



THE APOSTLE
PAUL
ON THE RAPTURE
OF THE **CHURCH**
THE TABERNACLE IN THE WILDERNESS
CHN MINISTRIES SUNDAY SCHOOL BIBLE STUDIES
TEACHING PRESENTED BY BROTHER SAL

CHN VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS MINISTRIES **BIBLE SCHOOL**

RAPTURE SERIES

PREFACE

THE TABERNACLE IN THE WILDERNESS

INTRODUCTION

I think to start at the beginning we should look at the tabernacle, or Temple in the Wilderness, as a road map of the simplest, total expression of Christianity, to be found in the Old Testament. Christianity from beginning to end.

The Tabernacle was the shadow cast by the word of God to be fulfilled in the time of the promised Messiah. Beginning in the time of Moses, it's rites and rituals have pointed the people of the tribes of Israel directly at the Messiah. After the rejection of Jesus, the Jews continue as they were, under the law, awaiting their Messiah right into the present day.

It wasn't until that time that God revealed His "fail safe" program, the Church, to whom He passed along the meaning of the rites and rituals of the Jews, as promises to a whole new breed of civilization; neither Gentile nor Jew, but new creatures in Christ, that make up His body, the

Church, whom against not even the gates of hell shall prevail.

Since those rites and rituals, better known as the feasts, were passed along to us, the Church as promises, I think that it's an important thing for Christians to know and understand. It is the basis for our Christian beliefs on the one hand, and a trail to follow, leading from the past, directly into the future. And, since we are in the future now, because we have arrived at the time described in Daniel, as the end time, we can use hindsight to view the Christian promises, through the substance and shadow of their original Jewish meaning and see our way even more clearly than were able the Jews. But, the structure itself is a lesson in the geography of the landscape of Christianity.

So, for the serious student, and the seekers of truth, it's paramount to understand the roots of our Faith, which really all began with the Temple in the Wilderness, The Tabernacle. It is the simplest, total expression of Christianity, to be found in the Old Testament. Let's start with the building itself.

The Tabernacle

The Temple in the Wilderness.

You don't have to be confused about what it means to come to God if you pay attention to the simple road maps that God's given.

If you wanted to come to God, in the Old Testament, you met him where He said you could meet him. The tabernacle is both a type of Christ and a type of the total Christian journey, which takes us from outside of God's presence, into his presence.

Now, Christ is that meeting point. But from the Old Testament type of Christ, the meeting point, you can get all you need to know to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

But, if you wanted to get to God, then you met him where he said he was. Here and here alone, in that tabernacle, hidden behind, at the outset, on the outer fringe, a white linen fence, seven and a half feet high. And, God was there, and that's the only place you could meet him. Inside that court yard, was a tent. And the tent consisted of a holy place and a holy of holy's. Three pieces of furniture in the holy place, one in the holy of holy's, two in the outer court, and one door.

Now, if you wanted to come to God, that's where you went. And the drama of what God was communicating, made clear, geographically, that every man starts outside, away from God. Separated from His presence. And the only way you could meet him was to meet him where he said he was.

Now, you came to this place, and the first thing you were confronted with is this white linen fence, the symbol of God's holiness, without which, scripture says, no man will see God. You can't get to him, without holiness.

The fence was supported by oblong blocks of brass. And, there was a brass chain from each post running to a brass peg in the ground outside. From youth on, every child of Israel was taught that brass symbolizes judgment. It was on the horns of the altar, where death for sins occurred. The picture was graphic. Everybody starts outside, and the brass pegs and the brass blocks taught a simple truth: remain outside, and judgment was your lot. Look up, the top of each post was crowned with silver, and from post top to post top, all the way around this fence, no matter which direction you went, ran a silver chain.

Now, all the silver in the tabernacle was made from the silver half shekel, given as redemption money, by the males in the tribe, every year. In contrast to brass, which always symbolized judgment, silver, symbolizes redemption. The price being paid to redeem lost inheritance, restore freedom, and restore life was paid in silver.

Follow that silver chain, either direction, it led to one door, only one, through which you could walk. The curtains of that door had four

colors in it. Blue, scarlet, purple and white. Blue, for the eternal nature of Christ, as revealed and founded in the gospel of John, who began at the beginning. Purple, the kingly role of Christ. The purple, as unveiled by Matthew, who wrote to the Jews, that indeed, Jesus was the King of the Jews. White, the purity of his perfect manhood, as revealed by Luke, who as the historian, put together the perfection of our Lord. Scarlet, or red, for the suffering servant Messiah, portrayed in Isaiah, but expounded by Mark in his gospel.

Those scriptures, written centuries before Christ came, contain all the clues. One silver chain, led to one door. Walk through that door, which is Christ, and you're on the inside of the fence. Immediately you are confronted by an altar, which is the altar of burnt offering. At this altar, two kinds of sacrifices were offered: the sin, and the trespass.

Trespass, is where man usually starts when he talks about sin. A trespass, by definition, is a thing you know about. I robbed, I stole, I killed, or the more spiritual derivative of that, I hated, I desired what was not mine. Sins that the church has been hung up on for years, were considered trespasses by God.

Man has always started out on the periphery, but the closer you get to God, the more you are aware that you are not a sinner because you sin, but rather, you sin, because you are a sinner. There's something wrong with you. You're born out of fellowship with God, which is why I get angry with Adam, who caused that, we inevitably find ourselves alienated and against God. A condition of separation from God, that before the temple in the wilderness, we couldn't do anything about.

The sin offering was for that condition. The trespass offering was for the deed. And the sin offering even embraced the sin of ignorance. Even in the Old Testament, they had a sacrifice for the sins they didn't know about. But, the message was the same in both cases. You were to bring a sacrifice, and stand it in front of that altar. It had to be a pure animal from out of the flock. Then you would lay your hands on it, because God decreed that when you did that, all of your sins and trespasses would transfer to the animal, and in so doing, you were

recognizing, as close to what the New Testament calls, that recognition and request for forgiveness of sins. You recognized that it was your sins that was going to go onto the animal, and it will be treated as we deserved to be treated. For sin comes death. Blood contained the life, so immediately after the transfer of sins, by the laying on of the hands, the knife was drawn, the animal was slain, and in the sin and trespass offering, the blood, containing the life poured on the ground, and the carcass of the animal was taken outside of the camp.

At that instant, even in the old testament, the believer stood justified. God looked at him as though he was just like the dead animal with the life blood poured on the ground. Payment by proxy or vicarious substitute had been made for his sins. It's as simple as that.

Now, obviously, the question is raised, how can the blood containing that life of an animal stand in for a man? The same way paper money, worth nothing, can be spent, and stand in for hard money, gold. Because the power that redeems the money has on reserve, used to be, the hard money to buy up the paper from the challenger who says intrinsically, that it has a less than adequate worth. And as Romans says, in the counsels of heaven, when man was created, God had his "fail safe" plan: The lamb slain from the foundation of the earth, drawn from the bank of heavens life, one worth enough to stand in for all of us, would one day, offer himself, and buy up all this paper money, so to speak, because the surety was there and the absolute commitment in the fullness of time to pay that surety had been made.

God redeemed that man with the life of that animal. You walk out now, redeemed, paid for, with your sins laid on the animal. He dies, and all you have to do, to effect the transaction, is to do what God said, if you did, the transaction was complete. In the New Testament, it's not the blood of animals, it the blood of one Christ, Jesus is the propitiation, the one who paid the price. In the New Testament, we don't lay hands on the head of the sacrifice, we don't, Romans 9 says, ascend up and get him, and bring him down, we don't have to descend down and get him and bring him up. The words already nigh you, it's in your mouth, speak it forth, for with the heart man believeth and with the mouth

confession is made unto salvation.

As God decreed a plan involving the laying on of hands, for Old Testament transactions, all you have to do, where ever you are, is believe that God laid on him the iniquity of us all, and you step out from underneath, and stand redeemed, by simply believing, and hanging the body in a act of using the tongue. With the heart, man believeth and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Now, you're inside! Inside the fence, covered with the righteousness of Christ. The penalty is paid, and the carcass of the dead animal is taken clear outside the camp. The one that remains is now covered. The substitute paid the price!

But, service is involved, as the priest stays in the tabernacle area. There is a Laver of cleansing there, which is the next piece of furniture. It's a golden fount of flowing water in that outer court. You're already covered, but as you serve God, and dust gets on the hands, and feet, you are to bring yourself to this Laver, and look at yourself in the mirror, and check out your spots.

It was made from the melted down mirrors and jewelry of the ladies in the camp, and it was burnished and polished, and shaped in such a way that it would magnify your image when you stood in front of it. It was the duty, of all who worked in this outer court, to come to this Laver, repeatedly and consistently to examine themselves, and wash and cleanse themselves in it's water.

Notice that it was strictly their responsibility to come to the Laver to check themselves. There was no one assigned to put the Laver in a wheelbarrow and bring it around to any one who he thought might need to be cleansed!

You can't come to God, and stand here, knowing that you ought to be a dead man, and he died for you, and not want to please him, and his word clearly says, that you, are periodically to bring yourself to the Laver. My Lord is never against any individual who wants to bring himself to

the Laver and deal with his spots. That's why I get upset when some bone head starts telling me, or anyone else, to deal with my spots.

Repeatedly I have taught, from this example, of the Laver, live your convictions, but preach Christ! Get out of my face about my spots! Me and the Laver are working it out! And, I know exactly where it's at, I don't need a road map from a casual observer. My job is to bring myself to the Laver. It doesn't have a built in recording system that says, "Hey Brother Sal, you haven't been here for a while, better get over here. It doesn't leave much room for our fellows to say, "have you noticed that Brother Sal hasn't been over to the Laver lately". That's my business, and yours is your business, not my business. My business is to preach Christ, and go to the Laver to get my spots cleaned, not to get your spots cleaned.

The Laver is there, and no one is going to get a special reward for bringing it to me and beating me over the head with it. It stays put! You go to it!

And, what is the Laver? Christ, the revelation of God's will. The gold. Gold is the symbol of spirituality, always, as brass is the symbol of judgment and silver symbolizes redemption. You go to the Laver, and there is only one measure, God. He has revealed his word, and the culmination of that word is Christ. You bring yourself to that Laver, and standing along side Christ, you let it measure you, not a fellow Christian or priest. It, and it alone is the measurement. And when you go before the Laver, you'll see some spots, you can't live without them, you can't move around without picking them up. But, there is water in the Laver. A fount of flowing water. Well, who does the cleansing? You do, by dipping your hands in the water. What's the water? Peter, Paul, and even James says the water is the Holy Spirit.

No prophecy of scripture is for private interpretation. How do you get the Holy Spirit in you to do the washing? Faith! Simple as that!

Well, I don't know how to put my hands in the water. God gave you the formula. Faith and he puts his spirit in you, and puts you in Christ!

