly know who they are, whose they are, and where they're going.

When you meet someone like that there is a quiet confidence in their demeanor, not a forceful drive to accomplish some personally set goal. Someone who knows that the path they're on is the one that God ordained for them from the beginning of time is a spiritual force to be reckoned with.

I have met these believers in all walks of life and they all share one common element, they've learned the secret to freedom in life. Each one has come to that time and place where a conscious decision was made to take their hands off the wheel—for good. We've all done that many times, only to grab control once again when it suited our needs or fed our fears. What makes these believers different is that they've learned not to grab the wheel when the urge arises. It takes a commitment, but more than that it takes a burning desire inside to serve the One in control. Unless we have that desire, we won't be able to stand up to the pressure of our old soulish nature, the pressure that wants to be the captain of its own destiny.

In the previous six books in this series we explored many of the facets of our Walk With God. In this book we're going to pull all that together and take a look at what it takes to get on this path and stay on it. God has all the assets in heaven ready to assist each one of us as we take that step of committed faith and release it all to Him. And that's where it all starts, with a solid commitment. We come by faith, we walk by faith, and we die by faith, but our old man doesn't like it and that's what makes it tough. For the bride of Christ it's imperative that she move on from settling for an unfulfilled, nominal Christian life. It's time for her to leave the Holy Place, the place of salvation, and move into the Holiest Place, the place of relationship. It's only there that she will find the path to a victorious and abundant life; the Spirit-filled Life, the Life of Christ. That is the Perfect Will of God, that as His Son's bride we

enter into His Rest—the Rest of Christ—and become conformed into His image.

INTRODUCTION

*Pro 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and **lean not unto thine own understanding.** 6 In all thy ways **acknowledge him,** and he shall direct thy paths.*

*Eph 5:17 Wherefore **be ye not unwise, but understanding** what the will of the Lord is.*

*Ps 32:8-9 **I will instruct thee and teach thee** in the way which thou shalt go: **I will guide thee with mine eye.** 9 Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.*

In looking at these three passages we become aware of several important issues regarding the will of God and how we are to find it and walk in it. The first (*Pro 3:5*) is that we won't find it by ourselves. Our own understanding will not direct our path to the will of God, and when we determine to follow our own ideas we are sure to eventually stumble and fall when doubt comes, and it will surely come.

Doubt is the door opener for fear. The enemy uses it all the time to confuse and disorient us as we live out this life in the flesh. If we're not sure that "we know that we know" what God's Word says, then doubt will always open the door and fear walks in. On

the other hand, if we know that we have God's Word on the subject at hand, doubt knocks but faith answers and doubt and fear never get in. Let me give you a personal example.

When the idea of adoption first came up I wrestled with it because of this very issue. I knew that if this wasn't God's plan I wouldn't be able to stand under the pressure of doubt when it would come. But by submitting it all to the Lord in faith and waiting for His answer I was able to determine His Will. When you have that, your flesh and the enemy have no chance to talk you out of it. You can walk right on in the midst of all the circumstances and know that you know you are on the right path.

We need to rise above the fear and anxiety that follow us when we lean on our own understanding (*Ps 55:22; 1 Pet 5:7*). If we lean on ourselves we will wind up like Israel when it leaned on Egypt for deliverance and, like a reed, it broke (*2 Kings 18:21*). Isaiah addressed this in regard to Babylon when that country was full of pride and looked to itself as the total answer (*Isa 47:10*). One of the key elements in knowing God's will is that perfect peace that only He can give. It never comes from our soul, which wrestles constantly with doubt and fear in the sea of our own understanding. Knowing His will requires wisdom.

Secondly (*Eph 5:17*), we are directed not to be unwise. That word comes from the Greek word *aphron*, which not only means mindless, ignorant, and stupid, it also has two more very significant meanings as applied here. He first refers to being *egotistic* (thinking you know it all), and the second we just noted above; *unbelief*. Unbelief is not having faith in God and His moral desires for your life. We need to be very wise in determining the course we set for our life's work, and we show true wisdom when we spend our time seeking to understand God's will. When we allow Him, He will give us the desires of our heart (*Ps 37:4*). They

are the desires that always line up with His perfect wisdom and result in perfect guidance.

Thirdly (*Ps 32:8*), David said that God will guide us with His eye. This comes from the Hebrew word for eye (*ayin*), which refers to God setting for us the standards of good and evil. It's interesting that the very next verse tells us not to be like an animal that needs to be controlled because it lacks understanding or discernment—they don't know the difference. Look at these verses in the Living translation:

Ps 32:8-9 I will instruct you (says the Lord) and guide you along the best pathway for your life; I will advise you and watch your progress. 9 Don't be like a senseless horse or mule that has to have a bit in its mouth to keep it in line!

We need to rely on God to give us direction to make the right decisions in our lives and not be like stupid beasts that require strong correction to keep them on the path. He tells us that He is watching our progress and advising us along the way. So a large part of our walk with Him is listening for His voice of correction (and being willing to be corrected). But we can only hear that voice when we aren't listening to our own mind, which is the definition of leaning on our own understanding. David spoke from personal experience and he is a good example for us of passing on what we have painfully learned by God's hand to benefit others.

Knowing God's perfect will for our life can only come by turning to Him with the sacrifice of our selfish interests. We must learn to put aside all of our natural knowledge for His wisdom, and this doesn't happen overnight. It's the result of a personal walk with Him whereby we grow daily in the knowledge of who He really is. How sad it is that we so often treat the Creator of the

Universe like some bystander in the background, just waiting to be called in for advice at the last moment after all else has failed.

God's will for us is just that, His Will. Until we determine to keep our head out of it and hands off the wheel we are destined to come up short of His very best, each and every time. I can't count the number of times I've had to deal with this lesson in my life. It is a constant source of pain and frustration to realize that, once again, I have taken control and am walking in my own power and authority. I've always liked the expression coined by Oral Roberts—*Let go and Let God*. Let go always means that I have taken hold of something that rightfully belongs to God. It's very hard to walk with Jesus if we don't know where He is. If we aren't living in the Holiest Place with Him we'll find ourselves taking off in the wrong direction and wondering why He isn't following. We need to constantly remind ourselves that He is our source of direction.

CHAPTER 1

HOW DO WE FIND GOD’S WILL?

Phil 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

The context of this verse is in the present tense and reflects a continuing process. God is “working” in us all the time, literally “willing and doing.” We ultimately take action by the willing of God in us.

*Ps 37:4: **Delight thyself** also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*

To *delight thy self* means to be soft, pliable, or delicate in our relationship to God. When we are, He is able to put into our heart the desire of His perfect will. He made us for a purpose and when we’re filled with the desire for that purpose we learn His will and walk in His peace. In the previous verse (*Phil 2:12*) Paul finished the statement with *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*; with a humble frame of mind or with caution. Why? The why comes in verse 13: *because it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do His good pleasure*. He will give us both the will and all we need to do His will (His good pleasure).

Now be sure that you understand what *work out your own salvation* means. It is not referring to the salvation we have already received. That was accomplished by Christ on the Cross and did not and does not involve any “work” on our part; either before or after. What Paul is referring to us is that we need to work out what we already have; our salvation. This is the process of working out our sanctification, the sanctification that we received the moment we were saved. Our challenge is to submit to the work of the Holy Spirit and allow Him to bring to the outside (workout) the righteousness we were given the moment we were saved. This process is not about doing something to be saved, it's all about become the spiritually mature bride that Jesus is coming back for.

Now, with that in mind let's consider three things with regard to the issue of work in this verse. First, it's not that God works for us but rather we “will and do” as a result of God influencing us. Second, God does not force us to act but uses His will to influence us when we allow Him. And third, we need to remember that God does not physically force us to do anything. He simply exerts His influence on us (His Holy Spirit) so that the desired result, His will, is of our own choosing. However, if our will is not submitted to Him then none of these three will have any effect in the *doing of His good pleasure*. We simply move on like the world and pursue our own priorities, just like Cain pursued the world while Seth pursued God.

But what is God's good pleasure? It's His delight or that which pleases Him. We can't accomplish this on our own, we need help and God is the only one who can give it to us. If we're serious about overcoming the enemy in our daily walk why wouldn't we gladly accept His help? With that attitude we won't be looking at His will as some sort of infringement on our freedom. We'll see that the purpose of His very will is to set us free and not to throw

obstacles in our path. People generally dread God's direction in their hearts because it's leading them away from their own selfish interests. So, when the choice seems difficult we need to remember that God not only gives us His will but also the power to do His will. Our part is to submit, do, and watch His good pleasure become the result. Now, one final thought before we move on to finding His will.

If we're to be successful in walking out God's perfect will for our life we have to remember that He is "not" focused on those material things that always seem to be our focus. Read *Matthew 6:31-34* and notice how material things follow after a heart that first seeks after God. That's the real golden nugget here. When we allow His desires to become ours then our "work" becomes His work and the result is the realization of His good pleasure, which is the very best possible outcome for us. In the process He takes care of all our needs because He knows what we need before we do. In other words, if we focus on the material things, attaining them will always be a struggle and His will gets set-aside in the process. On the other hand, if we focus on His will, the material needs get met as a natural part of the process. God will never ask you to do something and leave you standing there without the means to accomplish the task. That would make Him a liar and *He is not a man such that He should lie (Num 23:19)*.

John 15:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

A grape at the end of a branch will never mature and develop into sweet fruit unless it's fed from the vine. The vine produces the life and as a result the branch produces the fruit. If we—the

branches, the bride of Christ—aren't connected to the bridegroom (the vine) we won't produce any fruit. Take another look at *abiding* in conjunction with God's will.

When we continue to dwell, tarry, or endure in His presence, we become like a branch that is firmly fixed to the vine. John tells us that the result is not just fruit but *much fruit*. We branches become the conduits for His will concerning others (the fruit). Therefore we will only know Jesus' will and be able to respond to it if we are in an abiding relationship with Him. In that state we will hear the voice of the Holy Spirit when He says *go here*, or *don't go there*, or *say this*, or *don't say that*. We each have a wonderfully unique path (His will) designed by the Creator that can only be determined by staying attached to the vine; living in the Holiest Place.

Can you imagine a severed branch lying on the ground having producing any fruit? No, what I see is a dead or dying branch with dead, dying, or rotting fruit at the end of it. Just like that branch we have to have life flowing into us every moment or our fruit will be nonexistent or rotten at best. The vine provides the sap that carries the nutrients and the instructions to the branch to produce fruit. Our vine (Jesus) provides life in His blood, which carries with it the directions for each of our lives; the will of God. You see, His will is a natural byproduct of our abiding in the vine, but we are not abiding if we choose to remain in the Holy Place. His will for our life goes way beyond just the place of salvation.

THE FIRST STEP

Mt 6:33-34 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow

shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

If we are seeking His kingdom first, then by “commandment” we are not to worry about tomorrow. Worrying about tomorrow uses up the time allotted for today, causing us to miss His direction for the present; a perfect definition of being out of God’s will. His will is that you be concerned only with the matters of today, and leave tomorrow to Him because tomorrow isn’t here and the past is gone and you can’t change it. Look at what God said to Solomon when He chose the Lord’s will over his own:

1 Kings 3:11 And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment;

Solomon had his priorities straight. He wanted to know what was important to God, what was important to carrying out God’s will for his life. We see the impact of this in Solomon’s words to his son.

Prov 2:1-9 My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; 2 So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; 3 Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; 4 If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; 5 Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. 6 For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and

understanding. 7 He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. 8 He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. 9 Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

If you would like an eye opener, do a word study on “wisdom” and see what an important ingredient it is in God’s will. It always leads to putting Him first.

