

<http://ebcwa.free.org.nz>  
[ebcwa.org.au](http://ebcwa.org.au)



## **REVIVAL AND RENEWAL.**

**BY**

**DR JOHN CAMERON MCEWAN**

**[BOOK 113]**

**Revised for Hanukah 17 December 2014**

### **WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?**

Professor Simon Greenleaf was one of the most eminent lawyers of all time. His "Laws of Evidence" for many years were accepted by all States in the United States as the standard methodology for evaluating cases. He was teaching law at a university in the United States when one of his students asked Professor Greenleaf if he would apply his "Laws of Evidence" to evaluate an historical figure. When Greenleaf agreed to the project he asked the student who was to be the subject of the review. The student replied that the person to be examined would be Jesus Christ. Professor Greenleaf agreed to undertake the examination of Jesus Christ and as a result, when he had finished the review, Simon Greenleaf personally accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

Professor Greenleaf then sent an open letter to all jurists in the United States saying in part "I personally have investigated one called Jesus Christ. I have found the evidence concerning him to be historically accurate. I have also discovered that Jesus Christ is more than a human being, he is either God or nothing and having examined the evidence it is impossible to conclude other than he is God. Having concluded that he is God I have accepted him as my personal Saviour. I urge all members of the legal profession to use the "Laws of Evidence" to investigate the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and if you find that he is wrong expose him as a faker but if not consider him as your Saviour and Lord"

### **HOW CAN I BE SAVED?**

#### **Salvation is available for all members of the human race.**

Salvation is the most important undertaking in all of God's universe. The salvation of sinners is never on the basis of God's merely passing over or closing His eyes to sin. God saves sinners on a completely righteous basis consistent with the divine holiness of His character. This is called grace. It relies on God so man cannot work for salvation, neither can he deserve it. We need to realise that the creation of this vast unmeasured universe was far less an undertaking than the working out of God's plan to save sinners.

However the acceptance of God's salvation by the sinner is the most simple thing in all of life. One need not be rich, nor wise, nor educated. Age is no barrier nor the colour of one's skin. The reception of the enormous benefits of God's redemption is based upon the simplest of terms so that there is no one in all this wide universe who need be turned away.

#### **How do I become a Christian?**

There is but one simple step divided into three parts. First of all I have to recognise that I am a sinner (Romans 3:23; 6:23; Ezekiel 18:4; John 5:24).

Secondly, realising that if I want a relationship with Almighty God who is perfect, and recognising that I am not perfect, I need to look to the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour (I Corinthians 15:3; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:6; John 3:16).

Thirdly, by the exercise of my own free will I personally receive the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, believing that He died personally for me and that He is what He claims to be in an individual, personal and living way (John 1:12; 3:36; Acts 16:31; 4:12).

#### **The results of Salvation**

The results of this are unbelievably wonderful:

My sins are taken away (John 1:29),

I possess eternal life now (I John 5:11,12),

I become a new creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17),

The Holy Spirit takes up His residence in my life (I Corinthians 6:19),

And I will never perish (John 10:28-30).

This truthfully is life's greatest transaction. This is the goal of all people; this is the ultimate of our existence. We invite and exhort any reader who has not become a Christian by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ to follow these simple instructions and be born again eternally into God's family (Matthew 11:28; John 1:12; Acts 4:12; 16:31).

© Evangelical Bible College of Western Australia 2004 - PO Box 163 Armadale Western Australia 6992

Many other Christian resources are available freely from our internet web site: [www.ebcwa.org.au](http://www.ebcwa.org.au) and [www.ebcwa.free.org.nz](http://www.ebcwa.free.org.nz) for weekly messages.

For further information contact Dr Peter Moses at PO Box 163 Armadale WA 6992 or email Brian Huggett [brianhuggett@bigpond.com.au](mailto:brianhuggett@bigpond.com.au)

We encourage you to freely copy and distribute these materials to your Pastor and friends. You only, need written permission from EBCWA if you intend using the materials in publications for resale. We encourage wide distribution freely!

## **REVIVAL AND RENEWAL – THE EVER PRESENT NEED FOR THE CHURCH**

'As God's people are renewed and reformed, God's revival power is unleashed. Historically however, these 'moves' have ended in only partial change due to Christian's ignorance of God's ultimate purpose - the restoration of man and the world to God's original plan.'

'Revival Studies' enable us to discern the primary signs of forthcoming revival, how to prepare ourselves both for it and for what is to come after, and how to avoid the pitfalls that a partial knowledge of God and history will lead us into.' Curriculum statement of a USA Theological Institution.

As we go through this study we will be highlighting texts from scripture, and the ones you are to turn to and read will be in bold type. Do not read on in the chapter without reading the verses named in bold type. At many points a doctrinal study from the Bible Topic Book (BTB) will be referred to. These are included in the text and are to be read through carefully, with each verse named read and prayed over.