Only one way you get the water to wash in regeneration. Having seen the spots in the word of truth! It's a dry rub if you try to cleanse yourself. If you want the water to wash you, you no longer go to a place. You Faith. Paul said it to the Galatians. Receive you the spirit, by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Effort won't get it. As in the Old Testament, it was simple, plunge your hands into the water. In the New Testament, start Faithing! - Receive you the spirit, by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?, it was a rhetorical question, it was the hearing of Faith. Water does the cleansing. You deal with the Laver about your spots, alone.

Next comes the curtain. We are in the Tent area, where God's presence is going to dwell. It consisted of four layers of fabric and skins. On the outside, was badger skin, that ugly earthly animal. The best illustration of how Jesus clothed himself in the tent of earthly human flesh. And working through the skins, all of which teach the proof of his redeeming work, and on the inside, looking out, again you see the pure linen. The point being, once we go through this door, and the sacrifice is offered, and the body carrying your sins is outside the camp, we are encircled by the linen cloth quality of the fence, and here we are totally encased with the nature of Christ. God looks at you now in Christ and sees past the badger skin to the linen, as we are now totally encased in Christ. We're now inside that area where the service of God is being performed. The dead animal carrying the sins is outside the camp where it's never seen again, symbolizing that those forgiven sins are never see again by God.

Enter the tent, and over on the left is the golden candlestick. It consisted of a stem and three curving branches on each side, making seven arms, and on each a cup and a knop. And they were designed as flowering branches with a cup at the top of each one of them, and a wick in each cup.

Early in the morning, everyday, the priest would go and trim the lamps and fill them with fresh oil to overflowing which made the lamp burn brightly. And, we're not left in doubt as to what that golden candlestick symbolizes, it's the Church, you and me, in Christ. And, what it teaches, is that we have a light to shine. As He was the light of the

world, He left the task to us. But something very interesting, and too often forgotten by those who would be a witness by standing in your face and lassoing you. It was as a natural function of the branch in the vines. It flowered a cup and knop at the top these cups were flowering with a wick.

Once the fresh oil was in, the trimmed lamp, burned brightly, bringing light automatically. Simple truth; you don't witness by knocking people down, you witness by the out growth of Christ's nature in you. This implantation, to use a Biblical phrase, the gift of the Holy Spirit, which God gives us by Faith, burns the dross. But, you're not as aware of it, you're busy faithing. But as you begin to see desires change, the Holy Spirit, is burning, as the scripture says, the dross. In addition, that life in us maintained, which is maintained as long as we have faith, causes growth.

Some of you have probably changed more than you ever believed you could change, and you didn't change because you shook yourself and said, CHANGE. You started the life of faith and change outworked through you. Now why did it burn brightly? The oil of the Holy Spirit. As water typified Spirit in one context, oil typifies it here.

Everyday, early, fresh oil in the cup. If the oil was there, the light was bright. Didn't have to work at it. People noticed something. You talk about charisma. Do you know where the word comes from? The gift of God's spirit. Some people can walk in the room and you feel their presence. I firmly believe that if the Holy Spirit is abiding, it creates it's own chemistry! And that promise of God that He will abide is to a faither, There is something different about the uncommon faithing man, placed in him by the Holy Spirit. Let it firmly be established that when you dwell in Christ, and his word abides in you, and the vine and the branch are together, and the light of the Holy Spirit is there, you are a witness. You don't have to work at it. You will be.

Well, how do I get the oil in every morning? Same formula - FAITH gets the Holy Spirit in you!

God won't give it to you for anything else! I repeat, "receive you the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

Now, there is another piece of furniture. The table of show breads. It consisted of a table and twelve loaves of bread. And, they had to be replenished every week. One loaf from each tribe, with frankincense. It's not Christ, the living bread. He was the living bread from God out of heaven. That was the manna, that came down from heaven.

Someone once calculated that God gave them fifteen tons of manna every day. But, out of what He gave them, He expected they bring Him a loaf from each tribe every week. It was an offering from the people out of their store to Him. And, it had to be brought with frankincense. The symbol of joy, cheerfulness and sweetness. They gladly would bring it every week.

Now to me, the mystery is, when God rained down fifteen tons of bread, what did He want with twelve loaves from them? Obviously, He didn't need it. But, He wanted that frankincense demonstration that they recognized that He was the provider. And, they gladly built a table, and provided it for Him in His house.

By the way, it was inside the curtain, and nobody but the priest could see it. If a government agent came in to check on the use of the bread, God killed him deadlier than a stone. Once when Caesar's worm went in there to see what those priests do with those offerings, God killed him dead on the spot! If you wanted in there, you had to become a priest, and qualify according to God's standards. And, if they were a spy, He'd kill them too.

God's not as openly brutal today, but spiritual death is much worse. The point I'm trying to make is that this was a secret place. So, when some bureaucrats come sniffing around, and asked, don't you want to know what happened to your bread? That offering was given to God! That bread belonged to the priests. The point is that there are a lot of people that outline the Christian journey. You come to Jesus, and let Him bear your sins. Come to the laver and get clean. Be a witness, the golden

candlestick. Go over to church and pray, but just don't bother me with that table of show breads. But, God put in very high cotton, the table of giving.

That's why I say, that if I could ever get set free in the budget, I would still teach one seventh of my time on giving. That's God's choice! Seven major pieces of furniture in the Tabernacle, and one of them has to do with giving! But, I would teach it from the frame that God was able teach it. He didn't need their bread. I repeat, He gave them fifteen tons everyday! They needed to give! It was part of His testament for sharing in His inheritance.

Next to the curtain, that was the equivalent of a veil before the holy of holies a third piece of furniture. The alter of incense. The Psalmist said, let my prayer be said before thee as incense O Lord. Jesus said that when you pray, go to the closet and shut the door and pray to your father, who heareth in secret. Nobody outside of that holy tent saw that alter, God saw it.

Now, the laver of cleansing had to have a fire burning on it constantly as a symbol of prayer. It was lit every morning with fresh coals. But, you could only light it with one fire. Two of the Old Testament characters were struck dead, because they brought, what the Bible calls, strange fire. You couldn't just take a coal off someone's campfire, and light this alter. You could only take a coal off this alter where the burnt offering, another type of sacrifice, offered at the alter in the outer court, was burnt, and the word is a liturgical word in the Old Testament, which means to ascend for God's pleasure.

You had to take a coal from that alter, and only that alter, where the sins were taken care of, where the substitute paid the price, and the literal life of the burnt offering was ascending to God. You took a coal from that alter and lit this fire.

You don't just charge into God's presence and say, give me this or that. You go back and you stand for a minute in front of Calvary, to use New Testament language, and you remember the basis by which you

approach God. He died for me. I'd be dead otherwise. You take that coal. That kind of hard attitude. You've got to know you're a sinner to be able to understand forgiveness. Just as that woman they criticized for the ointment in the alabaster box, she said she's been forgiven much, that's why she loves much.

You start your prayer life as a reminder, that my access to God is because while I was yet a sinner, God commendeth His love toward me. And, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. That's why I say, send every sinner to me. Because I grew up in a Church where God would like you IF you were perfect. All imperfection was embraced in His death. He loves you and me as we are! Not our souls, you and me! He died for me. I don't have to work too much to get to feel good toward God when I remember that. That lights the incense. You light it in the morning, and it burns all day. And that incense, which is an attitudinal frame of thanksgiving to God for what He did for us is closest to the very presence of God Himself.

Once a year, on the day of Atonement, you could part this curtain and enter in where the Ark of the Covenant sat, in the holy of holies. The Ark of the Covenant consisted of an oblong box made of acacia wood, a root out of the dry ground, as the symbol of our humanity, covered with gold, as the symbol of divinity, and the mystery of the incarnation is portrayed in that type. The divine and the human merged into one.

In order to make very clear that the box symbolized Jesus, inside the box were the unbroken tablets of stone. The popular movie, Raiders of the Lost Ark, should have done their research. The tablets in that box were not broken! Moses broke the first commandments, the second ones were unbroken, and were placed inside this box to prove that at the first giving of the law, man broke it. Only in Christ was the law unbroken. Also in the Ark was the high priestly rod of Aaron, which to prove his priesthood, God worked a miracle. As that rod, through the darkness of the night, from it's deadness as a staff that had been used to walk with, budded in the morning became the symbol of death and resurrection. The rod was a symbol of the high priestly work of redemption, and the rod that budded as a symbol of Christ was also kept

therein. Thirdly, there was a cup that kept the manna, the symbol of the living bread. Each of those three things were God's exclamation points to say, if you can't get it from the dimensions (which I haven't explained), if you can't get the message from that incarnate union of acacia wood and gold, let me make it clear, the unbroken tablets, the budding rod, and the cup of manna is to say once and for all, that is Christ!

On the top of the box was a solid block of gold. Carved into it, the Cherubim. When man sinned, the Cherubim with flaming swords, were stationed at the entrance to kill all that came into the garden of Eden. Eden means heart of God. All who came into God's presence were to be slain. These Cherubim now sit with folded wings beholding this area of the solid gold block, no longer with swords, they're at peace. And the solid gold block is the symbol, as gold always is, of divinity. It was that work of Christ at Calvary, where He atoned. Cappereth is the name of this, called the mercy seat sometimes. It literally means covering. We are covered!

In a terrible old picture in the Old Testament when the Ark came back from the Philistines it went to a village and they lifted the gold lid and peeked in and God instantly killed 50,000 in that city, to teach drastically the point, that any man who looks on God's standard of unbroken law, without the covering atonement, with nothing between us, you die. But between us, and the perfect law of God, kept by Christ, is the mercy seat, the covering atonement, that which Christ did which covered us.

And the high priest would stand in front of that Ark of the Covenant, and what was called the Shekinah, a bright light of God's presence would settle down on the mercy seat, and the high priest would then talk with God, represented by the Shekinah, and bring all the sins of the people before him, and they would be forgiven, in that case for a year.

Before the high priest went in and parted the curtain he brought the blood from the sacrifice for sins. He would sprinkle it seven times on the ground where he would stand. He only stood in

God's presence because the life of the substitute had been spilled and he stood on the merits of that price having been paid and he sprinkled seven times on the mercy seat. And, if the blood of the sacrifice that was given was acceptable, he was not slain.

He had bells sewn on the bottom of his robe, and a rope tied around his ankle leading outside the holy of holies, and if they could hear the bells still tinkling, then they knew that the propitiation had been accepted and they had a year of grace by which God had forgiven all their sin, there was a new beginning. If the blood was not acceptable, the priest was slain, and then, not hearing the bells, they could use the rope tied to his ankle to drag him out of there.

Hebrews says, Christ sat down after doing it, and once for all, past, present and future, He covered every sin. His sacrifice was that sufficient. The high priest stands there on the merits of the slain lamb, and God and the priest commune without barrier.

Now, there is no clearer roadmap of Christianity than this. I don't care what our background is, we start outside. There's only one door, Christ; One Sacrifice, Christ; One Laver, Christ; One Life, anointed by the Holy Spirit, Christ. He accepts our gift and we bring the recognition of his sacrifice and from a heart of gratitude can praise him in our own private prayer life and fill the atmosphere with thanksgiving that if God never does anything else for me, He died for me. We stand in His presence on the shed blood of the outpoured life and between us and God's standards is the covering atonement, and our faith in Christ's shed blood covers us! What else is there? God says, that's all we need.