It’s clear throughout *Matthew 6* that one of the key objectives of God’s will for us is for Him to be the sole focus of who and what we are. He said it to Israel; *thou shalt not have any other gods before me (Ex 20:30)*. He said it to the church; *and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment (Matt 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27)*. Why? Because in the midst of following this commandment the cares and worries of today are taken care of by the One who cares the most. But how do we make God’s will our own?

It’s a simple case of first things first. If His will is to become our will then we should understand what His priorities are. Here are just a few to get us focused on what is important to Him.

Through Love

Mt 22:37-40 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love (agape; the God kind of love) the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love (agape) thy neighbor as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Loving God is the most important thing we can do. In fact it is so important that Jesus even called it *the first [premier] and great [exceedingly mighty] commandment*. As we noted earlier, it must come first but Jesus adds to it by immediately stating that loving our neighbor (with as much love as we have for ourselves) is the second commandment. He told us that love is so important to God that the entire Old Testament (the Law and the prophets) depends on it. It literally hangs on it since without love it becomes meaningless. They are like the first and last links in a chain and everything in between depends upon them as they link God to man, man to man, and man to God.

Paul told us in *Rom 13:10* that love is the fulfilling of the Law. What Moses wrote in the Law and what all the prophets of the Old Testament said all comes down to loving God and our fellowman. Mark and Luke told us that when Jesus said this it had such a profound effect on the Herodians, Sadducees, and Pharisees that nobody could even ask Him another question (*Luke 20:40; Mark 12:34*). So, right up there at the top of the list is love for our neighbor. We need to think about that more often when we're reflecting on how much we love the Lord.

The love spoken of here is *agape*, but we aren't able to exhibit this kind of love on our own, it only comes by yielding to God's will. Then it will flow out naturally, just *like rivers of living water (John 7:38)* through the one who dwells within—the fountain of that love—the Holy Spirit. And if it was important enough for Jesus to tell us that the Old Testament is held together by it then love is most certainly included in the objectives of His will.

Through Teaching

*Mt 28:19-20a Go ye therefore, and **teach all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:*

It is always God's will that we teach the Gospel, everywhere and at all times, and that's why we must always be ready.

2 Tim 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

The kind of teaching Jesus was talking about in verse 19 is that which makes disciples. We're not to just deliver the Gospel message of salvation; we are to be active participants in the maturing process after the "new birth." That's the message of the *Book of Hebrews*, moving from Christian infancy to spiritual maturity

God's will for our lives most certainly involves using the lessons He has taught us as we walk as witnesses with Him here on earth. And the most important witness we have to others involves two key objectives: putting God first and walking in love. Whether we know it or not, others judge us by where we place our priorities when the going gets tough. When we come under severe pressure our true walk becomes clearly visible. And it's during these times that we are the most effective teachers—good or bad.

Jesus wouldn't have said, *go therefore* if He wasn't going to be with us, wherever *go* is. It's His strength in our times of weakness that aids us in teaching and discipling those around us. The *all nations*, for most of us, represents the place where we spend our

day, be it at home, school, or work. It's also the most likely place to find God's will.

Through Holiness

*1 Pet 1:15-16 But as he which hath called you is holy, so **be ye holy in all manner of conversation**; 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*

I like Vincent's translation of the first part of this verse: *after the pattern of the Holy One who called you*. We find that pattern to be one of the holiness (*purity, moral blamelessness, sacredness, consecrated*) that is to be a part of our personal conversation. However, conversation doesn't just refer to talking, it also means behavior or mode of conduct. The literal translation is: *turning up and down and back and forth*. In other words, we can't just *speak* holy because we are required to *behave* holy. Why? Because it's written that the One who called us is Holy.

Jesus' character (His name) is the character that we should be developing and seeing evidenced in our lives. He is our model, and therefore our conduct should be representative of Him (of His name). Saint Augustine said: *Let the acts of the offspring indicate likeness to the Father*. If we're going to walk with Jesus as Enoch walked with God, then we're going to have to adopt His likeness (His name). And that isn't going to happen overnight, it's a process that requires a lot of time spent looking at the example. What a wonderful objective of God's perfect will. He has ordained (determined ahead of time) that we (the bride of Christ) are to become like His Son. We are to reflect His character because we carry His name. And because it's a life long journey, God has given us His Holy Spirit to help us, teach us, and provide all that

we need to become the image (character) of Jesus—the image of God.

Through Growing In Grace

2 Pet 3:17-18a Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. 18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In this case, being forewarned is forearmed. We are to watch that we don't fall from our steadfast position in Christ. We need to be diligent and prayerful in our study of the Word so that we don't succumb to the teachings of the wicked. This comes to us today in the form of false teaching that departs from the Word of God and from the influence of those in the world that are against Jesus; the spirit of the antichrist.

On the other hand, Peter told us that it is God's will that we grow (*grow up*) in grace. Grace represents His divine influence upon our heart and its reflection in our lives. Remember the definition of grace: **God's Riches At Christ's Expense**. One of the biggest evidences of that grace abiding in us is gratitude, and if we grow in grace we will increase in the favor and image of God.

Grace is a lot like a seed, when it's watered it grows and increases, and when we continue to believe, obey, and walk in love we grow in our knowledge of Jesus. Our whole Christian life is about growth, but if we don't continue to grow we stagnate. There is no standing still with the Lord, either we're moving ahead (maturing) or we are falling back (drifting away). If we don't move past the grace of salvation we will remain in a sort of spiritual infancy, and an infant that doesn't grow every day becomes sick.

The Lord has the objective of extending His grace to us, but we need to appropriate it if we are to grow and mature, which brings Him glory and honor.

Now, before we move on from grace, take note that we're told in verse 18 to: *grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*. Knowledge is something that we "acquire" by "applying" the effort so that we may attain it. We ask God for His wisdom in how to apply our knowledge, but He expects us to put forth the effort to attain it. What good would the wise use of accounting principles be to someone who hasn't studied and gained the knowledge to be an accountant? Now, that doesn't mean that God won't help us to attain that knowledge, that's why He gave us His Holy Spirit. There is no better lesson to teach our children than to ask the Lord for help in learning; the key word being "help." He expects us to put forth the effort.

CHAPTER 2

GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW

EVERY PATH IS UNIQUE

There isn't a clearly identified, one size fits all, path to follow in finding God's will for our life. It goes right back to the underlying fact that we are all individuals with individual callings and giftings. There are, however, some things that we can do that will guide us in the right direction and provide us with mid-course corrections along the way. Remember, the race that we're running isn't a sprint, it's a marathon and therefore we need to maintain a steady and deliberate pace in following His leading. Here are some of the ways He has provided to guide us and keep us on track along our journey:

By The Word

Ps 37:31 The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.

By placing the Word of God in our heart it becomes the foundation upon which we conduct our lives. When we have the Word operating in love, we can be assured that our footsteps are

going to be sure. We'll be walking in His will as the psalmist said: *I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart (Ps 40:8)*. Our footsteps (our goings) will be sure, steady, and focused on our becoming holy. It works this way: we become holy in proportion to the Word of God in our heart, because it's our heart that dictates to our eyes, mouth, hands, and feet.

Ps 119:9-11 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. 10 With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. 11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

By Asking

*Jas 1:5-7 If any of you lack wisdom, **let him ask of God**, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. 6 **But let him ask in faith**, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. 7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.*

How many times have we heard verse 5 quoted? After all, doesn't God tell us that if we want wisdom we should ask Him for it? The problem, however, is that it isn't given without mixing the *faith* required in verse 6. Without asking in faith we'll certainly end up like the man in verse 7 who received nothing. And the faith required here is *strong faith*, faith with nothing wavering.

James had been talking about trials in the previous verses and here he told them that if they didn't understand the purpose of their trial they should ask God. Good advice. Sometimes we just need to ask why is this happening to me? James is telling us that God will

give us the practical insight we need to understand and grow in the trial. However, we must come in strong faith and be willing to want what we ask for. Sometimes the answer to our question opens doors to places our soul doesn't want to go.

The word *liberally* as used in this context means “simply,” and when combined with *upbraideth* not it means: the giving of pure simple good without evil. We can ascertain God's will in all circumstances if we will just ask Him with the kind of faith that expects an answer. We aren't to come like a wave that builds up and then falls away or is tossed about by the force of the wind. If we do, we can't expect to hear anything in the midst of our trial.

Sea trials for a Navy ship are designed to reveal any defects or weaknesses. If any are discovered the naval architect is addressed to determine the cause and cure for the problem. God uses trials in our lives for the very same purpose, to reveal weakness. In that moment when we're perplexed and confused He wants us to ask Him, it's a privilege we have that has been paid for by Jesus. We can be sure that if we ask in faith God will give us the necessary wisdom because He said He will. And what is the proper manner? *But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering!*

By Walking In The Light

*Ps 119:105 Thy word is a **lamp unto my feet**, and a **light unto my path**.*

*Ps 119:130 The entrance of **thy words giveth light**; it giveth understanding unto the simple.*

In verse 105 the Hebrew word lamp (*niyr; candle*) refers to the specific Word of God for our present circumstances. It illuminates

the exact area where we're standing at that moment, and is provided to keep us from stumbling in the dark as we move along the way. It lights up those things that would otherwise be unseen obstacles.

The word as a light (*owr; bright clear or morning sun*) speaks to the entire Word of God for our path through life. It aids us in determining which crossroad to take and the path to follow (*2 Pet 1:19*). This distinction between a lamp and a light is seen in Proverbs (my highlight):

*Prov 6:23: For **the commandment is a lamp**; [part] and **the law is light**; [the whole] and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.*

We will have our path illuminated and obtain understanding through His Word. The path that we need to have illuminated for us is His perfect will. When His Word enters our life it brings with it the light, which reveals our path. Therefore, above all, we need to keep our lamp and light filled with oil (the Holy Spirit) to insure that the flame doesn't flicker and dim.

In verse 130 we see that it's the *entrance* of the Word into us that generates the light, the revealed Word. If we will diligently search the Word, the Holy Spirit will always bring understanding and reveal how it is to be applied to our lives. The Septuagint translated this verse as: *the manifestation of thy words enlightens*, and Martin Luther put it this way: *when thy word is revealed, so it delivers us, and makes the simple wise*. In either case we know who it is that manifests and reveals.

The entrance or opening spoken of here is the gateway to the mind for that revelation. In other words, the Holy Spirit brings light to our minds by revelation of the Word of God, through

which we who are simple (*easily seduced*) gain discernment and wisdom. Finally, look at the literal Hebrew thought contained in this verse: *The opening of the eyes of the soul caused by the entering of the Word of God.*

By Having Patience

Ps 25:4-5 Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. 5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

In verse 4 the psalmist refers to God's *ways* (course of action) to keep us from temptation and danger. He wants God to show him the *path* (the well-trodden road) that will insure that he keeps those ways. He desires the Spirit of God to *lead* him by the Word of God, and in accomplishing this he is willing to *wait all the day*. Look at the definition of the word to wait: *to bind or gather together by twisting, to collect*. Another way to say it is that *he gathers together the entire day in God*.

This idea of binding together is used twice in *Ps 27:14: Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD*. It is God's will that we look to Him for our plans for the entire day, therefore we shouldn't move in haste but patiently wait for His timing in all things. Isn't that a good definition of His perfect will?