If you are going through this text with a group, take it in turns to read each verse referred to and stop and pray over each of the issues that the Holy Spirit fires into your heart; do this as they arise for you and your group. Stop at certain points when the Spirit has moved upon you and just sing, or pray, or worship in other ways.

This is not an academic study, but a study of the Spirit's moving through the ages, so that the Spirit may move powerfully through you and your church. We have a determined output that we want as a College from this text book – we want daily refreshment and renewal in the Holy Spirit for all saints, and we want revival for all spiritually dead (or carnal) believers, that they and their churches might be revived and fulfill their ministry.

As we begin this study we need to remind ourselves of the importance of the statement above; that the Lord's purpose, is for us to daily walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, to be focused upon God's purpose for each day, and to live in accordance with his plan for our life. We are here upon the earth to worship and serve the one who gave his all for us! The purpose of God is that we are renewed in the power of the Spirit every day and so guided by the Spirit into the specific tasking he has for us each day. When this does not occur, and the people in the local church become lukewarm, or cold and formal in their faith, the church's mission to save the lost gets lost, and God's plan for that church falters. Unless there is revival of the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives the members of that church in that place, it will come under divine discipline and may even cease to exist.

This is the Lord's message through John to the churches of the book of Revelation (**Revelation chapters 2-3**). Let us now pause and skim read through these two chapters and identify the challenges the Lord gives the churches. Notice how each church is corrected and/or encouraged, and how all are urged to be spiritually renewed or revived to full spiritual life. These seven churches and the messages to them give us a snap shot of all of church history, for their problems are with the church throughout history and around you, where you are, there are churches with all the problems you read of here, and the same spiritual need for revival.

We worship, and we grow and serve the Lord, or we, through disobedience, slip backwards (Backsliding) and cease to fulfill our purpose and stand in danger of removal from the plan. This has happened to many individuals and churches through the years. Church History is the study of God's work through the years and illustrates the penalty of disobedience.

In many places in the world where Christianity once bloomed there are ruins of churches and nothing else, and the reason is the same everywhere this is true; the people went cold, stopped applying their faith into life, stopped evangelism and the church died. This is the topic of personal spiritual warfare; and we are warned against grieving and quenching the power of the Holy Spirit. **Ephesians 4:30, 1 Thessalonians 5:19.**

When we enter this study, we enter a study that could be called "first aid for a dying church". Unless we walk in the power of the Spirit, we will fall and the church will die in this place! Praise God that he is never without witness and there are always those who the Holy Spirit moves upon who revive the church and begin again the work that we are left here to fulfill. **Matthew 28:18-20.** We walk in the Holy Spirit's power alone to fulfill our eternal destiny.

Jesus words in **Matthew 7:13-14** are significant for us to reflect upon as we begin. There are two paths for all mankind; God's path and the alternative! The first great divide is between saved and unsaved, but then as believers we can fall short of the Lord's plan for us, and this second division is referred to by Paul as the difference between the Spiritual believer and the Carnal believer. **1 Corinthians 3:1-4.** Notice the reason for carnality. It is unconfessed and controlled sin in the lives of the Corinthians.

The Angelic Conflict, which is Satan's battle for the souls of the lost, centres on stopping the lost reaching a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, but he doesn't stop there. He has a plan for both the unsaved and the saved, just as the Lord has! Satan's plan is to blind the unsaved to the truth about their sin and the truth about the Saviour, and the Holy Spirit breaks those barriers down. **John 16:8-11, Ephesians 2:1-10.**

Satan's plan for the saved is to distract us from living fellowship with our Lord, distract us by money, power, work, or things. He plans and executes attack us from all fronts; he attacks us through temptation to sin, and he attacks us by encouraging us into cold, formal, legalistic religion that quenches the power of the Holy Spirit.

If Satan can stop believers walking in the Spirit he has defeated them. Praise God, the Holy Spirit is more powerful than Satan! **1 John 4:4**. Remember this text and quote this text to yourself each day!!! We are called to resist the enemy in the power of the Holy Spirit, and we do this by dealing with sin in our life through repentance (thorough confession of sin), by drawing close to the Lord in worship, feeding daily upon his Word of life, and applying it into the very fabric of our day.

Daily spiritual Renewal or major spiritual Revival begins with the deep sigh of the believer as they face their sinful nature and their need of spiritual power from the Holy Spirit. Absolute dependence upon the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit is at the heart of fulfilling our mission upon the earth. We will study some of the great revivals of the past, but the biblical message is clearly given; we are called to be ourselves in the Holy Spirit's power and direction, not copy any other people or historic situations. God calls us to revive our own and our church's spiritual life, and he calls us "just as we are", to be ourselves in this process.

We see these principles wonderfully illustrated by King David after his great sin with Bathsheba and Uriah the Hittite. **Psalm 51:1-10**. David does business with God and so he is restored to spiritual life and service and there is revival of national as well as personal life. Remember, revival is not God's first option! He prefers us to walk daily in obedience. God would have preferred by far that David never needed to pray this prayer, because it was the evidence that he had walked in carnality well away from the path God intended for him, but even here, with thorough confession he is restored.