Isn't it amazing how we can stand here today, and with 20/20 vision, look back and see exactly how God built Christ into the scriptures, just so we could verify for ourselves that Christianity was part of the plan created before the foundation of the world.

Do you have any doubt that God also built into that plan of Christ, the completion of the Age of the Church? But, just as the knowledge of the Church wasn't divulged until it became necessary, doesn't mean that it

wasn't there, just waiting for it's time. Because it was. And now, in these last days, the plan for the closing of the age that became necessary by the Jews rejection of Jesus, is revealed in all it's glory. The Rapture is written into the plan, just as surely as Christ was written into the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. God gave us His word on it.

Go on to Class I of the Rapture Series

[Shadows of things to come](#)

CHN VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS MINISTRIES BIBLE SCHOOL

RAPTURE SERIES

CLASS I

SHADOWS OF THINGS TO COME

AD 61

~ THE APOSTLE PAUL TO THE COLOSSIANS ~

INTRODUCTION

Paul was not personally acquainted with the believers in Colossae. It was an ancient but declining commercial center near Laodicea. The Gospel was brought to them during Paul's ministry at Ephesus which lay about 100 miles east. Epaphras played the major role in the evangelism and growth of the Church at Colossae.



Paul is under house arrest in Rome, during his first imprisonment when he writes this letter. Epaphras reported on the conditions in the Church while visiting Paul in his confinement. Tychicus was the bearer of the

letter.

False teaching, the common culprit of the time, had brought about heretic thinking. The Church became synthesized, blending Jewish legalism, Greek philosophic speculation and Oriental mysticism. The new teaching had it all covered; diet, Sabbath observances, worship of angels and the practice of severity, which stemmed from the belief that the body was inherently evil. (2:11-23)

Paul combats the heresy by emphasizing the cosmic significance of Christ as Lord of Creation and Head of the Church and that any practice, teaching or intermediary that detracts from the uniqueness and centrality of Christ is against the faith.

The theme of the Colossian letter is the supremacy and all-sufficiency of Christ as Paul addresses the work and personage of Christ, heresy and the connection of Christ to the believers.

I hope this background sets the stage so you can better feel the moment and the power of Paul, and the reason he used the words that he chose to combat the heresy that was plaguing the Colossian believers.

It is in this letter that Paul reveals what turns out to be the path to the understanding of the Rapture, but whose meaning was kept a mystery until its time to be known would be revealed in the unsealing of the Prophecy of Daniel, where the time of the end time was kept locked up.

The trail to the Rapture winds through the scorching sands of the Mideast and the lifestyle of the Jews. Paul told us all about it. He found reason that we should rejoice the moment we understood it. The Journey begins with the most important of the teachings, which was given to the Colossians to stem a heresy. I hope you enjoy the trip.

The year is AD 61, and Paul writes to the Church at Colossae

After his greeting, in which he extends grace and peace from God, Paul

speaks of his gratitude for them and their faith, and then goes on to pray for their growth (1:9-14). Read it.

Then he exalts Christ's character, and over the next few verses he chisels in stone who Christ was, so we would never forget! If this is who Paul said Christ was to those early converts, than that's who he is today to you and I. Paul wasn't mincing any words here. We must understand that this description was literal..

Christ is the image of the invisible God!

The firstborn over all creation.

For Him and by Him all things were created, and he goes on to specify what all things means.

He is before all things and in Him all things hold together.

He is the head of the body, the Church. (please note the Church is the BODY)

He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

God was pleased to have all this fullness dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether they are in heaven or on earth, by making peace by the blood shed on the cross.

Then Paul goes on to show them the benefits of Christ.

He tells them that once they were alienated from God and were enemies in their minds because of their evil behavior, but now He has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation. But you have to continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This same gospel that we heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven and of which I, Paul,

have become a servant.

He reminds them of his commission from Christ and says: Now I rejoice (Paul sure was a rejoicer) in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the Church. I have become its servant by God's commission. God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness; the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Then he tells: We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all His energy, which so powerfully works in me. What eloquence! God could not have picked a better man.

The calling of this Ministry is to illuminate Paul's teaching about the Rapture of the Body at the closing of the Christian covenant and to reignite the light that Paul once had burning so brightly.

Now, everything that Paul is teaching the Colossians is important, but we are focusing on the path to the Rapture in this teaching.

Paul began to teach on being exalted over legalism in chapter 2 at verses 11-17. Verse 13: When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave all our sins having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us, He took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Therefore, do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, (here is the important part) or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration (Feast) or a Sabbath day, **FOR THESE ARE SHADOWS OF THINGS TO COME, BUT THE SUBSTANCE CASTING THAT**

SHADOW IS CHRIST!

The feasts of the Jews are the shadows of things to come for the Church. But the reality is Christ, the one who casts the shadows that are to come for the Church!

In that one verse, Paul tells us that if we want to know what is in store for the Church from Christ, you must consult the Feasts of the Jews that were fulfilled in Christ.

But, we're Christians, we don't know anything about the Feasts of the Jews. That might be true, but that doesn't mean that they don't exist for us. Because whatever the message they brought to the Jews, is now ours to claim as a Christian!

Well, what are they? What am I claiming? What do they mean? What has that got to do with the Rapture? Why will we understand the Rapture better now? That scripture has been there since Paul wrote it, and it never made it clear before. In fact, I didn't even know it had anything to do with the Rapture!

Paul was a brilliant man. He knew the law and he was a Benjamite, the light bearing tribe (God doesn't miss a trick). He knew the law so well that he was second only to Gamaliel, who was the most knowledgeable in the land. Paul was also a Roman citizen, so he understood both sides of the issue. God chose him for who he was and what he knew. He was the perfect choice to receive the commission, because he could understand the transition from law to grace. Once God got his attention, he never stopped until they cut off his head because his friend Nero blamed the burning of Rome on the Christians.

The Church was a mystery, hidden in the mind of God, known to us now only because He chose Paul to reveal it to. God told him the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and the Holy Spirit guided his life from then on.

Paul would never give a false teaching. He didn't know any! It is

important that we understand Paul's role in God's plan. Every teaching was to last till the end of time. It would have to speak as loud now as it did then. It would have to be the beacon by which we determined God's will for the Church. And again remember that the Church is the body of Christ.

In our lives today, the meaning of those words concerning the promises of God to the Church take on a whole different meaning, because we have arrived at the time when the prophecy of Daniel is unsealed, and the promise that knowledge about these times would increase is being fulfilled on every front of end time prophecy, so it's time for us to know about the conclusion of our covenant. The whole story of the conclusion of the Jews covenant is written in our book of Revelation, but the only thing that's written about the Church in that book happens prior to the beginning of the Great Tribulation. Everything else about the Church, including the Rapture was written by Paul. And it has to be found already written. There is nothing new under the sun; it's already written. That means when it's time, it will be easily seen.

Daniel's word being unsealed means we are in the immediate time frame when the Rapture is scheduled to occur. So, the message about the Rapture has to be there, or there is no such thing, because God would not have forgotten to tell the Church about the end of their deal. He's telling the Jews about theirs isn't he?

Christ was the connection between the Jews and the Church. The Jews had the law, the Church has grace. The Law was bound up in the feasts. Grace is about the promise yet to come.

Go on to Class II of the Rapture Series

[Old man Moses had a feast - part1](#)

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RAPTURE SERIES

CLASS II

OLD MAN MOSES HAD A FEAST

E – I – E – I – O

Part 1

Last Sunday we saw that a mystery is something that is hidden in the mind of God and until it's revealed by Him, we could look forever and never find it. And we learned that Paul was the Apostle to whom God chose to reveal the mystery of the Church, and how he became a bond slave to his commission.

We learned that Paul was writing to unravel the heretic thinking that had invaded the Church in Colossae. He defined exactly who Jesus was and the extent of His authority.

We saw where Christianity exalted over the practice of severity, other philosophy, mystical teachings and legalism.

We focused on the teaching about legalism, because that's where Paul addresses the Feasts of the Jews becoming the promises of God to the Church, and concluded by saying that Christ was the connection between the Jews and the Church.

The Jews had the law, the Church has grace. The Law was bound up in the feasts. Grace is about the promise yet to come. The bridge between them is the Messiah.

THE JEWS HAD THE LAW

The book of Exodus concludes with the erection of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, which was constructed according to the pattern God gave to Moses. The instructions on how Israel was to use the Tabernacle are in the book of Leviticus.

God laid down His requirements for their fellowship with Him and the provisions for their access to Him. God took their calendar, and set times when and how their observances were to be kept. The word Feast means "set time", hence the times that God set on their calendar were times with a meaning.

The meaning of each feast pointed to the Messiah, as the Messiah would fulfill each feast, thus pointing out to them, from their understanding of the feasts, who the Messiah was when he arrived on the stage of history.

I want to introduce a new word into the teaching at this point. The word is LANDSCAPE. I use it in the terms of a painting that is depicting scenery. In a landscape painting, there may be mountains in one part, and a lake and trees and boat on the lake, etc, etc. All of these individual scenes go to make up the whole landscape.

We can view Christianity as a landscape, with many scenes making up the whole canvas. One of the scenes in the landscape of Christianity is this teaching of Paul's to the Colossians about the meaning of the feasts

of the Jews becoming promises of God that are cast as shadows into the future, yet to be fulfilled for the Church.

If we want to know what's in store for the church from the Messiah, we have to look to the meaning of the feasts that have been fulfilled by the Messiah at His first coming, because those promises of the feasts were fulfilled by Jesus for the Jews as a sign of His coming. They were also cast as shadows into the future of the Church, so the Church can expect to cross their path someday, and when they do, they will find Jesus casting that shadow, and it will speak for itself for what it is saying.

Because the Jews rejected Jesus as the Messiah, God reveals the mystery of the Church to Paul, and he teaches that the feast of the Jews are but shadows of things to come for the Church, and the substance that is casting those shadows is Jesus.

Now, Jesus, who is The Messiah appears in our landscape, and when we look closely at Him, we find He has an entire landscape that makes up his scene, which lends to the landscape we are painting of Christianity. We will study the Messiah landscape later in this series. I just wanted to introduce it here, for comment later.

So right here, the Jewish landscape becomes part of the landscape of Christianity by way of Paul's teaching that the feasts of the Jews as shadows of things to come, but the substance is Christ, who Jesus was.

Hence, as Christians, we have to look to the meaning of the fulfilled feasts to see and understand what it is that is promised to us, so we can claim it.