Whenever I think about waiting I remember in *Exodus* when the Israelites were between the proverbial rock and a hard place. They had Pharaoh's army on one side and the Red Sea on the other. Let's take a little trip back in time and read the description of this event; read *Ex 14:9-31*. Here are some key verses to make my point:

- *10 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD.*
- *13 And Moses said unto the people, **Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD**, which he will shew to you today:*
- *19 And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the **pillar of the cloud** went from before their face, and stood behind them: 20 And **it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel**; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other **all the night**.*
- *21 And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by **a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided**.*

In verse 10 we see the circumstances that caused their fear, and in verse 13 we see the immediate response of the man of God. He told them to *stand still* and wait on God's deliverance from their circumstances. Before he even asked God, he was able to boldly state that the Lord would fight for them because of his relationship with God. Their part was to stand still and hold their peace God didn't waste time in acting but the children of Israel still had some waiting to do.

Can you imagine the appearance of that cloud to hide Israel's presence from Pharaoh while providing light to Israel's camp (19),

and then to see God part the waters at Moses command? But most of us miss the importance of verses 20 and 21—they speak volumes. They didn't immediately go through the Red Sea, they had to sit there all night with Pharaoh on one side and a raging wind holding the waters apart on the other. Can you imagine what a night that must have been? God had taken His action but there were things to be accomplished, like drying up the bottom of the sea so they wouldn't sink in the mud. While they may have been very uncomfortable knowing that Pharaoh was just on the other side of the cloud they were required to wait.

How many times have we asked God to deliver us from our circumstances but then lost heart when it didn't happen the way or in the time we envisioned. Instead of focusing on the drying sea floor (our answer), we focus on the chariots of Pharaoh (our circumstances). Israel saw God working with their eyes, but many times we can only see His hand by faith. There may be no visible cloud or parted sea to behold but there is always His peace for those *whose mind is stayed on thee (Isa 26:3)*. Just like it required faith and patience for Israel so it does for us.

By Renewing Our Mind

*Rom 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye **present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.** 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye **transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

Here Paul told us, because of all he said in the previous 11 chapters, that this is what is expected of us. It is only *reasonable (logikos; according to the Word of God)* that we should present our

entire spirit, soul, and body to the One who gave His life for us. Let's take a look at verse 2 first.

Becoming transformed requires us to turn from the world or *be not conformed to this world*. Look at the contrast between being transformed and being conformed. Conformed is the Greek word *suschesmatizo*, which refers to fashion alike, make in the same pattern, or put on the appearance of another. As used here it means to fashion ourselves into or accommodate the world's pattern (the present state of things). It's a life without God or a life with God in second place, behind our own selfish interests. It's letting our character become like those in the world, like the father of this world. Remember, we have a new Father as a result of our new birth and Paul told us not to conform "back" into the character of our previous father; Satan. If we do, we're regressing back into the things from which God has delivered us: pride, vanity, selfishness, etc. We can prevent this by taking the opposite action—be transformed.

Transformed is the Greek word *metamorphoo* from which we get our word metamorphosis: the caterpillar to the butterfly—*Jesus on the mount of transfiguration*. Webster said that one of the primary meanings is to "change in character or condition." The implied meaning in the Greek is a radical, thorough, and universal change both inward and outward. We're to be transformed as opposed to choosing conformance to the world. We are to allow the Holy Spirit to transform us into the image of Jesus and, just like the caterpillar submits to this process by building a cocoon, so we submit to God's transforming hand by submitting to the teaching of the Holy Spirit; entering into our cocoon if you will (the Holiest Place). As a result, we will emerge completely changed "on that day." This is what Paul referred to as the *renewing of your mind*. Just as the caterpillar moves from the

bondage of the cocoon to the freedom of flight, we move from the bondage of the Law to the freedom of the Spirit. It starts from the inside out and has as its goal becoming entirely new. This is God's plan, His will for each of us.

But, we need to understand that renewing our minds is a process, which we must choose to undergo. It really means that we are to bring our soul into agreement with the new spirit within us that is being led by the Holy Spirit. In so doing we prove to the world that our Life In Christ is the *good, acceptable, and perfect will of God*.

If I may digress here for a moment, let's not forget that one of the key elements in this renewing process is what comes out of our mouth. The Word tells us that, *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (Matt 12:34)*. Whatever we've put in there is going to have a profound impact on the transformation of our mind. I like what James has to say about our tongues:

James 3:5-6 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

And that little instrument is controlled by our mind. Can you imagine our caterpillar, once inside his cocoon, beginning to eat away at the cocoon itself? He would never make it to the butterfly stage if he did. The words we speak are just like that, they have the power to fulfill or hinder the transformation of our minds. They speak either life or death. What is in our heart got there through our eyes and ears and guess who controls what they see and hear?

Words are so important that God spoke to us about them very early on and very often:

*Prov 6:2 Thou art **snares with the words of thy mouth**, thou art **taken with the words of thy mouth**.*

*Prov 18:21 **Death and life are in the power of the tongue**: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.*

*Heb 11:3 Through faith we understand **that the worlds were framed by the word of God**, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.*

*Isa 55:11 So shall **my word** be that goeth forth out of my mouth: **it shall not return unto me void**, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall **prosper in the thing whereto I sent it**.*

*James 3:10 **Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing**. My brethren, **these things ought not so to be**.*

*Matt 12:36-37 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment. 37 **For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned**.*

Now let's go back to the beginning of this section.

*Rom 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a **living sacrifice**, holy, **acceptable** unto God, which is your **reasonable** service.*

Paul noted that we are to present our bodies in the same way the Levites presented sacrifices to God. However, in contrast to the Levites, we are to be a living rather than a dead sacrifice. In so doing we become an *acceptable (well pleasing)* offering to the Lord. This is our *reasonable (rational)* service, which carries the meaning of spiritual as distinguished from thinking or reasoning. In other words, it's our spiritual ministry. Just as the Levites were required to present a holy (without blemish, perfect) sacrifice to God, so are we to present our best in the form of our mind, talents, and time. Joseph and Mary were following this example when they presented Jesus for circumcision on the 8th day (*Luke 2:22*).

The renewing of the mind (the gateway to the soul) brings with it the obligation to make one's self a *living sacrifice* (broken spirit) unto holiness. It's a process we have to initiate, dying to our self a little more each day. Our soul is the sum total of who and what we are, it's the seat of our emotions and desires: food (*Deut 12:20-21*), love (*Song 1:7*), longing for God (*Ps 63:1*), rejoicing (*Ps 86:4*), knowing (*Ps 139:14*), and memory (*Lam 3:20*). It's been described as our entire inner nature, our personality (*Deut 26:16*). Our mind is also the battleground between our old nature and the spirit for control of our soul. Our job is to allow our spirit, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to renew our entire set of soulish desires. Look at four lessons from this verse as outlined by Albert Barnes:

1. That the proper worship of God is the free homage of the mind. It is not forced or constrained. The offering of ourselves should be voluntary. No other can be a true offering, and none other can be acceptable.

2. We are to offer our entire selves, all that we have and are, to God. No other offering can be such, as He will approve.
3. The character of God is such as should lead us to that. It is a character of mercy; of long-continued and patient forbearance, and it should influence us to devote ourselves to Him.
4. It should be done without delay. God is as worthy of such service now as He ever will or can be. He has every possible claim on our affections and our hearts.

Stated another way, it's God's will for us that we show the world that our rebirth in Christ has completely changed us spiritually and is manifested in our nature. In order to accomplish that we must present ourselves as holy unto Him, which we can't do without submitting to the work of the Holy Spirit. We're to allow Him to renew our mind by turning it from the world and its ways (system) to His ways by the Word of God. The bride is being called to present herself holy to God by becoming a living sacrifice so that she will be holy when He comes for her, without blemish, spot or wrinkle. I know there is a lot of scrubbing to be done on my wedding dress (my life) before He comes, and that cleansing has to come by the Word and the Spirit.

By His Spirit

John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

The truth is always God's Perfect Will for us, and His Spirit is the one who guides us into it. He shows us the truth because He only speaks what He hears the Father say. He will never speak to us about Himself or teach us anything contrary to the Word; His words are not going to be in conflict with the words that Jesus has spoken. Men change their mind and break their word but not the Holy Spirit; *God is not a man that He should lie (Num 23:19).*

*Heb 6:18 That by **two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie**, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:*

These two immutable—unchangeable—things are the fact that God confirms His Word with His oath and that it is impossible for Him to lie. He is going to lead us like a father guides his child. Look at *John 16:13* in the Living Translation:

*When the Holy Spirit, who is truth, comes, he shall guide you into all truth, for he will not be presenting his own ideas, but will be passing on to you what he has heard. **He will tell you about the future.***

Jesus told us that the Holy Spirit is going to tell you what He hears the Father say concerning the things (specific things) that are coming in the future. These things involve the coming kingdom, and you can take to the bank the fact that they include our individual part in it because it concerns His will for our life. God wants us to see in the darkness and understand those things that seem so difficult. He is concerned that we understand the deeper things of God (1 Cor 2:10), which concern the return of Christ and all the events leading up to and surrounding that moment. We are

not to be caught unaware, we are to be cognizant of the times and the seasons. So, as we look around today, what we see should cause us to ask the Holy Spirit to *show us things to come*. And that brings us to the point of knowing and understanding, but just how do we know for certain what His will for our life is?

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT YOU KNOW?

By Your Heart

*Eph 6:6-7 Not with eye service, as men pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, **doing the will of God from the heart**; 7 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:*

Paul told us one way to be certain of God's will is to serve out of your heart to please Him and not out of your soul (*eye service as men pleasers*). This same thought is found in *Col 3:22* where he used the example of servants obeying their masters. In serving the Lord out of our heart we avoid trying to please man, which always results in compromise. The idea also implies service when you're not within the sight of your master. The word for servant in verse 6 is *doulos*, which you remember means bondservant. It was the bondservant who, after being set free by his master, desired to stay and serve his master of his own free will. That's the kind of servant Paul referred to here. One who, by choice, never wants to leave Jesus.

Those who are under involuntary service will only be obedient when the eyes of their masters are watching. on the other hand, one who is serving voluntarily can be trusted when the master isn't there. The application for us is straightforward. We serve our bridegroom from our heart (out of love) and not our head (out of obligation). Then and only then are we capable of receiving the

peace that comes from knowing that you know in the midst of life's challenges.

By Your Peace

Col 3:15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

The peace referred to here is that which comes from our union with our Lord, the peace He gave us—His peace:

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

This peace (*eirene*; *quietness, rest*) comes when the Word of God indwells us. Paul goes on to use an interesting word to describe what we're to do with that peace; *brabeutoo*. It literally means to be the "umpire" of your heart, thereby judging one and against the other. In other words, the peace of Christ will render those decisions that need to be made, and you abide by those decisions by following the path of peace. Remember that Jesus is *The Prince of Peace (Isa 9:6)* and He died to become our peace. In verse 27 Jesus is very specific to say that it's His Peace rather than just peace. This speaks of eternal peace versus temporal peace, the peace that is of the world and is fleeting. It's interesting how He chose to relate His Peace to an umpire in a contest, always keeping the game in check.

I can't tell you the number of times the umpire has ruled within me and I chose not to follow the path of peace. Sometimes I just missed the call and at other times I heard the call and decided to ignore it. In each and every case, without exception, following the

path of peace is the only option for a child of God. It's His most direct link with us as we move along the path of obedience. This peace is to govern or umpire over our mind to insure that we don't lose the victor's crown. Can you imagine a baseball, basketball, or football game without an umpire? The result would be total chaos, without any order. And we, like all athletes, may not always agree with the umpire's call but we must abide by it if we're to continue in the game. How fortunate for us that our umpire never makes a bad call; there's no need for a video review.