We will see many cases where great evil is forgiven and believers who have become quite evil are restored. If people are still alive there is hope for them! We have a wonderful, merciful, and gracious God. In the days of Ezekiel, who we will use as a central example of revival we see many pulled back from great and gross sin through his and Jeremiah's faithful ministry. God's promise to his rebellious people remains positive and hopeful.

**Ezekiel 11:19 And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:**

These people can no longer feel their sins, or feel the pain of the Lord over their evils, and so they need a spiritual "heart transplant". The Lord will give them this, but it will be through a burning away of all the sinful patterns that they have built up over the centuries. It will take between fifty and seventy years for the people to learn to forsake their sins and their evil pagan behaviours, but they will learn and those returning under Zerubbabel, Joshua, and then Ezra, and Nehemiah will rebuild a nation in holiness and true separation from paganism. Idolatry will never again be a problem for Israel.

This spiritual revival is the result of acceptance of divine discipline on the people's part, and reception by them of the Lord's teaching and spiritual life. Their transformation, as our own, is the work of the Holy Spirit alone. This is the Lord's promise to all people who will repent of evil and sin, and come back to spiritual life. **Isaiah 1:21-27, 30:18-21, Jeremiah 16:15-21, Hosea 14:1-9, Micah 7:5-8, Colossians 3:1-11, Titus 2:11-14**.

God's promise of the renewal of the heart into a unity of purpose with His perfect plan and purpose, is a Bible long promise, and has the same mechanics to it throughout scripture; repentance opens the door to renewal. Revival comes through repentance from the path of rebellion against his will to renewed daily obedience to the clearly revealed Word of God. God's objective in all his dealings with mankind is summed up in the prayer of the Lord in John 17; that we might all be "revived" spiritually to live in the place of absolute identity with the purpose, plan and power of God. **Deuteronomy 30:1-6, Jeremiah 32:39-41, Zephaniah 3:7-9, John 17:20-26, Ephesians 4:1-6, Philippians 2:1-7**.

As David grapples with his great sin with Uriah and Bathsheba, he faces this need within himself as we saw above in Psalm 51:1-10. Paul faces this same daily need for spiritual renewal and revival as he faces the battle against his Old Sin Nature. **Romans 7:14-8:2**. Revival is the work of the Holy Spirit, and He uses clean vessels; so revival begins as people confront and deal with sin and evil in their lives. **James 4:7-10, 1 Peter 5:5-9**.

The people of Ezekiel's day, just like us today, face the need to walk in the filling power of the Holy Spirit, for only God's indwelling power can set us free from the power of sin and death that still has influence over us through our Old Sin Nature. The victory of the Holy Spirit in the lives of significant numbers of the saints in one geographical place is called "revival". These revivals occur all through history, and whenever they occur, they open the door to individual and national blessing. Let us enter this study with prayer for revival of our own hearts love for our Lord, for revival in our marriages, our families, our churches, and our nations.

Dr John C McEwan Dean - EBCWA

Written Auckland, New Zealand, 11 February 2006  
Revised Arusha, Tanzania, 5 May 2006, and again in Auckland in 2011 and 2015.

**OUTLINE OF OUR STUDY OF REVIVAL**

- CHAPTER 1     SOME BASIC CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS, GETTING - THE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON SIN, SALVATION, AND THE SPIRIT.  
7 Principles for reflection - to prepare our hearts and minds for Biblical Revival.
- CHAPTER 2     A CASE STUDY OF REVIVAL UNDER MAXIMUM PRESSURE - THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE PROPHET EZEKIEL
- CHAPTER 3     BIBLICAL REVIVALS - AN OVERVIEW OF TWENTY FOUR BIBLICAL REVIVALS
- CHAPTER 4     WELL STUDIED HISTORICAL REVIVALS - AN OVERVIEW OF REVIVALS – SEEING THE “WAVES OF THE SPIRIT” THROUGH THE YEARS FROM THE SIXTEENTH THROUGH TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURIES.
- CHAPTER 5     WHERE TO FOR OURSELVES, OUR LOCAL CHURCHES AND OUR NATIONS? THE CHALLENGE TO ALL LEADERS OF THE CHURCH TODAY TO RESEARCH OUR OWN NATION’S NEEDS AND TO PREPARE OUR HEARTS AND LIVES FOR REVIVAL FOR OUR GENERATION. - TWELVE PRINCIPLES FOR APPLICATION.

**CHAPTER 1 - SOME BASIC CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS****GETTING THE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON SIN, SALVATION AND THE SPIRIT.**

To lay the foundation for our study, let us identify the key biblical and theological concepts (Biblical Doctrines) we need to understand before looking at examples of Revival. To live in a consciously God-honouring way we need to understand the nature of ourselves, our tendency to sin, the nature or character of God, and God's remedy for our sin. We must also ensure we are not “ignorant of the devices” of the enemy, **2 Corinthians 2:9-11**, lest he distract us from our purpose and hinder our walk with God.