Very few preachers and teachers of faith associate this teaching of Paul's to the Colossians with how it points directly at the Rapture, but that doesn't change the fact that the teaching is there, already written. Don't think for a minute that God would reveal the Church to Paul, without telling him all about it, beginning to end. Only the timing was hidden in Daniel, not the events. That is evident in his letters to the Thessalonians and the Corinthians. Paul said, the feast of the Jews are

but shadows of things to come for the Church. When we study the Rapture in this context, we gain new insight. As we examine Paul's teaching to the Colossians with respect to the inherent meaning in each of the feasts of the Jews that were fulfilled by the coming of the Messiah, we can see clearly down the road that God paved with these words to lead us to the full understanding and truthfulness of the Rapture.

As I said last week, we're Christians, we don't know anything about the Feasts of the Jews. That might be true, but that doesn't mean that they don't exist for us. Because Paul told us that whatever the message they brought to the Jews, is now ours to claim as Christians!

THE FEASTS OF THE JEWS

OK then, what are they? Remember, the word Feast means "Set Time".

The Jews kept holy, the weekly Sabbath, a time set on the last day of each week, Saturday, and seven other Feasts, during their calendar year.

First comes the weekly Sabbath, which the Jews were to keep holy. It was a day that meant rest for the Jews, and as with all the feasts, it had it's beginning and ending at sundown.

The Feasts were the times that God set, on their calendar, for them to interact with Him, and He with them. Their Feasts, or set times began in the Spring with Passover and finished in the fall with Tabernacles.

The first of the Spring Feasts, and the most important, was held in the first month of their spiritual year and was called Passover, which was to be celebrated each year, forever, in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt.

Then came Unleavened Bread which celebrated their affliction under bondage in Egypt, but celebrated with joy, as it was always to be linked as part of their deliverance, because they had to leave in such haste that

they didn't have time to leaven their bread.

Then the Feast of First fruits which celebrated the promise of the full harvest yet to come. Truly a Feast of promise, and required an offering of an omer of barley flour, made from sheaves of barley from an unattended field, which had never been watered or fertilized.

Finally, occurring fifty days after First Fruits, the feast of Pentecost is celebrated as the final day of First Fruits. This last day was a time for a new offerings of a loaf of bread, the completed product of the harvest.

Then the fall Feasts:

Trumpets - The Harvest Time/New beginning

Atonement - The Affliction of their souls, and finally,

Tabernacles - A time of thankfulness, gladness and expectancy.

Those are the feasts of the Jews, of which only the first four Spring Feasts were fulfilled for the Jews by the coming of the Messiah, and are the ones that became the promises that God makes to the Church.

Remember, Paul demands this examination because he preached to the Colossians that the Feasts of the Jews were . . ."shadows of things to come . . . but the substance was of Christ"

As Bible students, we must ask what Paul meant by that and follow that trail wherever it leads until we've got the answer. And when we do, we find the world of the Rapture in scripture opens up to us, and the mystery is revealed by time, just as God said it would be. The words are already there, and they have been since the day Paul wrote them. There is nothing new to believe, only to understand why you believe what you believe about the Rapture.

I feel that having this insight into Paul's teaching on the Rapture is the highlight of my life, and I pray that you find it to be the same.

CHRISTIAN CLAIMS ON THE JEWISH FEASTS

OK, so what exactly are we claiming?

On the Sabbath we are claiming the REST of the Sabbath. Christians keep holy the Sabbath by making it a verb. It becomes Sabbathing, or resting in the work that Christ did, because there is nothing that we can do on our own to attain what Christ already attained for us. The promise to the Church is that we can surely rest in what He did because it's the only way to Salvation. The Jews rejected Jesus, so they are still under the Law, so they must continue to keep holy the Sabbath by actually resting from all work on that day. Jesus fulfills the Sabbath to show the Jews who He was, and it winds up getting promised to us. Claim it!

On Passover we are claiming the SALVATION of Christ work, but by Faith, not works like the Jews who were required to show their obedience by their performance. Yet under the Law, the Jews have no Temple in which to perform the rituals of Passover, and are therefore restrained until He returns again to deal with them in the time when they do have a Temple. Jesus is the Lamb whose blood saved the world. It was for the Jews, but it got passed to us. Claim it!

On Unleavened Bread we are claiming Christ's victory over CORRUPTION AND EVIL, symbolized by the leaven. Jesus overcame corruption and evil, but not for Himself, but for the sins of others. He is our covering. The Jews said no, so we get it for faith. Claim it!

On First Fruits we are claiming the promise of the FULL HARVEST YET TO COME, as Jesus fulfills this feast by resurrecting on this day, along with many Saints that arose who were seen by many in Jerusalem, casting a shadow of both the return of Jesus and the resurrection of the saints. This is our promise now! Claim it!

And finally on Pentecost, we have nothing to claim, as we are already in heaven. God is now making a NEW OFFERING of Jesus as the Messiah, as He was first offered as the Messiah to the Jews on that Pentecost of Acts 2. But having come to His own, His own received Him not, requiring that He come again to them. At this feast, Jesus was offered to them, and on this feast He will continue to be offered to them once again, just as if time had stopped and suddenly began again, in the same place, under the same set of circumstances but with a modern cast.

Pentecost becomes the pivotal feast where the shadow cast was of Jesus being offered in Jerusalem to the Jews as their Messiah for the first time by the newly anointed Apostles. Just as the last two witnesses will be christened on that day by the Holy Spirit at the appointed time to continue God's march to the conclusion of His covenant with the Jews and the rest of the house of Israel.

Jesus could only have been offered as the new offering, symbolized by the loaf of bread that was offered in the Temple as a sign of completion, because He Himself had been completed as Messiah just 10 days before at His ascension by returning back to His divinity. But, it's what scripture reveals that happened on Ascension Day that really blew my mind. We'll let that dangle there til we catch up to it later.

What does all this mean, and what's it got to do with the Rapture? Let's discuss that next class.

Go on to Class III of the Rapture Series

[Old man Moses had a feast - part 2](#)



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CLASS III

OLD MAN MOSES HAD A FEAST

E – I – E – I – 0

Part 2

REVIEW

Last Sunday we saw how God used the Tabernacle in the wilderness as the instrument wherein the specified set times rituals (Feasts) for His interaction with them would take place. The significance of the Tabernacle with respect to what we are studying is crucial to understanding the manner in which God has interwoven all these parts to interact with each other. Each piece of the total landscape we are painting is a landscape in itself.

Recall the study I did on the [Tabernacle in the Wilderness](#), and you will remember that the Tabernacle is the landscape of Christianity and the

Messiah, who is within the landscape of Jonah, the only sign of the Messiah to be given.

Stand back and look at the landscape of Jonah and you will see the landscape painted by the Tabernacle develops it's theme. The best part is, when you look closely at the fabric of God's tapestry, you won't find a thread out of place. That's one of the unique features of God's word; it's the truth. It rings out like a Church bell rung in the stillness of early morning. There is no mistaking it if you live in the neighborhood.

I'm saddened by the fact that "religion" has complicated God by including Him in their traditions and rituals. If God is Truth, and truth is rooted in simplicity, then God is simple. There is nothing complicated about Him. Why do you think that the meek are going to inherit the earth?

Today we have to narrow our focus from the whole landscape down to a closer examination of the "sub-landscapes", if you will, that best illustrate how and why there are shadows cast into the future by the Jewish feasts, and how that fits into the landscape of the Rapture.

JONAH'S LANDSCAPE

Just as the Tabernacle painted the picture of Christianity by its construction, and its rituals symbolized the characteristics of the Messiah and His purpose, the picture painted in Jonah's landscape illuminates the characteristics of the Messiah within Christianity so well, that Jonah was used as the only sign of the Messiah. Jonah wrote this book in 760 BC. So, God characterized the Messiah to the Jews as early as then.

Being a sign indicates that the matter of Jonah depicts the Messiah and when we sketch out the story line we find a man who willingly gave his life to save others resurrected after three days in the bowels of a great fish at the bottom of the ocean, where he was surely dead, sent to warn the people to repent or suffer the wrath of God. Because of this warning, the people repented and God kept His word and spared them.

That is the only sign given of the Messiah.

What that says to me is that the Messiah will be a man sent by God to save the world from His destruction by willingly giving his life. He will be resurrected by God after three days and nights and the event of his resurrection will move the people to repent.

But, it didn't happen that way yet! "He came to his own and his own received him not" – "I will send my son, they will treat him differently", no they didn't. Those self-righteous religious leaders murdered him also. Wow! What was God going to do now? Those stiff necked Jews went their own way again!

Does this mean that all of God's salvation plans went awry and that we can't use the sign of Jonah as the sign of the Messiah? No, only that plan "B" had to be put into effect, and at the completion of it, plan "A" would be repeated.

How do I know that to be true? Because the Messiah was to die only once, and He did that already. Not to mention that He was raised from the dead after three days, and ascended back to His divinity in heaven, forty days after that. There is no question that Jesus came and fulfilled the promise of salvation.

The problem is that it wasn't acceptable to the chosen people who were under a living covenant. So, plan "A" had to be set aside, and plan "B" temporarily used in it's place.

Plan "B", which was a mystery, hidden in the mind of God, called for incorporating all of the past history of promise to the Jews, established in the ritual of their set times (feasts) for they're work of compliance, in a second covenant made with the followers of the Messiah for faith alone.

The new covenant would offer Heaven as the reward and faith as the vehicle to get there. The fulfillment would come at a time when the elements of the Prophecy of Daniel were seen occurring on the stage of

history.

First the Dead in Christ will be raised, with many being seen in Jerusalem as they once were, speaking of the miracle of their resurrection and the closing of the Church age for forty days, ending with the fulfillment of the promise of the full harvest, what we call the Rapture. But, that part of the landscape is contained in the landscape of the Messiah, which is contained within the picture being painted by Jonah.

Now, with that explanation of the landscape of Jonah, I hope the teaching of Paul to the Colossians about the feasts of the Jews becoming promises of God to the Church cast as shadows into the future, is a little easier to understand.

This understanding is the foundation so to speak, that we will build upon to demonstrate that God did leave a clear picture of the end of the Christian covenant in scripture as far back as the Tabernacle in the wilderness. And, because it was a mystery, just as the Church was a mystery, this understanding could not be seen until it was revealed by God, who did so by locking the timing up in the prophecy of Daniel which would remain locked up until its time came to pass on the stage of history.

At that time, anyone seeking the truth of the end times would find it. I did, and I am doing exactly as instructed by Paul in the scripture written to the Church in his time, to be heeded in the day when Daniel is seen in history.

If you are among those who accept Jesus as Messiah, then you are a member of the Body. And if we are in the days of Daniel's prophecy come to pass, then Paul's words should be the foremost thing on your mind, because your redemption is nigh you! What else is there to think about? What do Christians live for except to go to heaven?

I find this to be the most exciting time of my life, and only hope with as old as I am already, that I live long enough to be here for the Rapture.

Even though either way, I will be alive at the time.

With Paul's teaching of Joy and gladness for Christians at this time, I find it very disconcerting that the Church is teaching fire and brimstone, doom and gloom and being left behind as its theme for the end times.