... The meaning here is, that the peace which God gives to the soul is to be to us what the brabeutes, or governor at the games was to those who contended there. It is to preside over and govern the mind; to preserve everything in its place; and to save it from tumult, disorder, and irregularity. The thought is a very beautiful one. The soul is liable to the agitations of passion and excitement—like an assembled multitude of men. It needs something to preside over it, and keep its various faculties in place and order; and nothing is so well fitted to do this as the calm peace which religion gives, a deep sense of the presence of God, the desire and the evidence of his friendship, the hope of his favor, and the belief that he has forgiven all our sins. The “peace of God” will thus calm down every agitated element of the soul; subdue the tumult of passion, and preserve the mind in healthful action and order—as a ruler sways and controls the passions of assembled multitudes of people.

Albert Barnes

Now, before we move on, let's go back to *Col 3:15* and look at the verses that immediately precede it. Paul spent some significant time speaking of doing those things, which “are” the will of God:

- 3:2 Set your affection on the things above.
- 3:5 Mortify (kill) your fleshly intentions.
- 3:8 Put away anger, wrath, malice, etc.
- 3:9 Don't lie.
- 3:10 Put on the New Man.
- 3:12 Put on kindness, mercy, meekness, etc.
- 3:13 Forgive one another.
- 3:14 Above all, walk in love.

This bond of perfection is designed to unite the whole world. It is represented here like one piece of clothing that holds all the other pieces of grace together. Without love there might be other graces, but they wouldn't be held together in a perfect whole.

Now, the last piece in verse 15 says: *and let the peace*. When we're walking obediently in God's will there comes a peace within that fills us with assurance. Paul even went further and told us that the whole church is called to have that peace in their heart, the peace that comes as each individual member walks together as one bride. In the next chapter we'll look at how the Lord intends us to walk with Him and our brothers and sisters.

CHAPTER 3

WALKING IN FELLOWSHIP

Enoch and Noah had a walk with God that is the example of what God has in mind for us. It's a walk that is founded in fellowship. Fellowship in the Greek (*koinonia*) means in communion with another person. Just like we have communion with Jesus, we're supposed to walk with Him in the same way—intimately. Let's explore this concept of walking in communion together and see what it involves. The first ingredient is the most obvious... love.

WALK IN LOVE

*Eph 4:2-3 With all **lowliness** and **meekness**, with **longsuffering**, **forbearing** one another in **love**; 3 Endeavoring to keep the **unity** of the Spirit in the **bond of peace**.*

Notice the virtues mentioned in verse 2, which can only come from the Spirit of God within us. The first two, *lowliness and meekness*, go absolutely cross-grain to our flesh and pull at every natural tendency within us. We might better understand their meaning if we substitute the words humility and gentleness. Paul then showed us how to employ these virtues in our daily lives—with *longsuffering* and *forbearance*.

Longsuffering (makrothumia) means to keep an even temperament under adverse conditions such as personal conflict; be patient. We are to be patient with the faults and failings of other members of the bride, being slow to anger. Each of us has a different temperament and if we're to walk for any distance together these differences are guaranteed to show up. The best example is between a husband and wife as they grow and mature as individuals becoming one. They can choose to magnify each other's imperfections or they can *forbear* them.

Forbearance (anechomai) means to bear with, endure, or suffer. This most often involves those little things that are important to one and insignificant to the other. When there is no forbearance there is irritation and intolerance, which is manifested in faultfinding and a bad temperament. The answer is to hold back in love. Remember that love isn't a feeling, it's a choice, so we need to choose to hold back. Others are required to bear with our faults in the same way and therefore the common bond of *love (agape)* allows us to endure or suffer with one another. Then in verse 3 we see the purpose for exhibiting these virtues; *unity (henotes; oneness—oneness in Christ—one bride)*.

It's not always possible for one person to maintain unity and therefore it's the responsibility of all of us. In this context the word *endeavor* carries with it the implication of diligence. Our part is to be diligent in our obedience to the Spirit as we interact with our brothers and sisters because He is the one who accomplishes this through the manifestation of these virtues in each of us. With our hearts adjusted in love we'll see the unity that Jesus desires for His bride. When we all are filled with His love, joy, and peace, the result is unity or oneness.

To put this in perspective, look at the audience Paul addressed in Ephesus—converted Jews and Gentiles. They had each been

brought up in a different manner, which was bound to result in conflict. If there were ever two that found it difficult to walk in fellowship it was the Jew and the Gentile. The believing Jews came from a strong background of the Law and the believing Gentiles from the perspective of grace. Here they were, all regarded equally in the eyes of God but not necessarily in the eyes of each other. That's why Paul encouraged them to exercise humility and gentleness in dealing with each other. To be patient with one another's views by laboring together in God's love. In that way they would all be working to keep unity within the body, bonded or cemented by the Holy Spirit, resulting in peace within the body of Christ.

This message needs to be heard and headed by the bride of Christ today. We seem to have gathered into various corners with different doctrines that have caused separation and division. Jesus isn't coming back for a bride that's all divided and torn up with confusion and dissention. This unity of Spirit has to come from within, and that can't merely be a coat we put on before going to church. It has to come from the inside, orchestrated by the Holy Spirit, or there won't be the love of God that results in the *bond of peace*. It's interesting that the Greek word for *bond* is *sundesmos*, which means a *joint tie* or *ligament*. And we all know what happens when one of those is broken or torn! So it is with the brides' peace.

It's an essential part of our walk with the Lord and both the Old and New Testaments contain many examples of men and women who chose to walk in love. They were challenged and they often failed, but they knew the way back to unity always went through forgiveness and repentance. When these two are wrapped up in God's love, peace will always follow. It's God's will for us to

walk as one, in love by the same Spirit, the same Lord, and the same Father. Once again the greatest commandment:

Mt 22:37-39 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

WALK IN SUPPORT OF ONE ANOTHER

Gal 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

In his letter to the Galatians Paul showed us the contrast between two approaches to the Law. First we have the Law of Moses, which was described as a burden (*Acts 15:10*) and a yoke, which the Jewish fathers couldn't bear and neither can we. On the other hand, we have the Law of Christ, which is not a burden (*1 John 5:3*). Jesus told us that His yoke is easy and His burden is light (*Matt 11:30*).

This follows along with the previous section in which we looked at *forbearing one another in love*. Rather than being selfish and ignoring each other's burdens we're to come alongside like the Holy Spirit and help bear them up. Pastor Ray Bentley (Maranatha Chapel) once painted a great word picture concerning Jesus' yoke. It was of an older ox being yoked with a younger one. The yoke was designed so that the older ox carried the entire burden and the young ox was just brought alongside. In the process the older one took on the workload and the younger one observed and learned. Jesus is our older and wiser brother and He told us to come alongside because He is shouldering the entire burden, and His

yoke won't chafe us. We're to just walk alongside and learn, resting in Him.

We all have our own burdens but when we reach out to each other in love we are, in the same manner as Jesus, sharing one another's yoke. When we do this we fulfill the Law of Christ. Let's look at some scriptures regarding His Law to get the full meaning and understanding:

*John 13:14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought **to wash one another's feet.***

*James 2:8 If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt **love thy neighbor as thyself,** ye do well:*

*1 John 4:21 And this commandment have we from him, That **he who loveth God love his brother also.***

*1 Cor 12:26 And whether **one member suffer, all the members suffer** with it; or **one member be honored, all the members rejoice** with it.*

*1 Cor 13:4-7 Charity [agape] suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7 **Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.***

Paul gave us such a wonderful example when he compared the church to the human body. If one part hurts, the whole body hurts. Can you imagine stubbing your toe without any pain in your foot? The Law of Christ doesn't allow for us to be critical of one another, to find fault, or to take pleasure in another's failings. If

we're to attend to His Law then our actions must necessarily include helping our brother pick up his load and encouraging him with our words, deeds, and prayers.

Going back to the first verse in this section (*Gal 6:2*), consider what Paul said. Since you desire the Law then you should fulfill the Law of Christ. They had it in their hearts to be obedient to the Law but being critical of a brother who failed to follow it was being judgmental. If we look at verse 3 we see the implication: *for if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself*. We are most deceived when we act out in judgment rather than reaching out in love. They are mutually exclusive because we can't love God without loving our brother—*And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also (1 John 4:21)*.

If my toe hurts I can't ignore the pain and continue on at full strength. I need to stop and address that pain right away or else limp along at something less than full potential. The bride of Christ was not designed to be or function as a group of independent members; we are not Lone Rangers!

WALK IN CONFESSION

Jas 5:13-16 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. 14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: 15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. 16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

If we consider James' intent here we see that he referred to three types of confession and prayer. The first in verse 13 directs us to pray for ourselves, the second in verse 14 directs us to have the elders pray, and the third is contained in verse 16 where we are told to pray for each other.

He did not tell us to indulge ourselves in confessing our faults publicly or generally one to another. And he did not, as some believe, refer to confessing our sins to a priest. Rather he referred to confiding in one another that we may pray for the healing of each other's faults. The word fault (*hamartia*) refers to both those which are intentional or unintentional.

This is an area in which men seem to fall far short of women. A man needs to find a brother to whom he can be accountable for his spiritual growth and maturity. Women seem to be able to do this almost unconsciously. Perhaps it's because they are generally more in tune with their spiritual side than we men are. But the Lord is faithful to establish that type of relationship if we will just ask Him.

There is nothing more comforting than having a fellow believer who is committed to pray for us in our times of difficulty. James tells us that those *effectual fervent prayers* are powerful and unwavering. They are "energetic prayers" that have power, not prayers that just go through the motions. They come from the heart and are earnest and sincere. These prayers are the same whether they come from an elder or another believer. The only requirement is that they come from a righteous man.

These prayers *availeth much* or have great strength and prevail by overcoming resistance. Someone once said that *prayer moves the hand that moves the world*. Well, we certainly know that if anything moves the hand of God it's a simple, earnest, and fervent prayer from the heart. We can't control or dictate to God but we

are told to ask Him, in which case He has said that those prayers may effect much; bring about much. An old Hebrew axiom says: *the prayers of the righteous are short*. There may be some real truth there. This is an example of *James 2:18* whereby we are able to show our faith by our works.

If you aren't in an accountable relationship with a trusted believer, I would strongly urge you to ask the Lord to lead you to someone. We simply weren't made to walk through this life and carry all of our burdens alone. God will be faithful to bring us someone to stand with us in our struggles as we will stand with them. Just remember, this is not a substitute for casting our cares upon Him (*1 Pet 5:7*), it's a way for God to minister His love and mercy to us through another.

WALK IN FORGIVENESS

Mt 5:22-24 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. 23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

Forgiveness is something we as the bride of Christ struggle with constantly. It's one of the reasons why unbelievers say that "church" isn't for them. It's been said that the army of God is the only one that shoots it's wounded. Shame on us, we need to take our example from Jesus and be ready to forgive even unto our own

hurt. I could build a very large case to show how unforgiveness works to our detriment but this scripture sums it up well.

When our hearts hold iniquity our prayers never rise above the ceiling. How can we expect the Lord to hear our prayers when we're holding something against a fellow believer? When we consider what Jesus has forgiven us of do we really need to go any further? It's a fact that unforgiveness shuts off our communion with God until it's dealt with, and verses 22-24 provide us with an excellent example. Once again, let me quote from Albert Barnes on the importance of forgiveness in our walk with Jesus:

- In order to worship God acceptably, we must do justice to our fellow men.
- Our worship will not be acceptable unless we do all we can to live peaceably with others.
- It is our duty to seek reconciliation with others when we have injured them.
- This should be done before we attempt to worship God.
- This is often the reason why God does not accept our offerings, and we go empty away from our devotions.