As you read the Corinthian passage, ask yourself, from this context, what was the “device” of Satan that Paul refers to? His strategy does not alter through time, as Church History reveals! To be effective servants of the Lord, and play our part in the great drama of redemption, we must then, know ourselves, know our Creator Saviour God, know our task here upon the earth, and know our enemy and his strategies to distract us from our task.

Let us identify and study each of the key doctrines in the order below. Read and reflect on each quoted scripture in each doctrinal point. With each scripture read, ensure you allow the Word of God to correct any preconceptions you may have regarding the texts you read. It is all too easy to tell the Word what it says, rather than have our favourite passage cut deeply through our false concepts and behaviours. Let us open ourselves to the work of the Spirit to correct and then to encourage.

One great saint of the past gave a good test for interpretation of any passage. He challenged Bible students to ask, concerning their interpretation of any passage the following questions:

1.     Does my interpretation make me love the Lord more?
2.     Does my interpretation make me love and value my brethren in the Lord more?
3.     Does it give me a greater desire to see the salvation of the Lost?
4.     Does it make me desire to serve in the church more?
5.     Does it make me ready to do anything for the Lord without false pride?
6.     Does it focus me on making every day fully devoted to God’s will for my life?

If the answer is a resounding “YES” to each of these questions, then it is reasonable to assume that your interpretation is not wrong! It is the fruit of righteousness that shows we are his sons and daughters, and when we love him we seek in every way to be his servants in all things. If there is no fruit of righteousness in our life then is it also reasonable to assume that we do not have a living relationship with him, and are either in carnality in need of revival, or are unsaved, and in need of salvation.

Read the Lord's words in **Matthew 7:13-23**. Note carefully two things. **Firstly** note the two paths we discussed in our introduction. Every person selects their path and they must be told the consequences of their evil actions, or lack of correct actions. Remember, doing nothing about eternal realities is equally condemning, as the servant who hid the talent found out. **Matthew 25:14-30**.

**Secondly**, note that there are always more false prophets and teachers than true and genuine ones. We are urged to practice discernment for good reason! The enemy, as we will see, delights in counterfeit spirituality and has often had more of his servants in religious organizations than the Lord has! All the great revivals occur against a backdrop of opposition, create conflict with the servants of the enemy, and they are often the majority as we will see with Ezekiel's days, and in all the biblical and historical examples we will study.

Remember the Lord's words; "you shall know them by their fruits". Satan can counterfeit the gifts of the Spirit and he does; for he is a wonder worker with his own "power and signs and lying wonders". **2 Thessalonians 2:9-12**. However, he finds it difficult to counterfeit the fruit of the Spirit, for they come from a heart at peace with God and empowered by the Holy Spirit, and he cannot counterfeit that. It is the fruit of the Holy Spirit we look for as evidence of a holy and devoted walk with God, not the gifts and power manifestations that can be counterfeited.

To experience the best God has for us, in full daily renewal of the Holy Spirit, or to see revival in our community and nation, we must know and apply the following Bible doctrines into the very fabric of our daily lives. As we go through each of the seven points below, we will take at least forty minutes on each one, reading through each doctrine, so that all understand each point, before moving to the next. If you are reading through this manual alone, or in a small group, take this amount of time to go through each doctrine in order, and discuss and pray over the application of each one as a group, or through quiet meditation within your own spirit as the Holy Spirit powers the Word into your heart.

## **SEVEN FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR REVIVAL**

### **1. Biblical Consecration of the Life. We must understand and apply, the true nature of sin and evil, and their consequences in the life of the individual, the community and the nation.**

#### **SIN: FALL OF MAN**

1. The fall of man is given in Genesis 3.
2. Man having been given free will yielded to temptation and thus transgressed the commandment of God (Genesis 2:16, 17, Genesis 3:1-8).
3. Through their disobedience they fell from the state of innocence and sinlessness.
4. The result of the fall is universal sin which is transferred to members of the human race by physical birth so that all human beings are conceived and born in sin (Psalm 51:5, John 3:6, Romans 5:12). The sinful nature comes through the male, but all of us face the reality of the power of sin. All need to face the reality of the need for the Holy Spirit's power to break the hold of sin over our life.
5. Death: spiritual and temporal, is the consequence of sin.
6. Suffering connected with sin is given for both man and woman in Genesis 3:16-19. It also affected the environment (Romans 8:20-22).
7. The first gospel message is given in Genesis 3:15.
8. Adam is related to humanity as the author of sin and death, whilst Christ is the author of righteousness and life (Romans 5:12-21, 1Corinthians 15:21,22, 45-49).

#### **SIN: OLD SIN NATURE**

1. We are born with a nature, inherited from Adam, which is against God and prone to sin (Ephesians 2:1, Romans 5:12).
2. The old sin nature is perpetuated in the human race by physical birth (Psalm 51:5, 1 Timothy 2:13, 14).
3. We are therefore considered spiritually dead at the point of physical birth (Romans 5:12).
4. Names for the old sin nature:
  - a) Flesh - Galatians 5:16
  - b) Old Man - Ephesians 4:22, Colossians 3:9

- c) Carnal - Romans 7:14
- d) Sin - Romans 5:12
- e) Heart - Jeremiah 17:9
- f) Member - Colossians 3:5.