This only shows me that someone is very misinformed! But not you lucky people! God picked you to know the truth, because you are the people of the day and of the light. You are the ones that are being awakened to the truth of the matter. You are they that are called upon by God to carry this message to the Church.

I think that's it high time that you began to understand that and act accordingly. Don't forget, FAITH is an ACTION based upon belief, sustained by confidence. Understanding your position in God's plan is not enough; you are obligated to God, by scripture to warn those who are asleep. Now, you can do that on your own, or join in and help with us and through us. We need help in every way. Prayers to keep the devil behind us and a clear path to the front, evangelism of the teaching to your friends, neighbors and fellow Church members, and finally money to sustain us in our needs during this struggle. If you never realized what giving was for before, get a hold on it now. Giving was made part of the trip for just such a time as this.

Next we have to examine the landscape of the Messiah and how Substance and Shadow are used to march all of the promises to the Jews into the future of the Church. But, that's next class.

Go on to Class IV of the Rapture Series
[Substance and shadow](#)

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RAPTURE SERIES

CLASS IV

SUBSTANCE AND SHADOW

REVIEW

Last Sunday we stood back to see how [Jonah's landscape](#) developed the theme of Christianity as painted by the [Tabernacle in the Wilderness](#), which led us to see that the Messiah's landscape is contained within Jonah

Once again we have to narrow our focus from the whole landscape down to a closer examination of the “sub-landscape”, if you will, of the Messiah, and how His landscape is reflected in the Feasts of the Jews, which, as Paul teaches, cast shadows that are to be seen in the future landscape of the Rapture, coming when the events locked up in Daniel's prophecy are seen in time.

Paul's teaching on the Rapture is part of Paul's teaching about the

Church to the first converts. It's already recorded in scripture. There is nothing new. The Rapture isn't the issue as it was part and parcel to the revelation of the Church. The mystery is the timing. The timing is kept sealed in the word of Daniel which will be seen only in it's time.

The understanding of how God projects His intention for the Jews, into the landscape of the Church, which was grafted onto the root of their tree, Abraham, to receive the full benefit of His grace, in their place, as a reward for their trust in His word, is what it is to understand **Substance and Shadow**.

MESSIAH'S LANDSCAPE

Just as the Tabernacle painted the picture of Christianity by its construction, and its rituals symbolized the characteristics of the Messiah and His purpose, the picture painted in Jonah's landscape illuminates the characteristics of the Messiah within Christianity so well, that Jonah was used as the only sign of the Messiah. Jonah wrote this book in 760 BC. So, God characterized the Messiah and His purpose to the Jews as early as then.

The Messiah willingly gave up his life to save the world from spiritual death; God resurrected Him after three days in the grave, where he was surely dead; He sent the warning to repent or suffer the wrath of God and then He ascended back to his divinity.

Jesus was the Messiah the Jews awaited, but they rejected Him, and so the Body of Christ on earth is revealed to, and preached by Paul to the Gentiles, as the recipient of the promises left unclaimed by the promised. Now, that's who the Christians are. Christians get the promises made to the Jews that are fulfilled in Christ by His coming, prophesied in the old testament by the feasts of the Jews, and His leaving and coming again, as recorded in the Gospels and the New Testament. Reminiscent of the Son coming out of the Father, and in the world of Daniel's Prophecy of the substitute deliverer Antichrist, (the toes) growing out of the feet.

The bridge between the Old and New Testaments is the Messiah. The promises were made in the Old Testament, and because of the rejection, they are delivered in the New Testament. Paul teaches us that the Feasts of the Jews contain the promises, and that the promises are projected by Christ into the Church's landscape as a path to understanding how the end of the Age will occur. Follow that path and you arrive at the understanding. Once again God demonstrates that He is not the author of confusion, as we find His word rooted in simplicity.

In our second class we defined the meaning of the feasts, and what promise each signified. Jesus fulfilled the Sabbath, and He becomes our rest, as we rest in His work of salvation. Jesus was the Passover lamb as He dies on Passover to save mankind from spiritual death by His sacrifice. Jesus fulfills unleavened bread, and is our covering as He conquers corruption and evil, but not for himself. Jesus rises on First fruits fulfilling it as the promise of the full harvest yet to come, and He's offered on Pentecost as Messiah to the Jews as the new offering of the completed works.

The feast of First Fruits lasts for 50 days, and ends on Pentecost. It opens with an omer of barley flour offered as the promise of the full harvest yet to come, and ends with the offering of a loaf of bread, the completed product of their work.

Each of the Spring feasts fulfilled by Jesus and their significance is passed along to the Christians of today in shadow form because the Jews as a nation chose not to accept Jesus as the Messiah, so they continue to await his coming to this day.

Now the shadows of the feast lead us only to Pentecost. There are three fall feasts yet remaining to be fulfilled by Jesus. The Feast of Harvests, Atonement and Tabernacles. These feasts are reserved for His second coming because there would have been no need for them had the Jews accepted the sacrifice at the time.

But, because they rejected, the direction of the fulfilled feasts was

turned into promises of God to the Church. Those promises end with the completion of the Churches covenant. The Churches covenant ends at the Rapture, and there is no Jewish feast that celebrates the rapture. So, naturally there is no shadow cast for the Rapture from the feasts.

But, remember, that the substance casting the shadow is Jesus, and Jesus is the Messiah, so the Messiah landscape has more to it than just the feasts. I can say that because the Messiah landscape comes out of Jonah's landscape, which requires a 40-day period of warning that ends with being saved from God's destruction.

Now, the Feast of First Fruits, the promise of the full harvest yet to come was a feast that was held on the first day of the week, Sunday, after the first Sabbath, Saturday, after the first day of Passover, which could be on any day of the week, because it was always on the 14th day of the month. Keep in mind that the Jewish day begins and ends at sundown. So the beginning of the first day of the week, Sunday, begins at sundown on Saturday night. In Hebrew, the word for dusk and dawn is the same, as they occur at the same moment.

Now, in order for Jesus to remain in the tomb ("belly of the whale") for three days and three nights, one must count backwards from Sunday at dawn (Jewish time – sundown for three days to see what day Jesus was buried. Well, sundown on Wednesday until sundown on Thursday is day 1. Thursday at sundown to Friday at sundown is day 2, and Friday sundown to Saturday sundown, dawn Sunday, is day 3.

As a proof of Jesus' Messiahship I offer the fact that this select happening can never happen again in history. Shortly after Jesus' time, the celebration day for the feast of First Fruits was changed to the day following the first day of Passover. Never again can anyone be buried on Passover, remain in the grave for 3 days and nights and raise on First Fruits. That means that in the year that Jesus died, Passover would have fallen on Wednesday, which saw it's dawn hours at sundown on Tuesday. Now, the Passover meal was to be eaten between the evenings, that is between Tuesday at dawn till Wednesday at sundown. He ate the Passover meal on Tuesday night, and was in His grave by

Wednesday sundown.

But, on that day of First Fruits after Jesus rose, other saints came out of the graves that opened and went into the Holy City (Jerusalem) and were reported by Matthew (27:51-52) that many rose and were seen by many in Jerusalem.

Jesus is the First Fruits of resurrection and the many saints that followed Him out of their graves were the promise of the full harvest yet to come. Now Matthew doesn't mention any more about these risen saints, but intuitive reasoning tells us what they are doing, and scripture tells us what happens to them.

We know that Jesus was going about visiting all of His friends and telling them of the resurrection and its meaning. I'm sure that those other folks were doing the same thing. I think they account for most of the 3,000 who came to Jesus at Peter's first alter call on Pentecost just a few weeks after those same God-fearing citizens were screaming for His blood, and calling for the release of the criminal Barabas.

These same folks are identified by Isaiah in chapter 61. He said that Jesus came to, among other things, set the captives free. Psalm 68:18 says that when He ascended on high, He took them captive to Himself which is confirmed at Ephesians 4:8.

Therein lies a picture of the Rapture. Forty days after they rise on First Fruits, fulfilling the 40-day warning period of Jonah, Jesus ascends back to heaven taking with Him the captives that He set free by His death and resurrection. And, when Jesus ascends back to heaven, His mission as the Messiah is complete. Ten days later on Pentecost, Peter offers Him as Messiah to the Jews for the very first time, and now all the Spring feasts are fulfilled by Jesus.

When these set times were promised to the Church, the shadows are cast and their meaning to the Church in the end time is illuminated because, at long last the time has come.

The set time for the Rapture to occur in fulfillment of that shadow cast by Jesus Himself when He ascended to heaven taking with him the promise of the full harvest yet to come is 40 days after First Fruits. That scene was the promise fulfilled. When He returns for us on that same Ascension Day, it will be to fulfill that promise and reap the full harvest in the twinkling of an eye, of those living at the time, and those that were made alive that had slept in Him.

Now, we still have some accounting to do for elements in Jonah's landscape, but that's next class.

Go on to Class V of the Rapture Series

[God Set the time Paul sets us straight](#)

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RAPTURE SERIES

CLASS V

GOD SET THE TIME PAUL SETS US STRAIGHT

REVIEW

Last Sunday we stood back to see how the Messiah's landscape, contained within Jonah, develops with pinpoint accuracy how He bridged the span of time between the Old and New Testament.

To understand how God projects His intention for the Jews, into the landscape of the Church, which was grafted onto the root of their tree, Abraham, to receive the full benefit of His grace, in their place, as a reward for their trust in His word, is what it is to understand **Substance and Shadow**

Today, we must narrow our focus to the whole landscape of the Messiah, and how its reflection in the Feast of First Fruits reveals the

landscape of the birth and completion of Christianity at the Rapture.

Paul's teaching on the Rapture is part of Paul's teaching about the Church to the first converts. It's already recorded in scripture. There is nothing new. It's part and parcel to the revelation of the Church. That's easily seen as we reach the point of grasping the understanding that Paul is conveying to us in his teachings.

GOD SET THE TIMES

As I have previously mentioned, when you look at a picture, it's a complete scene, but a closer examination reveals that the whole scene being viewed is made up of other scenes that blend together and creates the picture.

By now it should be second nature to you to close your eyes and visualize the landscapes that make up the picture of Christianity that we are presently dissecting. One of the scenes in Christianity's landscape is the Rapture landscape.

Close your eyes and visualize this: we are in the bottom right corner of the picture of Christianity, just where the entire picture ends. As we examine this area, we find ourselves in the landscape of Jonah. Remember, Jonah paints a picture of the Messiah, and when we examine the scenes that develop His landscape, we come to the scene that corresponds to the feast of First Fruits.

As we have studied, the feast of First Fruits is God's set time of the promise of the full harvest yet to come. We have further studied that these set times of the Jews were cast as shadows of things to come for the Church, and that the substance casting the shadow is Jesus.

We learned from its landscape that the set time of First Fruits lasted fifty days and ended on Pentecost. The events concerning Jesus the Messiah that occur during that set time of fifty days are the shadows

that are cast into the future of the Church.