When we forgive others we clear out an obstruction in our heart that hinders our walk with the Lord. He has fully forgiven us and we need to fully forgive others. One of the best examples came from Jesus when He told the story of the unjust steward (*Luke 16*). How can we be that unjust steward when our king has forgiven us such a great debt—one that we could never repay—especially when forgiveness carries with it some powerful benefits.

Forgiveness Builds Strength

Pro 27:17 Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

Communion between saints is a wonderful gift from the Lord. He uses our brothers and sisters to challenge and build us up. When a knife is struck at the right angle against a properly wetted sharpening stone the result is a fine edge on the knife without damage to the stone. Yes, the stone gives a little of itself in the process but it's given to the benefit of the knife. It is interesting that in this process the knife also has to give a little of itself in order to attain that sharp edge. This process is most effective when the stone and the knife act together in harmony. So it is among the bride of Christ.

When we challenge one another we engage in that process, and it's designed so that each of us benefits. But our relationship must be in harmony as well or it will be dulled or damaged. Therefore forgiveness is a key ingredient in keeping our relationships healthy. When we're in a right relationship with one another the sharpening will always challenge us to grow. We need to remember that the stone we choose to sharpen us can also dull us. The influence of those who sharpen us will be either good or bad. The answer, as in all things, is to lean on the Lord and not our own understanding. He knows who we need and who we need to stay away from. Too often we choose our friends like we do a book; by the cover and not by the content. God chooses by the content, the content we need to grow and mature in Him.

Forgiveness Builds Support

Eccl 4:9-12 Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. 10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. 11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? 12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken

These verses are generally related to marriage but they equally apply to friendship. As we go back to the book of *Genesis* we find that in the very beginning God determined that it was not good for man to live alone (*Gen 2:18*). But look back just a little further and we see that God made man in His image (*Gen 1:27*). I think it's fair to believe that God wanted man (made after His own character) as a friend. Look at those years in the Garden of Eden and what was God's habit? He came to walk with Adam in the cool of the day (*Gen 3:8*). But, more importantly, look at what He did after Adam sinned against Him. He was the One who came looking for His friend (*Gen 3:9*), forgave him, and made a covenant with him concerning the future (*Gen 3:15*); a future based solely on forgiveness.

We see in both the Old and New Testaments that Abraham was called a friend of God (*2 Chr 20:7; Jas 2:23*), and those that are friends of the world are not (*2 Sam 16:16; Jas 4:4*). In both examples the issue of forgiveness is a key element. Take for example the forgiveness that God had for Abraham. On two separate occasions he lied by calling his wife his sister (*Gen 12:12-13; Gen 20:2*). Maybe he considered it only a half-lie because Sara was his half-sister. And when it came to waiting for the promised

heir he took things in his own hands (*Gen 16*). So how does this all relate to us?

As we go through these verses from *Ecclesiastes* we must keep in mind our relationship with Jesus. The pattern that was set in *Genesis* is valid today, and will be on to the end of *Revelation*—brothers forgive brothers. As the Father first forgave Adam so Jesus is forgiving us today. Look at verse 10. Jesus lifted us up on the Cross with Him and He continues to lift us up every time we fall. Look at the perfect description of the world's contrasting view in 10b. How hopeless the world is without Jesus, and yet how much hope it has available in Him. We must never forget that we're the messengers of that hope. The Talmud says it very clearly: *A man without a companion is like a left hand without a right*. Look at verse 11, and while we can easily relate this to marriage, it equally portrays the key ingredient of warmth needed in our friendships. Consider the two on the road to Emmaus:

*Luke 24:32 And they said one to another, **Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?***

I know I have those special friends in my life who just make me feel all warm inside when I think of them or are around them. Matthew Henry said, *Christians warm one another by provoking one another to love and to good works*. I also know that my friendship with them is strong enough that there is mutual forgiveness for those times of failure and misunderstanding (10). What is it in a relationship that allows us to feel this way? Look at verse (12) and note that it's all about support.

Our enemy, the devil, is more likely to prevail against us if we're standing alone because we can become easy pickings. Now

I'm not excluding the fact that we always have Jesus with us, but we have all experienced those times when the enemy was so overpowering that it was almost too much just to get out of bed. I am reminded of a specific instance of this in my life many years ago. We were going through a very difficult financial trial and it was all that Diane and I could do to just hang on to Jesus with our faith, never mind dealing with all the circumstances. Through most of this trial we were fortunate that when I was weak she was strong and vice versa (sounds like verse 10). But on one particular night we both hit rock bottom.

I felt like the whole roof had caved in and there was no hope. Now, mind you, my spirit knew I had hope but my mind couldn't recognize it. I was just like Peter, he knew he could walk on water because he had just done it but his mind lost focus the moment he looked at his circumstances and they overwhelmed him. The lower I sank into my doubt and fear the more hopeless the situation became, and the more my fear overflowed onto Diane. But she had the small amount of faith that we needed and she heard the voice of the Lord in the midst of the storm—*Call Martin*. That's all it said, but she acted upon it with only her faith. She later told me that all she could say to Martin was *Tom needs you*.

Now here is a lesson in why we need to let God choose our friends and not our flesh. Over my lifetime I have had many acquaintances but only a few real friends. Every real friend I have has been chosen by God, my wife being my best friend before we were married and she still is today. I could begin right now and run on for several pages listing examples of how these God Chosen friends have made sacrifices on my behalf, and I have done the same for them. The world says that you can tell who your friends are when the chips are down. There is a great deal of truth in that but, more importantly, who is there when the chips are gone?

My friend Martin is a “no chip friend.” A believer who is a good friend always does the same thing in times of trouble. The first thing they do is seek the Lord for wisdom. Now in the case in point, Martin immediately dropped everything he was doing and walked out the door in prayer asking God what to do. His answer was simple... *lift him up!* That was all he heard and that is what he began to pray about. When he arrived at our house I literally couldn't even stand up as the enemy had me so beaten down in fear. In true verse 10 action Martin began to speak healing scriptures of faith to me. He literally put his hands under my chin and lifted my head up as he spoke. As the Word began to flow into my heart he lifted me to my feet and when I was standing he raised my hands while never ceasing to increase my faith by the Word.

Well, within a few minutes, we were both praising the Lord and giving Him thanks for His Grace, Mercy, Protection, and Provision. It was a complete transformation from the darkness of defeat to the light of victory. Had the circumstances changed? Absolutely not, but my view of them had changed 180 degrees. Now, while this was not the miracle of blind man in *John 9*, was it really any different or any less of a miracle? What was the blind man's response when they asked him what happened? *One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see (John 9:25b)*. Well, where I was I couldn't see and a moment later I could see.

What I experienced that night in the love of a friend I have experienced many times in my life. God has also blessed me by allowing me to be on the other side as well. True friends in the Lord share a common love with each other that the world can't understand. Had Diane called one of our non-believing friends that night—I know a number of them she could have called who would have been there faster than Martin (he took time to pray)—but all they could have provided would have been emotional support or

mutual commiseration. When you need a friend you need a true friend, and that's someone who will bring one thing and one thing only, the Truth wrapped in love. Look at verse 12 again and let's see if we can tie this all together.

In my case the enemy was prevailing against me and my friend was there so that "two" could withstand him. Now read the last part: *and a threefold cord is not quickly broken*. Therein lays the key to the miracle of my lifted spirit. Let me, by scripture, show you just how the Word of God is all tied together and provides for our every need. First some background:

Heb 13:5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Matt 18:20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Matt 18:19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

On that dark night, as in every dark time in my life, Jesus was there with me in the presence of the Holy Spirit. In my heart I knew that but my mind (the battleground for the soul) was being overrun by the enemy.

Now I have purposely listed *Matt 18:20* ahead of *18:19* because there is something very special in this verse that we need to remember. The Holy Spirit is always with us, but when two or more of the bride are gathered in prayer (*in my name*) Jesus makes a special appearance in response. The only thing I know is that

God is omnipresent and I have to take that on faith. I believe that verse 20 tells us that where His saints are He is. *Psalm 132:4* tells us that God rests in His sanctuary and today His bride is His sanctuary. He is in the midst of her to forgive, refresh, and encourage (sounds like a friend to me). Look at *Rev 2:1* where Jesus said that He holds the ministers of the churches (7 stars) in His hand and walks among the churches (7 golden candlesticks). Now go back to *Matt 18:19* and note that what is being referred to is “agreement” by two believers.

That night God showed Martin what to pray for. With two of us gathered in His name He would be there, and by His Word He promised that what we asked for would be done. That is exactly what happened, but it wouldn't have if two had not gathered to withstand the enemy.

Now, in light of this I think we can see the importance of the threefold cord. I was the single strand that was being stretched to the breaking point. When Martin came alongside in agreement with me there were two strands. An engineer will tell you that two cords of the same material when brought together don't just double in strength, the strength increases logarithmically. At the moment we came together Jesus showed up and now that cord was threefold and was definitely not going to be broken.

I have never forgotten this example, and I've learned through other painful experiences to turn to my true friends in Christ when the sky begins to grow dark. We weren't made to walk alone, but in those times when our friends aren't at hand we only need remember that Jesus is always there to make our cord twofold.

Forgiveness Comes In Assembly

*Heb 10:24-25 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 **Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together**, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

The Lord has given us multiple reasons in His Word to assemble ourselves together (worshiping together). But many have generated untold reasons in their minds for not assembling together, ranging from laziness to rebellion. Unfortunately, one of the reasons is unforgiveness. In my opinion this is one of the most common reasons believers use for not coming to church, or worse yet, moving from church to church.

If we walk around with unforgiveness in our heart, whether we admit it or not, it is affecting us more than it's impacting the one who is the focus of our unforgiveness. More often than not they aren't even thinking about whatever it is that we're upset about. But that "whatever" is the tool the enemy uses over and over to separate us from our fellow believers. Let's look at these verses and see just what unforgiveness deprives us of.

Setting aside for a moment the tremendous benefits of corporate worship, prayer, and the preaching of the Word, one of the greatest benefits of coming together is found the word *consider*. It's the Greek word *katanooomen* and it means to diligently and attentively consider each other's difficulties, trials, and weaknesses. And too accomplish that we are to provoke or incite to do good.

Paroxusmos comes from a root word that means to sharpen alongside. Here the intent is to come alongside and incite or encourage love and the doing of good works. But this can't be

done if we're home alone and separated from our fellow believers because of unforgiveness. When we fail to gather together in fellowship we enter one of the first stages of *drifting*, which if left unchecked can put us on the road to the lukewarm church of Laodicea that can lead to apostasy.

When ye frequently and in numbers meet together, the powers of Satan are overthrown, and his mischief is neutralized by your like mindedness in the faith. To neglect such assemblings might end in apostasy.

St. Ignatius

We can then, as is often done in Hebrew, restate the positive in the negative: *when we fail to assemble the powers of Satan are not overthrown*. When we assemble together we gain stability and perseverance by mutually strengthening one another. We can't afford to let the enemy use unforgiveness as a tool to keep us from staying in fellowship with one another.

The impact of 12 is even more important today than it was in the days of the early church. At that time the early church was facing the coming destruction of Jerusalem (*Matt 24*), which would be a foretaste of His Second Coming. Today we're closer than ever to that monumental day in history when everything will be forever changed.

Those of us who wish to be found ready when Jesus comes for His bride will heed the admonition found in these verses. We are the generation that is sitting on the brink of His return and we can't afford to allow unforgiveness or anything else to deter us from fulfilling our appointed role in His Kingdom. To accomplish that we're going to need all the loving support and encouragement our fellow members of the bride can give us, and that means we can't allow unforgiveness any place in our heart.