5. The believer continues to have an old sin nature after salvation (1 John 1:8, 1 Corinthians 3:1).
6. The believer under the control of the old sin nature is called carnal (Romans 7:14, 1 Corinthians 3:1-3).
7. The old sin nature frustrates true production of the Christian life (Romans 7:15).
8. The old sin nature has two tendencies (Romans 6:6)
  - a) Area of weakness - pushes us towards lawlessness and sins (Hebrews 12:1)
  - b) Area of strength - pushes us towards asceticism and self-righteousness (Isaiah 64:6).
9. The old sin nature is not found in the resurrection body (1 Corinthians 15:56, Philippians 3:21, 1 Thessalonians 5:23).
10. Victory over the old sin nature is achieved by considering your old life dead, surrendering to God, confessing sin and relying upon the filling of the Spirit (Romans 6:6,11, Colossians 3:9-10).

## **SIN: OLD SIN NATURE – THE FRUIT OF**

(These are the evidences that Satan has a “toe hold” in the life of the individual dominated by or characterized by the presence of these fruits of evil).

1. The fruit of the old sin nature falls under four categories:

- a) Sensual
- b) Religious
- c) Social
- d) Personal

### **2. SENSUAL**

- a) fornication – porneia – illicit sexual activity or any sexual activity other than with your partner.
- b) uncleanness - akatharsia - all acts of indecency and uncleanliness that shock people, this includes abnormal sexual acts
- c) lasciviousness - aselgeia - unrestrained lust - people who are having sex for their own personal gratification, treating other people as sexual objects for their pleasure. Paul recognises that we are tempted in all these areas. Matthew 7:13-23 points out that it is not only the doing of these acts but the thinking of these acts which are sins.

### **3. RELIGIOUS**

- a) idolatry - eidolatria - worship of things other than God
- b) witchcraft - pharmakeia - this involved magic, astrology, séances and sorcery.
- c) hatred - echthros - this is unrestrained rage without a reason. You get so angry that no one can talk to you at all.
- iv) strife - eris - contentiousness - this is argumentation in regard to Bible teaching and spiritual matters.

### **4 SOCIAL**

- a) jealousy - zelos - a bitter hatred towards another person who has something that you want. This is the father of all the other sins.
- b) wrath - thermos - this is getting hot headed or flaring up. If the person does not control the power of a hot temper they are under the power of the old sin nature and not the Holy Spirit. If you get this type of trouble at a church meeting you turn to the Word of God.
- c) seditions - - this is faction forming
- d) heresies - this is one step forward from seditions and is a person who wishes to build on the factions. An example would be the “KJV Only” group who will break up a church over which translation to use. By separating on the basis of the KJV alone you have fallen into far more evil than is present in variations in the versions.

e) evil - this is tied into jealousy eating away at the souls of people who harbour resentment.

## 5. PERSONAL

a) drunkenness - methai - drinking alcohol to excess is not a sickness it is a sin. It is an inherited weakness, if your father is an alcoholic you should not touch alcohol at all because it is a weakness in the family. Avoid places where you could be tempted. If you have a weakness towards alcoholism you must deal with it.

b) revellings - jomoi - which means hell raising, a person who cannot bear silence but has to be drowned in noise all the time. Their life is empty and has no purpose but as long as they party vigorously and run from function to function they do not have to worry about their sin and the pointlessness of their life. When you are tempted to sin think about the Lord. Paul now adds "and such like", which means that if he has not hit their particular weakness they should fill in the blanks.

6. We all have weaknesses and unless you are on guard you fall every time. You have to ascertain your weakness and set your guard against it. God's way is to walk in the Spirit that is the way to deal with it.

## **EVIL**

1. DEFINITION: Evil is Satan's policy in opposition to God's doctrine. Evil is therefore a collection of beliefs and practises that back up Satan's viewpoint rather than God's. We must understand the enemy's policy.

2. Evil is not necessarily bad, it is simply a policy that will take you away from the path that God prepared for you.

3. False religion may be very moral and even ascetic (and therefore look "holy"), but if it is leading people away from God's revealed will it is evil.

4. Often evil can masquerade as "good". People who believe that their "good works" can satisfy God's holy demands are deceived by evil doctrine. Romans 7:19,20,

5. Only God's Word, Bible Doctrine can help the believer distinguish between true good and evil, Hebrews 3:13,14.

6. Only a soul saturated in God's Word is truly protected from the subtlety of Satan's policy of evil. Proverbs 2:10-14, 3:7, 19:23.

7. Only applied knowledge of God's Word negates and neutralises evil. Psalms 54:5, Romans 12:21, Isaiah 45.

8. The issue for the believer is the daily choice to accept God's Word and therefore protect oneself against evil. God watches for our choices. Proverbs 11:18,19, 22:3, 24:1-4, Ephesians 5:16, 2 Thessalonians 3:2,3.