We learned that the offering in the Temple on First Fruits began with an omer of barley flour, taken from an uncultivated field, and offered as a promise of the full harvest yet to come, and ended on Pentecost with an offering of the completed product of their labor, a loaf of bread.

We saw how Jesus rose on that day, fulfilling the set time for His resurrection, and became the promise of the full harvest yet to come. Also, on that same day, graves were opened and many saints came out of them and were seen by many in Jerusalem.

Resurrected saints, many of them, seen by many in Jerusalem!

Now we are into the landscape that develops the risen saints, and who they are in the Churches future. Remember now, we are in the picture of Christianity, swimming around down here in Jonahs landscape, right at the bottom corner of the picture, just before it ends. This scene of risen saints is part of the set time of First Fruits, so its shadow is cast into the Churches future along with everything else in the Jonah landscape.

Jesus fulfills the set time for His resurrection, becoming the first fruit of resurrection and after Him, comes the many saints, resurrected to their glory by His sacrifice. Captives of the original sin, set free from their bondage by the blood shed of an innocent, who was God, and taken as captives to Himself when He returned to His throne on that Ascension day.

That event had a set time. The time was set at 40 days in the Landscape of Jonah, and fulfilled by the Messiah, so is part of His landscape. The Messiah landscape includes everything depicted in Jonah. Jonah warned to repent or suffer impending destruction by God in 40 days. So, this 40-day period was a period of warning.

Scripture tells us what Jesus was doing during His last 40 days on earth, but it doesnt mention what the freed saints, who were seen by many in

Jerusalem, were doing. Jesus was visiting His friend and showing them that He was alive, and telling them about His leaving, and that He would come again. These resurrected saints knew that. They heard it straight from Jesus. The many who saw them in Jerusalem were surely being told their story, which ends with following Jesus, which is a warning to repent, as repent means to turn away from and turn toward. Following Jesus, out of the grave, into the Kingdom saved from destruction!

No wonder that just 10 days later, on Pentecost, when Peter offers Jesus as the Messiah, 3,000 people rushed to his call on the very first day of his Ministry. Obviously they heeded the warning to accept Jesus as Messiah and be saved from destruction and the reward of a heavenly Kingdom on earth.

The symbolism holds up because this is not the Church being saved. The Church was still a mystery, hidden in the mind of God, not yet revealed at the time of Acts 2.

This is an offer to the Jews to be saved from destruction, (which comes later to all Jews who do not accept Him, except for those for whom God has already provided for in their scripture), and to receive the Kingdom on earth, as promised in their covenant.

Not until the Church is revealed through Paul, does the reward change from salvation and Kingdom on earth, to salvation and Heaven with rulership in the Kingdom on earth.

But there was only one sacrifice made. It was made to save the world through the Jews, but that prize is awarded to a substitute because even though He came to His own, His own received Him not. That s why the Church was revealed in its time, because the need arose.

Put simply, Christ said, here I am , the Jews said, no you re not , and the Church said, I believe . So, the believer gets the prize, the Jews get the Kingdom on earth and Christ rules the Kingdom with the prize winners for a thousand years.

The significance of the dead that rose after Christ is that they were the token that fulfilled the promise of the full harvest yet to come by the harvester and the part they play in the shadow that is reflected in the future for the Church is taught by Paul to the Thessalonians. The dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive shall be caught up together with them in the air to be with the Lord forever.

Many of the dead in Christ of the end time are going to rise first. Before hand, just like they did when they cast this shadow. And when they do, they will be doing the same thing as their counterparts did after they rose. For 40 days they will be seen in Jerusalem, warning the Jews to repent and follow Jesus, the true Messiah before it s too late and God s wrath falls on them.

Paul taught Christians to be watching at the end time in order to see the elements of the prophecies occurring, so we can alert the others to what we see. But, this is the Jews show that s being played out on the stage, so we must be watching them if we are to see this warning sign that the close of the Church Age is only 40 days away.

The 40 days warning of the Jonah landscape, and the return to save from destruction in the Messiah landscape are the only components left unfulfilled. Those two elements complete the landscape of the Rapture.

Next is the Offering landscape at the close of the set time of First Fruits, the completed product of their labor that is offered on Pentecost, the fiftieth and final day of First Fruits.

Acts 2 records the events of the Pentecost that followed the Ascension of Jesus. And, as the story line goes, the Apostles were gathered and were anointed by the Holy Spirit, who transformed them into the bravest of soldiers. And on that day, as Peter spoke, his words being heard by every dialect, moved 3,000 to accept Jesus as the Messiah. Whereas on the first day under the law, 3,000 were slain for breaking the law by worshipping and idol, but on this day, covered by the blood of the lamb, 3,000 were saved.

Pentecost is cast as a shadow into its future within the First Fruits landscape. Jesus fulfills this because He is the new offering of the work of His labor. It was offered to and accepted by the Gentile substitutes, only after the Jews had rejected the work. Under Paul's tutelage the Gentiles began growing the body of new creatures in Christ, which continues into the present day. Whereas the Jews display the characteristics and history of a people who have been on hold, while the prophecies concerning their fate continue to play out in time.

On Pentecost, with every Spring feast (set time) fulfilled by Jesus, the way is clear for God to resume the Abraham covenant and fulfill their destiny.

The object here is to see that since the offering of the completed Messiah was made on Pentecost of Acts 2 for the Jews, and since they later rejected Jesus as the Messiah, God opts to place them on hold while he deals with the new covenant people, the Church. This requires that Jesus come again to complete His role for the Jews.

Pentecost becomes the pivotal feast, because the shadow cast into the future by the Pentecost of Acts 2 includes not only the new offering of Jesus, but also the anointing of the witnesses who carried the message of the Messiah to the Jews.

When Jesus takes His freed captives home with Him on Ascension Day, He casts the shadow himself of the Rapture, coming after 40 days of warning about the coming destruction.

Then on Pentecost, the witnesses are anointed and the march to convert the Jews was under way.

Now, in the future, the shadow cast from the Pentecost of Acts 2 requires that witnesses be anointed and begin offering Jesus as the Messiah to the Jews. Scripture tells us that God will anoint His last two witnesses to be the preachers of righteousness to the Jews.

When they begin to preach on Pentecost, it will be to the Jews, because

the Church is gone! They will be pointing at the Rapture to demonstrate to the Jews that again they were warned, and again they were stiff-necked and so again they missed Him. They will also be pointing out that the Peacemaker that the Jews have just proclaimed as their deliverer is a false deliverer. Also, they will continue preaching the gospel of the Kingdom on earth, so that now the end can come to pass, as proclaimed by Jesus to the Jews in Matthew 24:14

The Church has to be gone. That message is not to substitute Gentile believer that received the promises of the feast that were meant for the Jews. It s for the Jews again, because their covenant is still ongoing, and their end time prophecies are about to be fulfilled. The end time prophecy for the Church was already fulfilled on Ascension Day!

PAUL SETS US STRAIGHT

At the end of the 40 days warning, something unexpected happens to the freed captives that had been raised. They are taken to Heaven, captive now to Jesus, so instead of receiving the Kingdom on earth as a reward, as promised in their covenant, they will now have a place in the rulership of the Kingdom under Jesus when He returns along with the full harvest of His labor that he had previously claimed on Ascension day.

Jesus, The Messiah, ascended with His captives 40 days after they arose on the feast of First Fruits. That s part of the Messiah landscape that is included in that feast which is casting its shadow into the future of the Church to set the time precisely. And, that s a picture of the Rapture and the time for its occurrence. And it s landscape shows that it came at the end of a 40-day warning period to the Jews.

Now, Paul spoke of the Rapture in a variety of terms. He called it putting on immortality, a catching a way, a gathering together unto Him, and being taken out of the way. Remember these were **HIS** descriptions

of an event that he was completely aware of, except for its timing. He was telling the story just as God had told it to him. He didn't know anything else, so he couldn't have given any misinformation. And, he told them that when this event came to pass, it would happen in the twinkling of an eye.

So, don't let anyone ever convince you differently. Paul taught on the Rapture as an event. Paul taught on the Rapture's timing, and Paul taught on the significance of the Rapture to the end times. That's a whole lot of teaching about something that some Christians think doesn't even exist!

Well, if it doesn't exist, why did Paul tell us to follow a trail that led us to know exactly what day it will occur? And don't forget, along that trail we also found the warning period of the dead in Christ rising on First Fruits, and the anointing of the last two witnesses on Pentecost.

No, it exists for sure and we know the day, but not the date of its occurrence. For that we must continue to Watch the Jews. That's what Paul meant when He told us to Watch!

DANIEL IS THE ALARM

Daniel's prophecy holds the key to the timing of the end times, and thus to the Rapture, because it was the only prophecy that God sealed tight until the time of the end. That was done specifically to alert those living in that day that the final leg of the human journey had begun.

In the study of Daniel we learned that the Mideast was the location of the final action and the events leading up to peace with temple mount rights was the key.

We learned that the timing for peace has to be close enough so it can happen by Pentecost, because the new offering of the Messiah, the completion of God's work, to the Jews (which went to the Church)

happens on Pentecost. Thus, the resumption of the Abraham covenant, which has been held in limbo these many years, cannot begin again until the Messiah completes His covenant with the Church on Ascension Day, opening the way for His return, with them, to end the time of trouble and usher in the Reign of Christ on Earth.

THE RAPTURE – THE FEASTS THE END TIMES THE JEWS

The whole landscape of the end of the Church Age, and the beginning of the Tribulation is contained in the shadow cast by the feast of First Fruits. First Fruits is the fifty-day feast that ends on Pentecost. Christianity's birth and completion (not death, as we are all alive when we go to heaven) are typified in this 50-day period.

The theme goes from the promise of the full harvest yet to come, to the new offering of the completed work of Jesus. In Christian terms, the theme includes the Resurrection, the warning, the Rapture and the offering. That offering of the good news of the coming of the Messiah was made to the Jews! The Church was born at a later time under a different circumstance, and promised heaven and rulership in the Kingdom on earth if they accepted the offering.

We know that He s coming again, and that the theme of it is to complete the Abraham covenant. Scripture says the offering will be made again to the Jews. And because He s offered again, proves that the Church age is over. The Church already accepted Jesus as Christ, reoffering Him to us would be meaningless. And since Jesus atoned for sin, and we accepted that, the fulfillment of the feast of Atonement by Jesus, to include the Church would be meaningless also. And, when Jesus returns to earth to take command of His Kingdom, we will be with Him as part of the cadre, as He fulfills the feast of Tabernacles, not for us, but for the Jews!

With that understanding, how could anyone conceive of a mid, or post

Tribulation rapture, or worse yet, no rapture at all.

The scriptural evidence is overwhelming! Not one new word has been added to scripture! It's already nigh you; all you have to do is speak it forth! There is nothing new to believe, only an unexplored trail through scripture to experience.