CHAPTER 4

WALKING IN HARMONY

Harmony is an interesting word, it is a key ingredient to successfully walking in fellowship with one another. When I think of the word I immediately think of my dear friend Charlie. It was Charlie who introduced Diane and me to the wonderful world of barbershop singing many years ago. Now mind you, I can't sing a note but I appreciate good four part harmony.

It was during one of the first concerts we went to that Charlie explained the many nuances of competitive barbershop singing, and one has always stuck out in my mind. As the four individual parts are performed independently they blend together in perfect harmony and create yet a fifth voice, an overtone. My son explained it to me as being the result of harmonics, but that didn't help much. However, as clearly as you hear the quartet you hear that fifth voice, and it resonates the other four parts into completion. In thinking about that it came to me that as we, the bride of Christ, each do our part in harmony here on earth, we become the added voice that resonates the Gospel and the advancement of the Kingdom. Let's look at Jesus' four-part harmony.

1. The Lord – The Lead

Col 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

If we're going to walk harmoniously in God's will then we must be in agreement with the head (Jesus) of the body (bride). He was there in the beginning and is called *I Am*. Among those raised from the dead He was the most preeminent; above all the rest. This is the part we want to focus on. He is the lead singer in our quartet, which all the other voices follow.

Jesus is the *beginning* of creation and is the firstborn of the new creation, the church. It was God's will that Jesus should have preeminence over all things and He gave Him *all power in heaven and earth (Matt 28:18)*. It's our duty, as His bride, to follow the Father's will and honor our bridegroom just as we do the Father (*John 5:23*). It pleased God to place all fullness in Jesus (19) and He has made it all available to us (*John 1:16*) by filling us (*Eph 1:23*).

Now, before we move on to the body, take note in verse 20 that through the Cross all things were reconciled unto God through Jesus. What things? All that was lost in the Garden; the restoration of a right relationship with the Father and everything that goes along with it. To that end, when Jesus rose from the dead He stopped in Paradise (the place where the dead saints went before Christ) and brought them all to heaven with Him (*Ps 68:18; Eph 4:8-10*); nothing was left un-reconciled. We are now all members of His Body and, as the Father has given all things to Jesus, He is now *the head above all (1 Chr 29:11)*. Now comes the one in our quartet who harmonizes with the lead... the tenor.

2. The Members – The Tenor

*1 Cor 12:12-14 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 14 **For the body is not one member, but many.***

Take a moment and look up this scripture and read all the way through verse 27. We can't possibly be walking in the perfect will of God if we aren't, as individual members, edifying the rest of the bride. It's not in keeping with the will of God for one who is given a particular gift to take it upon themselves to set it aside and try and operate in another gift. If you're given *wisdom* and try and operate in *healing* you're out of order. You will suffer and the bride will suffer because you're out of order and out of God's will.

In God's eyes, all the members are equal and have the same important calling—advancing His Kingdom. Remember our previous discussion on harmony, it easily fits right here. If the bass tries to sing the lead and the baritone wants to be the tenor we won't have harmony and we won't have our fifth voice. So it is with the bride of Christ, we each need to do our part, the part we have been given. Jesus isn't the head of a bunch of eyes or arms or legs. He's the head of a whole body and we are responsible for being in and functioning in our part. That's where the Holy Spirit comes in as He administers all the brides' gifts, and when we listen to Him we know where we're supposed to be. Remember that in the previous verses Paul had been talking about one Spirit, *dividing to every man severally as he will.*

If we, as the tenor, don't hit our notes it's obvious for all to see and hear. When we get off key it has the effect of pulling all the others in the same direction. Now, if we're to have a full fifth voice we need to support those places that aren't obvious at first, but if they're missed they stand out like a sore thumb. Always follow the "lead" singer.

3. Submission – The Baritone

Eph 4:2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.

Submission is a word that really brings mixed reactions. We looked at it in Volume 6 in relation to authority—*The Authority of the Bride of Christ*—but here let's focus on its relationship with service. When we elect to submit to one another it's not a natural act that is welcomed nor supported by our old nature. The virtues of lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance, and love are only attainable through the Holy Spirit. Let's take a look at these key elements in maintaining harmony in the Body. Submission is our baritone; he is the one that is asked to sing the parts that aren't always very visible in the scheme of things.

- **Lowliness** means to have a humbleness of mind or true humility. This can only relate to "dying to self." We are to truly have a very humble opinion of ourselves and put our mind in subjection to our spirit. We are to decrease that He may increase—*Phil 2:3; Col 2:18; 2:23; 3:12; 1 Pet 1:5*.
- **Meekness** is mildness or the opposite of anger or irritability. It relates to how we respond to things from others like personal attacks or other injuries to our flesh.

Do we handle them with love and patience or do we immediately attempt to retaliate? When we allow the Spirit of Grace to operate through us in these moments then we are truly operating as a fit member of the bride... *2 Cor 10:1; Gal 5:23; 6:1; 2 Tim 2:25; Titus 3:2.*

- ***Longsuffering*** is our old friend patience. This means that we patiently bear the faults of others, and I can't think of another virtue that is more important or more often lacking. We're not going to walk very far in fellowship without it. Do you remember your first roommate? How long did it take for the excitement of being on your own in your own place to be forgotten in the face of some petty fault of theirs? We face the same thing in the bride today, and it's even more divisive here because it affects the harmony of the unit as a whole. How much sweeter it is to extend patience in gentleness. Husbands and wives who have a good relationship have mastered this virtue but the opposite—*Rom 2:4; 9:22; 2 Cor 6:6; Gal 5:22; Col 3:12; 1 Tim 1:16.*
- ***Forbearance*** means to hold oneself erect and be firm, to sustain or endure. In our everyday interaction with others we need to bear with the things that upset us along the way. Something that is important to another may very well be of little consequence to us, but that shouldn't keep us from listening to that person. In fact, at the end of the day our life may be the richer for it, if not only in the encouragement we gave our brother or sister, especially if we forbear in love as the verse tells us. That means we're not just acquiescing but are truly bearing their infirmities, miseries, and trials in love—*Mark 9:19; Rom 15:1; 1 Cor 13:7; Gal 6:2.*

Now that we have talked about 3 of our 4 parts, let's move on to what might be called the foundation of our quartet, the bass voice. His job is to under gird the other 3 voices and provide substance.

4. Unity – The Bass

Ps 133:1-3 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity 2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; 3 As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

I really believe that David captured the essence of unity as opposed to agreement. Agreement means to be in harmony regarding an opinion or action, while unity refers to the state of not being multiple but being one or alike all at once. It's very possible to be in agreement but not in unity, and so the distinction here is very important. The setting for the Psalm is the fellowship surrounding the restoration of the Ark of the Covenant and the restoration of the people (*Ps 122*).

When we're in unity, David tells us that it is *good* (beautiful, loving or the best) and *pleasant* (sweet), but the key words preceding unity are *dwell together*; to abide or endure. This dwelling together refers to the Hebrew custom that families stayed together and the married sons and daughters continued to live with their parents. The literal Hebrew translation is: *the dwelling of the brethren also together*. The application for the bride of Christ is represented in our being one family in Jesus (*Gal 3:26*), and sharing the same confidence and hope in Him, in His grace. It

follows then that our unity as the bride will have an impact on the world in transmitting the Gospel.

John 17:21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

David goes on in verse 2 to say that to dwell in unity is like *precious ointment (anointing oil; Ex 30:23)*, which is like the dew of the mountains, a fresh and pure covering. Both Mount Hermon and Mount Zion represent the high places of God, and he is talking about unity being the same as the dew that covered these holy places. The anointing oil was also commonly used at feasts and festivals and therefore represents things beautiful, joyful, and happy (*Isa 61:3*). There was so much oil that it flowed over Aaron's head and onto his beard and clothing. The dew is therefore a type of the Holy Spirit, the same Spirit who desires to flow out into the world in love through believers. Just like the anointing oil released a sweet fragrance to all those present, so the bride needs to overflow in abundant love for one another.

Now lastly, reread 3 in our opening scripture and note the words *for there*. It is *there* where God commands His blessing of eternal life. When read it in context, *there* is the place where unity is. It's through Zion (today the bride) that He brings forth the Gospel of eternal life. It's His desire that we walk in unity to show the world the love that is the central theme of the Gospel. When the world sees that love, it will resound like four part harmony with the fifth voice elevated above the others.

CHAPTER 5

WALK WITH JESUS AS LORD OF ALL

As we move into this final chapter I want to take a few moments and look at one of the most important aspects of our Walk With God; making Jesus Lord of All. Many come to Him seeking salvation but little realize that they need to make Him Lord of All. By faith we receive Him as Lord and Saviour, but for many they only acknowledge Him as Saviour.

It's somewhat like James' thoughts concerning faith and works. He agreed with Paul that we are saved by faith through grace and not by our own works. On the other hand, he said that if you have been saved then the evidence of that salvation is in your good works, the evidence being the fruit of the Spirit in your life. If you have made Jesus your Saviour then it should follow that your life evidences His Lordship.

As we've seen throughout this book, for the bride of Christ the challenge is to move on from the Cross, to move from the Holy Place (the place of salvation) on into the Holiest Place (the Spirit-filled life). It's here that the bride is to abide during her betrothal (her sanctification period), getting to know her bridegroom and learning to love and trust Him by dying to her selfish interests. Jesus paid for that privilege with His blood and it's His blood in

the Holiest Place that provides the bride the continual mercy and grace she needs to become all that she was created to be. That is the calling of those who call themselves the bride—to make their bridegroom Lord of all.

Acts 10:36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)

Here we see that Jesus is called the Lord of both the Jews and the Gentiles. The word for Lord is *kurios* (supreme authority) and it carries the meaning “controller.” This verse is actually translated: *The word which he sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, that word has authority over all.* Or put another way, the Word itself has the supreme authority and the revealed Word (*rhema*) is Jesus (*John 1:1*). If then we died with Him on the Cross and rose with Him in His Glory, the fact that He is Lord over all that we are is inescapable (*John 17:2; Matt 28:18*).

As I reflect on the issue of Lordship I am reminded of the difference between a servant and a bondservant. Rather than leaving he chose to stay with his entire family and serve his master of his own free will. That is where I believe many in the body of Christ miss the key to walking the walk. If we will take that step and become a bondservant our walk will move to a whole new level.

We are His bride and we need to be committed to Him and to Him alone. He bought and paid our bride price with His blood, but many have never made the connection that it includes His lordship. We can't have it both ways, claiming our salvation and rejecting the fact that He is our Lord. This issue, like so many we have discussed, is one of the heart and at some point in our walk we

must make the conscious decision to totally submit it to Him. So many hold back from that point of total submission because they feel that it will infringe on their newfound freedom. They want to stay in the Holy Place, the place of the nominal Christian (at the foot of the Cross). What they don't realize is that it will make them freer than they have ever been if they will take up their cross and follow Him into the Holiest Place. Just like the bondservant, they will have an entirely new perspective. There is no better Lord in the universe than Jesus and no better station in life than to walk with Him in total submission.

HOW DO WE KNOW HE IS LORD?

This book began with a focus on knowing the will of God. How appropriate that it should end with a focus on knowing Jesus as Lord of your life. Lordship is an all or nothing proposition. Jesus will not share us with anyone or anything else, especially ourselves. Strangely enough, I think He is more jealous of that than anything else. Look at all the times He became angry with the Jews. It almost always involved them sharing their affections with someone or something other than God. My mind keeps going back to that simple little phrase... *if he isn't Lord of all he isn't Lord at all.*

Luke 6:46-49 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? 47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: 48 He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. 49 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an

house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

A good servant never disputes his master, he remains focused on the work that he's been given. A good Christian is a faithful servant who is differentiated from the non-believer by what we see in verse 47. He hears and he does, but the non-believer in verse 49 hears but doesn't do.