9. The company of evil people will distort the thinking of the believer and confuse his/her witness. Isaiah 5:20, 1 Corinthians 15:23.

10. There is no evil in God at all. Psalm 5:4, 1 John 1:5, 4:4.

11. God judges evil and will condemn it to the lake of fire for ever at the final judgement. Psalm 34:16, Isaiah 13:11, Revelation 20:11ff

12. In spite of evil still existing in the world due to Satan's on-going presence throughout the Church Age, the Lord is still on the throne, and his hand is on all things.

13. Satan only does things by "permission" and we are in the Lord's hands and so are, in Christ, safe. Job 1:6-12, Proverbs 16:3, 4, Isaiah 45 : 6, 7.

## **CHRISTIAN LIFE: DISCIPLINE OF BELIEVERS**

1. Divine discipline is the result of a believer disobeying the will of God. If there is no spiritual power, or no spiritual revival in a believer's life, there will be divine discipline in time.

2. God disciplines all true children. Those who are not true children do not know discipline. (Hebrews 12:8-14; 1 Peter 5:9-10).

3. God's discipline of believers is shown in

a) Old Testament (Proverbs 3:11,12);

b) New Testament (Hebrews 12:3-13; Revelation 3:19).

4. Attitudes towards God's discipline (Hebrews 12:3-15).

a) Think lightly of it (v 5).

- b) Faint or become disheartened (v 5).
  - c) Endure discipline (v 7).
  - d) Learn and benefit from discipline. (v 11).
5. The effect of God's discipline
- a) Discipline blesses the believer (Psalm 94:12)
  - b) Lives are changed (Hebrews 12:11)
  - c) It is for a limited time. (1 Peter 1:6,7)
  - d) It is for the believer's benefit (Hebrews 12:10)
6. The believer who refuses to repent may be disciplined to the extent of death (1 Corinthians 11:30-31, 1 John 5:16)
7. Divine discipline never implies a loss of salvation. Galatians 3:26, 2 Timothy 2:11-13.

### **CHRISTIAN LIFE: DOUBT**

1. When we have a doubt we must be honest with God, and so deal with the doubts, before they "ankle tap" our spiritual advance and service.
2. Write your doubts out on paper clearly so that you are ready to see the answer when it comes.
3. Commit this before the Lord in prayer. Express it bluntly and openly and expect God to answer. Nehemiah 1:4 -11  
Mark 9:24
4. The Bible tells us to cast our cares upon him, 1 Peter 4:19, 5:7. "Cares" are anything that concern us
5. Use a concordance to find verses dealing with the subject which concerns you. Ask yourself the following questions:
  - a) What does the Bible state about my doubt/concern?
  - b) What definite statements does the Bible make about this subject?
  - c) Do I believe God's word on this issue?

Let us now, before we move on to the next point, look briefly at **Leviticus 26:14-46**, (there is a parallel but longer and more prophetic passage in Deuteronomy 28:1ff). These passages explain the five cycles of national discipline that the Lord will give to the nation Israel to warn them that they have walked away from his path and need revival. These verses are required reading for all who would discern their nation's state, for if the things described in these verses are present in your nation it is entering a phase of judgment rather than blessing and revival is needed urgently.

### **2. We must understand and apply our knowledge of the perfect, holy character of God.**

#### **GOD: CHARACTER OF GOD**

1. Whilst God is three persons all three persons have exactly the same essence or character: our stability in this life stems from the perfection and power of the Character of God, not from any strength, power or plans we have.
  - a) SOVEREIGNTY  
The Father (Ephesians 1:11 , cf Isaiah 40:8, Matthew 6:10, Hebrews 10:7, 9)  
The Son (John 5:21, Revelation 19:16)  
The Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:11 , cf Hebrews 2:4)
  - b) RIGHTEOUSNESS  
The Father (John 17:25)  
The Son (Luke 1:35, Hebrews 7:26, 2 Corinthians 5:21)  
The Spirit The Holy Spirit
  - c) JUSTICE  
The Father (Job 37:23, cf 8:3)  
The Son (Acts 3:14, John 5:22, Revelation 19:11)  
The Spirit (Nehemiah 9:20)
  - d) LOVE  
The Father (John 3:16)  
The Son (Ephesians 5:25, 1 John 3:16)  
The Spirit (John 16:7-11, 1 Corinthians 2:10)

e) ETERNAL LIFE

The Father (John 5:26)

The Son (Micah 5:2, cf John 1:1-2, 1 John 5:11)

The Spirit (Isaiah 48:16)

f) ALL-KNOWING

The Father (Hebrews 4:13, cf Matthew 11:27, 1 Peter 1:2)

The Son (John 18:4, cf Matthew 9:4, John 2:25, 1 Corinthians 4:5)

The Spirit (Isaiah 11:2, cf 1 Corinthians 2:11)

g) EVERYWHERE

The Father (2 Chronicles 2:6)