There was great meaning and power in Paul's words to the Colossians. We've explored the trail left by those words through the Old and New Testaments together, and discovered the landscape of the Rapture built into the landscape of the Messiah, depicted in the landscape of His only sign, Jonah, all wrapped up in the feast of the Jews, fulfilled by the Messiah, who bridges the span of time from then until now. (This is very much like the Television show on the Discovery Channel called, *Connections* .) And, all of these individual parts fit neatly onto the landscape of Christianity, which is in the picture painted by the Tabernacle in the wilderness, which was decidedly Jewish.

And, all of this is very easy to understand. It's extremely clear how God shows you the timing for everything demonstrated by His set times (the feasts, remember, feast means set time), for the Jews, that He turned into promises to the new creatures in Christ, by grafting them onto the tree of the root of Abraham, under a new and separate covenant.

Why does it take hundreds of denominations of Christianity to understand that? It doesn't! It only takes one! And, Paul only taught one; the one that He got out of the mouth of God. That meant it had to be **SIMPLE!** That meant it had to be **UNCOMPLICATED!** That meant it had to be **self contained!** Because God is not the author of confusion, and His entire plan was laid down before the foundation of the world. Once started, it continues along a course through time until it reaches its end.

RELIGION and its **TRADITIONS** are what are making void the word of God and confusing things to the point that hundreds of denominations are adding to the confusion that we have come to expect from man!

It s time for Christianity to look to its roots for the answer. Especially since we are even at the door of the end of time, as Christians will know it. Paul is who God trusted with this word. Turn to Paul s teaching for the **TRUE** message, spoken then to the new converts, but realized now, in those of us who made it into the end times .

Don t let **RELIGION** and its **TRADITIONS** blind you!

I hope that this teaching has helped to de-mystify what is our fondest hope in Christianity. Our hope is not a myth! It s scriptural and clearly defined for those who will take the time to search it out, as you have, by studying along with me and discovering the “connections” God used to assure you of your faith in His word.

Go on to Class VI
[Giving as an Object of Faith](#)

CHN VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS MINISTRIES **BIBLE SCHOOL**

RAPTURE SERIES

CLASS VI

Bonus Teaching

GIVING AS AN OBJECT OF FAITH

INTRODUCTION

CHN Ministries has been on the Internet teaching the message about end time awareness and the Rapture of the Church for over 5 years. At the end of my messages I tell you that I believe in the Biblical principal of giving, and that when you give to keep the word of this ministry going out to the world, that you are generous, but most importantly that you give hilariously.

I have always thought that when I remind you of that, that you knew what I meant by it. Well, from requests that I have had from many of the Watchers, asking for a clear explanation of my meaning, here is a teaching on giving that explains my belief on the matter.

I pray you understand it's meaning, and learn the joy that God intended for us to have in giving, as I did when I first became aware of it's meaning over 21years ago.

THE PAST, THE FUTURE AND THE "NOW"

The message that Paul proclaimed in 1 Corinthians 15 was that Christ rose from the dead; and that He, living again, by being the firstfruits of a harvest of life eternal, gives us hope in the promise that we shall follow Him into eternal life. Paul ends that chapter with one of the most repeated passages of Scripture.

"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Corinthians 15:54-55

In funeral home after funeral home, at graveyard after graveyard, for generation after generation, preachers have read that passage. And it ought to be read. There is no grater truth! It is the basis of the Christian faith.

If there is no resurrection, our faith is vain and the church is a false witness of God. If there is no resurrection, our hope that we, too, will come out of the grave is also gone; as is the hope of a miracle such as "the change in the twinkling of an eye" which is also referred to in 1 Corinthians 15. But, if you have that faith, you'll get excited about the Resurrection:

I'm sure I don't have to say that Paul didn't put in the little chapter and verse divisions that we see in the Bible. Those are the translators' work. Paul just wrote a letter; and he hardly sucked in his breath from that grand theme of the Resurrection, to his words which open the next

chapter.

“Now concerning the collection for the saints . . . “ 1 Corinthians 16:1

Paul dealt with the Past: Christ arose; the future; we too shall rise. Now, isn't that basic Christianity? Christianity starts with this miracle concept.

How are you ever going to get the approval of the world on those first two subjects? Do you really think that the nightly newscasters are going to go along with those two premises?

If they won't go along with those two premises, which are basic, basic Christianity, what do you think they will do with the other one, the present: “Now, concerning the collections for the saints.”

NEED IS NOT THE BASIS FOR CHRISTIAN GIVING

Present religious leaders are taking the attitude, “Well, maybe, just maybe, if we'd leave this present ‘collection’ activity out, the world might approve us.”

The world loves money; God loves “hilarious givers”.

Even though the world thinks we're either stupid or phony to proclaim such things of the past or the future, it doesn't immediately affect them. But they are enraged by what we do in the Present because the Prince of this world doesn't want Christians to prove the genuineness of their faith in ways that would cause them to give *money* which this world loves so much. And the devil uses the world to discourage and even prevent the practical expression of true Christianity's “hilarious giving” that God has declared that He loves so much.

But for both the past and the future, we're neither stupid nor phony. Jesus came out of that grave. Someday, so will we. If it happens soon, the Nightly News will have a program entitled, “Where did they go?”

On that program they and the “left behind” will be trying to explain where we went.

This is the basis of faith by which we are saved: He is risen. The hope by which we claim eternity is we to shall rise. But we are not to forget that in between is “Now, concerning the collection for the saints.”

What the world thinks doesn't change the fact of the resurrection or eternity. Why, then, don't we get off the defensive on the “now” subject of giving? The world is never going to understand or approve of giving God's way; they don't even believe He really exists.

Why be bothered by the people who do not believe Christ is risen? Why be bothered by those who do not believe that we shall rise and meet Him in the air, or be changed in a moment, or put on incorruption, or be raised from the dead as the harvest that follows the firstfruits? If they are not convinced of those two facts, then it isn't to them that we are talking when we talk about: “Now concerning the collection.” That message is only for those who have a basis for making a value judgment about the things of God. The only ones who can do that are those who seek Him. The world doesn't fit that category.

Let those of us who believe listen to what Paul said:

“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.” 1 Corinthians 16:1,2

Did Paul say, “As I have solicited the church at Galatia?” Did he say, “As I have been able to get an unequal response from Galatia to this big Bible I'm giving out?” No! He said “As I have given **order**.”

Can you imagine the audacity? Given order? By a preacher? Concerning money? It must be a mistake.

The natural response would be, “What do you mean, Preacher, ordering

me about my money? You just back up a little bit and ask, and you might receive a little bit.” “A little ‘please’, pastor, would help out there.”

“Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”

That sounds like an IRS agent talking. Withholding! How dare he! It’s amazing how quickly we’ve completely forgotten all those wonderful things about the Resurrection he was talking about. All the glamour is gone out of this life.

No matter where you turn in God’s book, you find this unintimidated approach concerning money and the possessions you have in hand with no apologies

It began right after Adam and Eve were kicked out of the garden. As you read Genesis in the original, it shows that God left a place, a time, and a method to bring offerings His way. The first fight recorded in the Bible was over those offerings. Abel did it God’s way. On the other hand, Cain decided that he could determine how, what, and the manner of giving to God. Able was approved. Cain was cursed.

I can just hear some Christians now saying, “Well, I’ve been giving and tithing; but, I haven’t done too good.”

I have a little message for those people. Let’s get a few things straight going out the gate. Abel brought his offerings God’s way and was killed for the effort. But whose place would you rather be in today, Cain’s or Abel’s? You see, both sides of the issue have the eternal look.

Isn’t that what Christianity is really about? That cold turkey choice between the visible and the invisible, the temporal and the eternal? Giving is part of that eternal look, and Christians had better make sure they understand how to give God’s way and for His reasons.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it

is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

THE WORLD LOVES MONEY; GOD LOVES HILARIOUS GIVERS

What is faith? It is an act, based upon belief, sustained by confidence which gives that upward connection. It seats you with Christ in heavenly places. The most important result of faith is that you are instantly connected with eternity. God’s life starts flowing in you. That is the primary benefit of the faithing act.

But, in God’s sovereignty, that same act of faith on occasion will produce the occurrence in time of that which was hoped for. Then this identifiable faith object, as I call it, having become fact, ceased to be the object of faith. When that happens, you had better find another faith object in a hurry, because when faith ceases its grip, you’ve lost the connection-eternal.

Giving, as an act based upon God’s promises, with the focus on stewardship, may also have the promises occur in time. For example the tithing message at the end of Malachi, *“Prove me now herewith to see if I don’t pour you out a blessing you can’t contain.”*

I wish that I would, before I die, test God sufficiently on that promise, until the ‘too much to contain’ part of that promise becomes fact! He has already given me some good blessings that I can contain in route to the uncontainable ones. but I can honestly say I haven’t been blessed so that I cannot contain it yet! So my faith in that promise still has hope as its object. When that reality happens, the object of faith becomes fact, and I’d better find another promise.

But, so far, this Malachi promise is a good one that has lasted through the years. This promise never wasted itself away into a fact. God has been so good, He has enlarged my expectancies at a rate equal to His supply, and that’s one faith object that continues to drive me forward.

Faith has that object of fact that is promised in time. But as you join yourself to God in faith, you are immediately seated with Christ in heavenly places. The imputation act of God justifies you, and His Spirit is placed in you. The sanctifying act of God separates you from the life of death. At that point, time and eternity begin to fuse and it doesn't matter much whether the reward is here or over there. The important thing is the faith connection. That's the basic Christianity I've been teaching for years. Giving and its rewards are included.

C.S. Lewis said it better than anyone I know, "God, to be God, has no needs." That's axiomatic self-evident. He can speak, and not-a-thing becomes everything. So, by definition, God has no needs.

As creatures, it is our nature to have needs. We are dependent. There is hardly a need of mankind that matches the need to be needed, the feeling of usefulness. So, as Lewis said, "God, in His kindness, having created us so full of needs, implemented a program whereby we could share with Him in the eternal rewards of His work, joint heirs with Christ, by feeling that truly we are needed because God has implemented a program where our contributions have a part in it."

As philosophical as that may be, it's as close as I can come to the only rationale for saying God needs us to participate in any program that He's involved in. It goes without saying; God could send an angel to teach better than I can. So anytime you talk about God's work needing participation, it has to be seen, as C.S. Lewis saw it, as a condescension by God to limp along through us, or through our participation as the body of Christ, that we might have the joy of participating with Him in His work and the satisfaction that comes with fulfilling such a task. Yet most of Christianity limps along raising its money because of need? That's not the basis of Christian giving.

Christians testify to the Resurrection; they testify to the Second Coming and the second resurrection; then, they turn around and make a lie of the miraculous testimony by reducing God to the status of a beggar on the collection business. No wonder the world doesn't believe the Resurrection, the Rapture or the second coming.

There is no subject the world knows as much about as money. So, when the church or churchmen talk about money, it gets their attention. But it gets their attention in a way that degrades and insults God by peddling need. It is never in any way related to the true basis for giving as God outlined in His book.