The first century church understood the example Jesus gave them. Palestine is a land of many hills and those who built their homes on a hill were in danger every time it rained and the stream became swollen and began to flow downhill. The very earth was torn out from under the houses, sending them into crashing ruin. It was very different for those who searched out a rock and built their house upon it. Each house was the same until the sudden appearance of the clouds and the rain, and then the difference became apparent.

It's the same for us. The dark clouds and the rain are representative of the circumstances of this life. They can be sudden and violent or they can come up unnoticed and slowly erode our foundation. Either way the result will be the same, without our rock we can't stand. So what is Jesus telling us in this story? He's telling us that to hear His principles and not to live by them is setting ourselves up for failure. To know your duty and to neglect it will end in great disappointment.

Matt 7:21-27 Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and

in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. 24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

The first word in verse 24 is therefore (there for a reason) and it refers back to verses 21-23. Look at who He was referring to. Those who enter the Kingdom of Heaven are those who *do* the will of the Father. If we're going to be a part of this next move of God into a Holy and Pure church, a bride without spot or wrinkle, we absolutely must commit ourselves to a submitted lifestyle and make Jesus Lord of all. We can't tolerate compromise in our lives if we have any hope of becoming the pure vessels He created us to be.

The gifts and callings of God are without repentance (*Rom 11:29*), He won't take them back. But it doesn't mean that we will walk in power in that calling or operate in those gifts, that's a direct function of our submitting to His Lordship. We won't see the anointing operating out of impure vessels, but we might see the counterfeit. We need to stop looking at the outside and start concentrating on the inside where the real key resides... Jesus' righteousness.

What a joy it is to know that all it takes to go right to the head of the line is asking for permission. Jesus wants us to be at the head of the line more than we want to be there. And what an awesome place the head of the line is. It's a place of total submission, total forgiveness, total love, total righteousness, and total confidence in the One who paid for it all.

Is constantly struggling with the same old issues really worth it? Is that part of the world you want to hang onto really better than being at the head of the line? Are fear, anxiety, and worry really that hard to let go of? How about anger and bitterness? These are the things that tell us Jesus isn't Lord of All, because when we totally surrender to Him we really do gain victory over these enemies. Without that we're still battling them in our own strength.

Being in the will of God (being at the front of the line) is really the only place to be, anywhere else is simply just second best. There was a saying hanging in the ready room when I went through Top Gun that summed up air-to-air combat in five simple words ... ***No Points For Second Place!***

If you didn't do up in the air what you were taught on the ground you were going to lose, and to lose meant not coming back. We need to have that kind of attitude where Jesus is concerned. He hasn't passed on the instructions of the Father without reason. Our very foundation depends on them and our heading their instruction.

Go back and read the quote by Paul Little at the beginning of this book. We need to follow Jesus every day and trust Him to reveal that particular part of His will we need to get us through the day. If we'll "listen and do" what He asks then we can be assured that He is Lord of All.

HOW DO WE WALK WITH HIM?

With Sacrifice

*Rom 12:1-2 I beseech you **therefore**, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

Once again we see that word *therefore*. In this case it's in reference to the entire preceding 11 chapters of this letter in which Paul has been telling them how to Walk With God. He writes here of the *mercies* of God, like the father who reaches out to his unruly children when they come to him in humility. If we're to Walk With Him as that child then we're going to have to devote ourselves to Him and lead holy lives by presenting our bodies as living sacrifices.

Paul tells us first *to present your bodies* (prove, provide, yield). This is in reference to the way Israel in the Old Testament presented animals at the altar for sacrifice. It was an offering made by the individual of his own free will as an evidence of his devotion to God. For the bride of Christ that means we're to present the most valuable asset we own—*our bodies*—not as a dead sacrifice but as a *living sacrifice*. The Hebrews, on the other hand, gave up all claim to the animal and left the atonement sacrifice in God's hands to deal with after its death as He chose. We continue today as an *active* participant in that sacrifice by giving up all right to our sacrifice; our self. We're to put everything that we are (spirit, soul, and body) on the altar each and

every day and make sure that we stay there. Unfortunately, many times I've awakened only to find that I've crawled off the altar.

The very next word in verse 1 is *holy*, which refers to being without spot or blemish (*Deut 15:21; Lev 1:3*). It's in reference to being set apart for God as we are doing by setting ourselves apart for His service with our sacrifice. This is our sanctification, the betrothal period for the Jewish bride. For us to be without spot or blemish means that we are to come to Him wholly dedicated with all of our energy in spirit, soul and body. We aren't to compromise and give a part of ourselves to the world and the rest to God, we're to offer to Him a complete sacrifice that is *acceptable* (fully agreeable, well pleasing).

The sacrifice that He requires is defined in the two previous words; *holy* and *living*. The Hebrews would never make an offering to God that wasn't acceptable and we aren't to invent personal sacrifices that we think will be pleasing to God because most of them are made to please us. Think about that. What do we do in the name of God that is just to keep us spiritual in the eyes of man? God only wants one thing, and that's everything that we are, and He wants it in total submission. Paul said that this is simply our *reasonable service*.

As we saw earlier, this is the word *logikeen*, which means rational or logical service. Reasonable means that which is with reason or that which is rational (Webster). In both definitions the key element references the mind. Paul told the Christians in Rome to serve Jesus with their mind as opposed to the outward external service evidenced by the Jews. This is one of those similarities between Paul and James (*Jas 2:14-15*) in which service is the result (evidence) of the sacrifice (salvation), the sharp contrast between the spiritual and the physical. If we make the *acceptable* sacrifice of our mind then the body will follow.

Paul finished this thought in verse 2 by clearly stating that the mind is the central element being discussed. If we submit our mind—our reason—in sacrifice to the renewing power of the Holy Spirit, our resulting transformation will be the proof of the *good and acceptable and perfect will of God (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15)*. The opposite is also true, because if we become conformed to the world we are, in effect, putting on the form and fashion of the world's system. It's our choice, we are either going to look like Jesus or look like this world, which we evidence by our sacrifice. To tie this all together let's take each of these last words individually to understand how important this sacrifice is:

- **Prove:** (*dokimazo; explore, investigate or ascertain*) You will ascertain or prove what is good.
- **Good:** (*agathos; benefit*) Refers to the fact that the Will of God is good.
- **Perfect:** (*teleios; complete*) Refers to that which is consistent or carried out in all circumstances.
- **Acceptable:** (*euarestos; fully agreeable or well pleasing*) Completely approved of by God or that which is pleasing to Him.

So, in the end it's our reasonable service (*Isa 1:18*) that we are to make of ourselves a complete and living sacrifice (*Rom 6:13*) to God (*1 Cor 6:12*), so that we may prove that the will of God is consistent in all circumstances and is well pleasing to Him (*1 Pet 2:5*). We aren't to submit ourselves to the world and its ways so as to become a blemished and unacceptable sacrifice. We're to walk

with Him as a living sacrifice, a sacrifice we make ourselves by putting Him on the throne instead of our self.

A clear and definite activity of the will is involved in recognizing His lordship, since He is to be Lord of all. By her "I WILL" the bride at the marriage altar, ideally, forever enthrones her groom in her affections. In subsequent years she lives out in detail all that was implied in that momentary act of the will. A similar enthronement of Christ can result from a similar act of the will, for the same decision as enthrones Christ automatically DETHRONES self.

Oswald Chambers

ACKNOWLEDGE HIM AS LORD

We have already explored making Jesus Lord of All, but I would like to look at three areas in which we evidence that by our Walk: *Trials*, *Self Denial*, and *Service*. These three areas make up a very significant portion of our daily life, and in each one we have the opportunity to take the High Road with Jesus as Lord or the low road with our self on the throne. The sacrifice discussed in the previous section is what this is all about, a conscious, committed, and lifelong sacrifice of all that we are in every area of our life.

Trials

1 Pet 1:6-8 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: 8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in

whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

This is what sets our Walk apart from the world. Just like Paul and Silas could sing while they were in prison (*Acts 16:25*) we are able to sing in the brief (*for a season*) trials of our faith. These are the trials that are an integral part of our Walk *if need be*, since there is always a need. How we respond in *heaviness* (sorrow) is what either sets us apart from or blends us in with the world. When we're able to praise God in the midst of our *manifold temptations* (various kinds of trials or tests; *Jas 1:2*), we do so only with the joy of the Holy Spirit (*Gal 5:22*). That is an act of acknowledging Him as Lord of All.

In verse 7 the word for trial implies a testing by trustworthiness. What God is interested in is the end result and not the test itself (*Jas 1:3*). He desires that the end result *might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ*. Wycliffe points out that there is a double blessing here in that: the Christian will be rewarded at Jesus coming, and at the present time Jesus is glorified in His being unveiled (*appearing*) through the trial. The testing of our faith is much more important to God than the testing of gold to prove whether it's genuine or not. Or, put another way, if gold is tested with fire to prove its value, and it will perish, how much more important is it to prove our faith, which will never perish. That's why how we handle the trial speaks volumes to the world around us, showing it who is Lord of All.

When we're Walking With God through the testing of our faith we demonstrate something very powerful to those observing us. Our faith in the Lord, who we have never seen, is evidenced in our love for Him, our believing in Him, and our rejoicing in Him (*John*

20:29). This is what eternal life is all about. We have it now and we need to walk in it now (*John 17:3*). For the Christians of the first century Church, there was a very real meaning in these verses. It was said at that time: *Renounce Jesus and live, Cleave to Him and die*. How much more value than gold that had in the eyes of the Lord. There could be no greater statement of faith than to put one's life on the line.

For us that may mean persecution from friends or those at work, but in many parts of the world it still means imprisonment and/or death. The end result, however, is the same in that Jesus receives praise, honor, and glory in the stand that we take for Him (*Heb 13:8*). To some it's a witness unto death and to others a witness unto shame, but to Jesus it's a demonstration of where He sits in your life. It's an opportunity to find out what is real and genuine in your life, what has true value, and what needs to be removed. It's in finding out what needs to be removed that we move into acknowledging Him as Lord by self-denial.

Self-denial

Luke 9:23 And he said to them all, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

We have run across this concept many times in our Walk, but this verse has always seemed to crystallize it for me. It combines all that Walking With God embraces. Jesus made it very clear that self-denial is the key to following Him. The key words are *come after, deny himself, take up, and his cross*. By way of making the case let's look at each one independently with their Greek definition and then take them together as a whole.

- ***Come after:*** *to accompany, follow behind.*
- ***Deny:*** *to contradict, disavow, or reject himself alone; always.*
- ***Take up:*** *to bear up, carry, or lift up in the mind.*
- ***His Cross:*** *self-denial*

Jesus was making the point to His disciples that now that they knew who He was, they were to take stock or re-evaluate what following Him meant. At first they thought He was coming as the conquering king who would orchestrate the overthrow of Rome, but it was apparent that He came as the suffering Saviour. If they were to now *accompany* Him they were going to have to *disavow* themselves. It's interesting that Jesus uses the same word for deny (*arneomai*) that He used when He told Peter that he would deny Him three times (*John 13:38*), and He is saying the same to us today. Jesus wants us to *no longer recognize* ourselves by rejecting our flesh on a daily basis, and *lifting Him up in our mind* through the process of *self-denial*.