The Son (Matthew 28:20, cf Ephesians 1:23)

The Spirit (Psalm 139:7)

h) ALL-POWERFUL

The Father (Mark 14:36, cf 1 Peter 1:5)

The Son (Hebrews 1:3, cf Matthew 24:30, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Philippians 3:21)

The Spirit (Romans 15:19)

i) UNCHANGEABLE

The Father (Hebrews 6:17, Psalm 33:11)

The Son (Hebrews 13:8)

The Spirit (John 14:16)

j) TRUTH

The Father (John 7:28, John 17:3)

The Son (1 John 5:20, cf John 1:14, 14:6, Revelation 19:11)

The Spirit (1 John 5:6, cf John 14:17, 15:26, 16:13)

## GOD: COMFORT FOR BELIEVERS

1. God is in control. Nothing will ever happen to you as a Christian that you have not had the opportunity to develop resources to deal with. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

2. God's character is stable.

(a) if God is for you who can be against you. (Romans 8:31-34)

(b) no matter what happens God's love is stable. (Romans 8:35-39)

3. God's promises are secure for he is always with us. (Matthew 28:19-20, Jeremiah 1:19)

4. God's power is always the same:-

(a) He will always keep us. (John 10:29, 2 Timothy 1:12,)

(b) God does not forget us or loose His power to keep. (Jude 24)

(c) Even if we fall away from fellowship we still are saved. (2 Timothy 2:13)

5. God knew before time what we would need in time and has provided for the supply of all our needs. (Philippians 4:19, Hebrews 4:16, Ephesians 3:12,)

6. God has the power to bless us. (2 Corinthians 9:8)

7. God is able to make all grace abound towards us. (Ephesians 3:20)

8. We should grow to the place of real confidence and blessing. (2 Peter 3:18)

9. We do this by feeding on His Word. (John 6:29, 33, 63)

**3. We must understand and apply into the fabric of our daily lives the choices we make to be either walking in the Spirit (Spirituality), or walking in the power of our “Old Man” (Carnality).**

### **CHRISTIAN LIFE: SPIRITUALITY**

1. All Christians have the Holy Spirit indwelling them. When we allow Him to control our lives, we are said to be "filled with the Spirit" or "walking in the Spirit". We are designed to be clean channels of blessing for the Holy Spirit to pour through. We are not to get in the way of the Spirit's work in us.

2. The filling of the Holy Spirit can be lost by

- a) Grieving the Spirit - by sin
- b) Quenching the Spirit - by not submitting to His leading
- c) This is called being carnal, or controlled by the flesh, the old sin nature.

3. The filling of the Holy Spirit can be regained by

- a) confessing sin (1 John 1:9)
- b) surrendering your life to God (Romans 12:1-2)
- c) This is called being spiritual, or controlled by the Holy Spirit.

4. Only the Holy Spirit in us can produce good works acceptable to God - anything in our own strength is unacceptable (Romans 8:5-11, 1 Corinthians 3:10-23.)

5. The spiritual believer

- a) Imitates God. (Ephesians 5:1, 1 John 3:9)
- b) To glorify Christ. (John 7:39, John 16:14)
- c) Fulfils the Law. (Romans 8:2-4, Romans 13:8)

6. In the Bible the human race is divided in three Categories:-

[a] Natural Man - A person born physically alive, but not regenerated. He may be highly sophisticated, civilised, gentle and kind, but is completely ignorant of any spiritual phenomena. (1 Corinthians 2:14) Equivalent to the cold person in the church in Laodicea.

[b] Carnal Man - A person regenerated or born again but living his life under the power of his old sin nature. Prolonged activity in this area produces a Christian who is still a baby. (1 Corinthians 3:1-4). Equivalent to the lukewarm person in the church of Laodicea.

[c] Spiritual Man - A person regenerated and living generally in the power of the Holy Spirit. He discerns the difference between the things of God and man. (1 Corinthians 2:11-13) He has fellowship with God in his daily life. (Ephesians 5:18-20) Equivalent to the hot person in the church of Laodicea.

7. Carnality

[a] The believer possesses an Old Sin Nature after salvation (1 John 1:8, Romans 7:14, 15).

[b]. The Old Sin Nature is desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9).

[c]. The believer under the control of the Old Sin Nature is called carnal (1 Corinthians 3:1-3, Romans 7:14).

[d]. The Old Sin Nature frustrates bona fide production in the life of the believer (Romans 7:15).

[e]. The Old Sin Nature is acquired at the point of physical birth (Psalm 51:5).

[f]. We are therefore considered spiritually dead at the point of physical birth (Romans 5:12).

[g]. The Old Sin Nature has several facets: areas of weakness produces sins, areas of strength produces human good. It has trends towards asceticism or lasciviousness. In many cases asceticism is considered to be spirituality.

[h] The Old Sin Nature is not found in the resurrection body.