I'm too honest not to tell my congregation if we have a need as we step out in faith to do things. But I've said as long as that need creates the pressure point for the giving act, we have, in large part, destroyed God's purpose for putting the giving act into His plan. We haven't yet been freed from the need syndrome; but we are different and we're heading in the right direction. The average ministry doesn't even think about or want to be freed from need. In fact, they create needs. Therein lies the critical problem.

I've seen with my own eyes evidence of the manufactured needs of some major television ministries. In summer, they plan the Christmas crisis. Knowing that giving drops in December because people are buying things for other loved ones, they manufacture a Christmas crisis. They print the letters in the fall, and mail them to be in the homes of the viewers to arrive in early December, so heartstrings will be properly tweaked for the need of the ministry during the month when, otherwise, they might forget.

Can you see Paul doing that? "Now, concerning that appeal letter I sent you that you got last week"

Instead Paul says:

"Concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye."

Need is not the criteria.

God doesn't need us; yet giving is built into every step of the God-man relationship. Why?

Scripture declares “. . . the love of money is the root of all evil.” Why don't we just take what God's word says at face value?

Have you ever tried to weed a field by cutting the surface off and not getting at the roots?

I can hear someone saying, “Well you teach grace, God's unmerited favor, I'm a recipient of that unmerited favor, and God is at peace with me.” Sure He is. Faith makes that connection, and rascals that we are; we become the recipient of God's grace. Un-meriting though we may be, God puts grace, His substance, which is His life, in us. But “that treasure,” we have in “earthen vessels.” The earthen vessel has got a lot of roots growing in it. The worst is the love of money, which Jesus said is the root of all evil.

God doesn't need our money. Yet He talks about it more than anybody. He's always hitting us in the face with it. Every time He gets on a subject that could make you “feel” spiritual, He ruins it by getting back to money. It's this business of “He arose! Hallelujah!” “He's coming again! Hallelujah!” “Now concerning the collection for the saints . . . I order you . . .” What happened to the Hallelujah!?

I already mentioned that the first battle was over giving God's way. Since God has no needs, why was that so important to Him? He had just created all the animals of the earth. Why did he want this offering at the door of access?

If I were to forget what God said and reason it out with my “brilliant brain,” I'd probably agree with Cain. Isn't this the reasoning:

“God created the animals and they reproduced. They were just being there, and I'd get no credit giving any one of them. But I tilled the earth. I worked hard. With the sweat of my brow and God's help, I raised grain and fruit. I had something I could offer God. So I brought it to Him.”

I see Cains sitting in congregations everywhere. When the subject of

the tithe comes up:

“Well, the church and pastor haven’t proved that they know too much about saving money. They know how to spend it. But, I’ve made some money in my lifetime. I can take the tithe and with the knowledge I have, which I doubt seriously the pastor has, I can turn it into ten times what it is now and give that.”

That’s Cain at work.

It all sounds wonderful. But, God doesn’t honor it. God has His plan. He wants giving done His way! Period!

He says, “This is what you do to keep access with me.” That’s why the Old Testament ends with the word “curse.” His chosen people did not honor God with their tithes and offerings.

Can’t you hear someone ask, “Since God doesn’t need it, why make such a big deal out of it?” Or,

“Well, the New Testament doesn’t talk about tithing.”

Jesus said concerning the tithes, “This ye ought to have done.” Whole movements have been started on less Scripture than that.

But, there’s more to it. Sometimes, we forget that the New Testament church was under persecution, under pressure, that the letters we read today were going to a church that had a certain quality attached to it. That quality was they had a history of selling everything they had, and giving it.

In the Book of Acts, church members took everything they had, sold it, took the proceeds and laid it at the apostles’ feet. If this congregation were to do that, do you think I would waste time teaching them on giving? Even the IRS recognizes that truth. They have in their Code a provision for an “apostolic fellowship.” Yet Christians think it’s a big deal because there are not a lot of sermons in the Book of Acts on giving? To whom would they be addressed? Those giving everything

they had?

When the whole book of God is put together, the message of tithing becomes a brake or a restriction to prevent over giving. It is not meant to be a goal that Christians strive to reach.

The New Testament church was so enamored with the message, “He arose,” so expecting the happening, “He’s coming back soon!” that, in their “now”, they gave everything away.

As time went on, they began to understand that the Lord wasn’t going to split the skies “tomorrow”, that there were as yet things to be done before He appeared, that they then had to deal with the “now.” That was when the order went out for the collections,

“Every week, upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store . . .”

That meant they were to get it ready to give.

Now, what formula would apply? It would be the oldest formula that God had written down; the principle that was before law, as grace was before the law; the principle that was translated into promise in Malachi 3 and thus became an object of faith; the principle of tithing.

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house . . .” Malachi 3:10

Tithing dominated the church world into the 16th century; it was built into the laws of the middle Ages. It can be connected to early New Testament practices. It’s a premise that goes back to Abram and Jacob; it goes back before before the law. It’s a principle of promise on which Jesus put His stamp of approval when, concerning the tithe, He said, *“These things ought ye to have done.”*

THE BASIC MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH IS, “CHRIST HAS RISEN”

Concerning Old Testament applications to New Testament teaching, Paul, in 1 Corinthians 9, draws the direct connection between those who preach the Gospel (who are also instructed to live by the Gospel) to those priests of the Old Testament who collected the tithe, the Lord's money, which God then gave to those same Levites who were sent to collect it.

Giving is forever in God's plan. It is no more to be apologized for to the world than the Resurrection or the Second Coming. It is the prominent expression of the “now.” It is the proof positive of God's Spirit in us overcoming the root in us which is the root of all evil, the love of money.

A true Christian will understand that between the fact from which our faith grows, *He arose*, and the fact on which our hope grabs hold, *He is coming*, is the *now* fact “concerning the collection for the saints.”

And since God doesn't need it, why?

Why this aggravating, painful, irritating, make-the-world-mad subject? Why is that the link that ties these two great spiritual happenings together? I'm not nearly as smart as God, and I've got enough sense to know that I could conceive of a plan with just the two elements, *He arose* and *He is coming back*. We could leave the middle one out. It would be much easier to sell.

The Great Commission?

Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel.”

That's the church's assignment to the world, isn't it? Every Sunday, at many churches and on television you can hear that same message: “Go ye into all the world and teach every nation. And when this gospel has been preached to every nation, then the end shall come.” When they

finish that, they say, “Send your money to this ministry. I can show that every \$1 given a soul is saved in Africa (or whatever). Unless the people you give to can demonstrate that they can get as many souls for \$1 as I get, then you should put your money here, because until we take this word to every creature, the Lord can’t come.”

In varying ways that’s what they say. But, it’s all camel spit. In my teaching on the Book of Revelation, I show unequivocally that the Jew and the restored house of Israel will finish the job of taking the gospel of the Kingdom out during the Millennium.

The church is not in the world to save the world, but rather the church is God’s project, through His Spirit, to save some out of the world that will make up the body of Christ, who will rule and reign with Him throughout eternity, including the Millennium. The Jews and the house of Israel will finish their assignment as God’s oracle for which they were called, during the Millennium. And, God will help a little by putting a plague on every nation that doesn’t come up to the Feast of the Tabernacles every year.

As Christians, we’ve been beat over the head with this witnessing concept. In other times, if you didn’t become a D. L. Moody every day and go out and find somebody to wrestle into Jesus, you were made to feel that you had somehow failed God. Some, who teach such antics, want you to ask, “Do you know Jesus” to every one you meet.

I do not believe that that’s the way to win souls. You see, I don’t believe in this traditional witnessing concept that’s laid on people and puts a guilt trip on them if they don’t go out and choke somebody into Jesus every day.

My Bible says, “No man cometh except the Spirit draw him.” And God can open the door.

I’ve watched people judge their ministries by their ability to get somebody at the close of a message to blubber for a while, instead of letting those emotional energy units be applied to an inward change and

a healthy grabbing of God's Word and acting on it to the discarding of other things. I really don't see much effort by these Great Commission purveyors to do it God's way.

The Bible records more of this instruction by Jesus than it records of the Great Commission itself:

"Wherever this gospel is preached, see to it you tell what this woman did." Mathew 26:7; Mark 14:3

He was referring to the woman with the alabaster box, who brought the valuable ointment, broke the box, and poured it on Christ. Judas, who handled the bag and saw his chance to skim some as it went through his finger, said, "Why this waste? This ointment could have been sold for much money and the money given to the poor."

Jesus said, *"The poor ye have with you always. Leave the woman alone, she's done a good work unto me."*

Then, He gave an order, "Whenever this gospel is preached, see to it that you tell what this woman did."

Don't just preach *He is risen! We too will rise!* Tell what this woman did who brought the offering. You can't teach Christianity, you can't live Christianity, without facing head-on, center stage, the importance of giving for no reason other than God's reason for giving. He likes it.

The basic message of the church is "Christ is risen."

Stop being poetic about it and actually begin to confront the necessity of believing that truth as the basis for Christianity. When you consider the miracle that is involved, are you really going to say that the Lord's provision for you is too much for Him? Malachi 3 says,

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse that there may be meat in mine house . . . prove me now herewith, and see if I don't pour you out a blessing you can't contain."

Do you think God finds it harder to keep that word of promise with you and work the miracle of provision in your life than He did raising Christ from the dead?

You see, most Christians don't really believe the Resurrection. Most Christians are Christians because they grew up in it, or because they've been falsely motivated.

The basis of Christianity: Christ is risen; He is coming again, and we shall rise, and in the twinkling of an eye be caught away to be with Him forever. That's Christianity. What goes in the middle? "Now . . .the collection . . ." In other words, just in case somebody thinks this is all just poetic, "Now, give money and things." **That** is Christianity, past, present, future.

That is what I believe because that is what I learned from this teaching so long ago. So much so that at the end of every teaching I pray for that uncontainable blessing to be poured down upon you.

Remember these words; God picked you to hear the messages of this Ministry for a reason. You must be among them that will hear it, and when you do, the message is clear, WARN those who are asleep. Our mission is to do just that and you are called upon to help us do it. Understand that, and rise to the occasion and be who Paul made you out to be.

I teach to support this Ministry, and I believe in the Biblical principle of giving to the storehouse where you get your meat. We are bringing the message of the AGE to the Church, and we need all the help we can get

Now, if this were a fine sunny Sunday morning, and if we were in an actual building, at this point I'd say; Stand up everybody! Now, everyone give a rousing cheer, because it OFFERING TIME! (cheers and applause) We're cheering in my Church because the Lord loves hilarious givers, and promises to pour down a blessing on them that cannot be contained! Trust the Lord for that blessing; you'll be glad that you did. When you give to keep this Ministry's word going out to

the world, give hilariously first, and as generously as you can.

If our Teachings are a blessing to you, then give appropriate to your circumstance. [Click here](#)

If all you have are prayers to offer, they are most welcome and needed. Please pray that the devil remains behind us, and the path way ahead is open and wide. And, please, let us know that you are praying for us. [Click here](#)

Humbly,
Your Brother in Christ,
Brother Sal from CHN

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