The act of following here is in the imperative tense and means to involve persistent action—*let him keep following*. As we have discussed before, eternal life starts the moment we're redeemed by our Lord, and the process of self-denial is to begin at the same time. It's a continuing process that can only be successful if we make it a way of life; we are to do to our flesh what Peter did to Jesus. We need to absolutely reject our flesh (*take up his cross*) and follow Jesus. And that decision must be a conscious one that comes from our heart and is made in our mind. Our trials come on a daily basis, and that's why Jesus tells us that we have to make the

decision to put Him ahead of our flesh each and every day. The cross of self-denial allows those who “come” after Jesus (nominal Christians) to become those who “follow” after Him (mature disciples) and acknowledge Him as Lord. Then and only then are they fit for service to Him.

Service

Col 3:22-24 Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: 23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

Before we look at the area of service we need to put verse 24 in context. If we go back to verse 22 we see that Paul was talking to servants, and more precisely bondservants. They especially need to obey with *a singleness of heart*. That means they are to serve in the same way, whether the master is there or not, as their purpose is to serve him and not to please man. This is an interesting commandment for believers today because our master is “always” observing our service.

In verse 23, the phrase *whatsoever ye do, do it heartily* can be translated: *whatever ye do, work at it from the heart (soul)*. This implies that we are to be diligent and cheerful in doing it for the Lord rather than man. Remember that whatever we do down here for our own benefit, we have already received the reward (*Matt 6:1-6*). On the other hand, our master is faithful to pay his servants with the inheritance He has received from His Father as a reward for service. But this isn't like walking up to the paymaster and holding out our hands for some remuneration.

... it is the ice cream reserved for the little girl who, rushing into her father's arms, cries, "See, Daddy, I cleaned up my playroom like you told me to." The real reward is the father's approval; the ice cream is mere trimming—but quite proper trimming.

Wycliffe

If we've served our master with *singleness of heart*, our heavenly reward is going to be like that ice cream. Our true joy is received in serving Him as we walk in God's perfect will for our life with Jesus as Lord of All.

CHAPTER 6

SOME CLOSING THOUGHTS

In this book we have only explored the surface of Walking The Walk. To learn all the many facets of this subject will take each of us a lifetime here on earth; a lifetime devoted to our Saviour and Master, the Lord of All, Jesus Christ. And it should be clear by now that assuming the servants role is the secret to entering into a beautiful Walk With Jesus.

In *John 13* Jesus demonstrated the full meaning of servanthood for His bride and His Foot Washing Theology has become the clear message of this book. We can't possibly hope to determine what God's will for us is if we don't first submit to Him as Master. Listen to what Oswald Chambers told his students about the subject of master and servant:

... To have a master and to be mastered is not the same thing. To have a master means that there is one who knows me better than I know myself, one who is closer than a friend, one who fathoms the remotest abyss of my heart and satisfies it, one who has brought me into the secured sense that he has met and solved every perplexity and problem of my mind. To have a master is this and nothing less—"One is your Master, even Christ."

... If our idea is that we are being mastered, it is a proof that we have no master; if that is our attitude to Jesus, we are far away from the relationship He wants. He wants us in the relationship in which He is easily master without our conscious knowledge of it, all we know is that we are His to obey.

That last sentence really puts a ribbon around it for me. If I can serve Him with a heart that is so right that I don't even consciously think about serving, then His joy is truly mine. Unfortunately I am not there, and it reminds me that I am still far from the goal. But Jesus doesn't see it that way. When He looks at me He sees a completed event because He sees His righteousness, His holiness in me.

We've considered in these pages what it means to determine God's will for our life and to walk in it. I think, in a word, it's *bondservant*. If you look at how Paul and some of the other writers refer to themselves in the salutation of their letters it is precisely with that title; *dulos*.

- *Romans—Paul, a **servant** of Jesus Christ called to be an apostle.*
- *Philippians—Paul and Timotheus, the **servants** of Jesus Christ.*
- *Titus—Paul, a **servant** of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ.*
- *James—James, a **servant** of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

- *2 Peter—Peter, a **servant** and apostle of Jesus Christ.*
- *Jude—Jude, the **servant** of Jesus Christ.*

They believed that it was a privileged to call themselves servants before they mentioned the title of apostle (ambassador of the Gospel; commissioner of Christ). Unfortunately, we find many in the bride today that are more interested in the ambassador's robe than the servant's sandals. Perhaps that's why there's no peace in their life.

God had it all planned out from the very beginning. He knew that in surrendering all that we are to Him we gain all that He has for us. The hard part, however, is to get us to see it that way. Our minds are in constant need of upgrading and the enemy knows it. It's our old soulish nature that is in constant battle with our spirit for control, and Satan knows that once we make that decision to become a bondservant we've taken the upper hand. At that point our mind is ready for a software upgrade, and God has given us His very own Chief Information Officer; the Holy Spirit. He is the one who guides the renewing process that transforms us from selfish and ego-driven humans to serving and love-motivated saints.

The secret to being able to Walk The Walk is to choose to be the servant. That decision moves us, as Oswald Chambers said, from being mastered to having a master, it opens the door for us to find out what God's Perfect Will for our life is, opens our ears to hear His voice and know that we know, and gives us the heart to walk in fellowship with Him as Lord of All.

What more could we want or ask for? To know who we are, whose we are, and for what purpose we were created. It just doesn't get any better than that because it's the answer to those

questions that fills us with His peace. In my life I've found that the step to servanthood carries with it an untold number of benefits, most of which I never even expected. I could probably make a list that would run on for several pages, but perhaps the two that top my list would make the point... *peace and joy*.

As I have walked through this world both with and without my Lord, these two fruits of the Spirit have had an all-encompassing place in my life. They truly are what the world is searching for and chasing hard after, along with real true love. Since I made the decision in my heart to put my ear to the doorpost and have the Lord place His mark, peace and joy have become much easier to take hold of. They just seem to be part of this thing called servanthood, and when they're not present it only takes a brief look into my servant's heart to find them. In those moments it becomes clear that I have allowed myself to slip into the "being mastered" role by siding with my old nature in some area. But the wonderful part is that I have the Holy Spirit to lead me away from my selfish interests and restore my walk.

As the bride of Christ, as we walk through our betrothal period here on earth, let's take our example from the Jewish bride and spend our time sewing our wedding dress—our outward righteousness—allowing our bridegroom to make it as spotless as possible, without blemish or wrinkle. That, as Paul tells us, is our reasonable service, to dwell in the Holiest Place where we can abide with our bridegroom. I go into much more detail about our walk, our sanctification, in my book *Wake Up and Rest, The Bride of Christ Sleeps at Her Own Peril*.

When we made that move to the Cross, into the Holy Place, we became a partaker "in" Jesus (our salvation). Now let us all live in the Holiest Place and be a "partaker of Jesus" by entering into His rest. He paid the price with His blood to open the throne room to

us and provide the continual grace we need to become more like Him every day. The choice is ours, but if we fail to choose His path we do so at our own peril and the loss will be ours... for eternity.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pastor Tom Mitchell has spent the better part of his ministry years exhorting, challenging, and encouraging the bride of Christ to move ever deeper into her relationship with her bridegroom. Over the past 30 years through Walk With God Ministries he has authored 13 books, written numerous articles, and has taught the Word of God from the pulpit, in the classroom, and through his weekly blog at: <http://WalkWithGod.org>.

His published works include *Wake Up And Rest – The Bride of Christ Sleeps at Her Own Peril*, along with its four companion books, *The Doorway to Rest*; *The Pathway to Rest*; *The Dangers to Rest*; and *The Battle For Rest* that challenge Jesus' bride to wake up and fulfill the role He has given her in preparing the way for His Kingdom. By anyone's clock, the time until His return is growing very short. *Wake Up And Rest* is a timely challenge the bride can ill afford to ignore, for if she does she does so at her own peril. This series reflects the urgency of the message the Lord has impressed upon Tom for His bride, to wake up and remember to whom she has committed herself and make herself ready for His soon return. The hour grows short and there is much at stake, both here and now and for all eternity. The question is... *will she wake up?*

His most recent work is the eight volume series, *The Way of Enoch*, that explores the foundation and sound scriptural doctrine that underlies God's plan for our lives. It is a journey that begins with learning who God really is and culminates in discovering how we are to walk out a loving and obedient relationship with our bridegroom. *The Way of Enoch* is a great resource for both the

bride of Christ and for those who have just begun their walk with Jesus. Each book is solidly based on the Word of God, looking at how it to be applied in the Christian life. The message is presented in a straightforward look at eight key areas of our Walk With God.

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Volume 6—Authority of the Bride of Christ

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Wake Up and Rest Series

The Bride of Christ Sleeps at Her Own Peril... This book is a wakeup call to those who have made their personal commitment to their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. They are the ones who hold the key to survival the world is looking for and they cannot fail to share it. But to do so they have to overcome their human side and allow their spirit to take charge and lead them through this “wilderness” we find ourselves in. And the key to that is to stop and take a long hard look at their relationship with the One to whom they’re engaged to be married. Do we really know Him? What is He expecting of us? How can we find the answers? These questions and many more have to be answered if we’re going to be able to step up and become all that He created us to be. *Wake Up and Rest* is a guidepost to a fruitful walk with our bridegroom as we prepare ourselves for our wedding day.

The Doorway To Rest—The Brides’ Invitation... When we consider Solomon’s Song we can easily see the relationship between Christ and His bride portrayed in many ways. Think of the “sun’s” relationship with the moon being like our relationship with the “Son.” This book is a detailed, verse-by-verse study of the *Song of Solomon*, revealing the true view of bride of Christ through

His eyes and a life changing view of the bridegroom through the eyes of the bride as she opens *The Doorway to Rest*.

The Pathway To Rest—The Brides’ Purpose... As we looked at the message of the *Song of Solomon* we were given a clear picture of not only who our bridegroom is, but equally important how He sees us and how we should see Him. His invitation opened the doorway to His Rest and now, as we walk out the days of our *ketubah*—our betrothal—we need to find out what that means and what it entails along *The Pathway To Rest*. For that we turn to the book of *Hebrews*, where we learn through each verse what sewing our wedding dress means and how important it is for us to be ready and watching for His soon return as we move up the path to spiritual maturity.

The Dangers To Rest—The Brides’ Warning... We have been inundated with not the shout of triumph but the incessant worldly scream of pending disaster. The country’s economics have been turned upside down and fear and panic have grabbed the headlines as the Middle East falls into chaos. The news is full of rampant pandemics, meteorological disasters, hopeless individuals committing tragic acts and families destroyed. And sadly, the majority of the bride of Christ is not prepared for His return. We have allowed the world and its supreme ruler to distract us from the path the lies in front of us. Now He has finally released me to write this verse-by-verse study—*The Dangers To Rest*—out of the book of *Revelation* that He put on my heart 18 years ago concerning His letters that not only deal with why He is coming back but also what we, His bride, are supposed to be doing and not doing as we wait and watch.

The Battle For Rest—The Brides’ Armor... Spiritual warfare is a war between the forces of God and the forces of rebellion led by Satan. And the bride is engaged in this spiritual war between light

and darkness, good and evil, heaven and hell and Christ and Satan. But sadly, many aren't even aware of the fact that they are in a spiritual battle every day of their life. As believing Christians we're in a grim conflict and we're not on a worldly cruise ship or a showboat; it's a battleship. It's a fight to the finish with no holds barred and we can't be neutral and we can't call a truce. This war is a personal one; very personal. In *The Battle For Rest* I have taken a detailed verse-by-verse study of the part of the book of *Ephesians* that deals with the enemy, his strategies and his goals and most importantly the battle orders we have been given to ensure victory over those personal strongholds.

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