### **CHRISTIAN LIFE – WALKING**

1. Physical walking is analogous to the faith rest life: step by step. Romans 14:5-8 , Ephesians 5:15-21, James 4:13-17.

2. Being regularly filled with the Spirit and feeding on the Word are similar to walking.

3. Attacks on believers occur when they are caught off balance. Romans 13:13.

4. Walking depicts the pattern and function of the believers life in time. Philippians 3:18, Ephesians 4:17.

5. It can also represent a backsliding believer who are said to be walking backwards. Ephesians 4:17.

6. We are all told to:

- a) Walk in the spirit. Galatians 5:16, 25
- b) Walk in the faith. 2 Corinthians 5:7, Colossians 2:6, 4:5
- c) Walk in doctrine 3 John 3.
- d) Walk in the truth 2 John 4

7. Walking is a analogy for spirituality

- a) Walk not after the flesh (Romans 8:4)
- b) Walking in Love. (Ephesians 5:2)
- c) Walking in newness of Life. (Romans 6:4)
- d) Walking worthy of our vocation. (Ephesians 4:1)
- e) Walking worthy of the Lord. (Colossians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 2:12)
- f) Walking honestly as in the day. (Romans 13:13)
- g) Walking in good works. (Ephesians 2:10)
- h) Walking in light. (Ephesians 5:8, 1 John 1:7)
- i) Walking in Christ Jesus. (Colossians 2:6)
- j) Walking circumspectly. (Ephesians 5:15,16)
- k) Walking as ye ought. (1 Thessalonians 4:1)

## **HOLY SPIRIT: MINISTRY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

### **1. TO THE UNBELIEVER**

a) RESTRAINING (2 Thessalonians 2:7)

If unbelievers were unrestrained in the Church Age the one world system which Satan is trying to establish would come. After the rapture of the Church it will come.

b) CONVICTING (John 16:7-11)

i) Sin - the barrier which remains in unbelief.

ii) Righteousness - God is totally righteous, man is only relatively righteous and needs God's righteousness for salvation.

iii) Judgment - Satan and all unbelievers are judged.

c) REGENERATION (John 3:5)

Man without the spirit cannot understand spiritual things. The Gospel is spiritual, the Holy Spirit makes the gospel a reality to the unbeliever when one believes and is "born again" or regenerated. (1 Corinthians 2:14)

### **2. TO THE BELIEVER AT SALVATION**

a) Regeneration (John 3:1-16, Titus 3:5)

b) Baptism (Acts 1:5, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 4:5) We are baptized into union with Jesus Christ and become part of the body of Christ. This is not to be confused with the Filling of the Holy Spirit.

c) Indwelling (Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20) From salvation on the believer is indwelt by the Spirit.

d) Sealing (2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1:13, 4:30). This ministry relates to your future with God, the guarantee of eternal security.

e) Distribution of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11) Each believer receives a spiritual gift at the point of salvation in order to function in the body of Christ.

### **3. TO THE BELIEVER AFTER SALVATION (Spirituality)**

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit after salvation is the means by which we live the Christian life ordained by God (Ephesians 2:10, 5:18)

a) The Filling of the Holy Spirit (spirituality through confession of sin and surrender of the life). (1 John 1:9 Ephesians 5:18)

b) The character of Jesus Christ is produced by the believer when he is filled with the Spirit. (Galatians 4:19, 5:22, 23)

c) Glorification of Christ (John 7:39, 16:14, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20)

d) Fulfilment of the Law. (Romans 8:2-4)

**4. We must understand and apply Biblical Confession of Sin, and ensure we are letting the Holy Spirit truly loose in our lives to guide us moment by moment.**

**CHRISTIAN LIFE: CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

1. Forgiveness is by the death of Christ. (Matthew 26:28, Revelation 1 :5)
2. Divine forgiveness is to all who believe in Christ. (Acts 10:43, Acts 16:31)
3. The penalty of sin was paid by Christ on the cross. (Hebrews 9:22, 2 Corinthians 5:21)
4. When a believer sins his fellowship with God is disrupted. God forgives these sins upon confession and cleanses from the unknown sins in the believer's life as well as known sins. (1 John 1: 5-10).
5. Jesus Christ is our propitiation. (I John 2:1,2 )
6. In human forgiveness we are told to forgive others even as God has forgiven us. (Ephesians 4:32). This can only be accomplished by the filling of the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:22,23)
7. Steps towards restoration of fellowship
  - [a] Examine yourself for genuineness of motivation. [2 Corinthians 14:5]
  - [b] Act on what you see. [Romans 4:7-8]
  - [c] Deal with any sin by confession. [1 John 1:9, Psalm 66:18]
  - [d] Forget the sin which you have confessed. Do not proceed into a pattern of guilt. [Philippians 3:13-14, Psalm 103:10-12]
  - [e] Resume your active spiritual walk. Avoid areas where you might be tempted by the sin which so easily besets us. [Hebrews 12:12-15.]
  - [f] Be reconciled to others once you have been reconciled to God. [James 5:16]
  - [g] Get moving and grow up. [2 Peter 2:17-18]

**HOLY SPIRIT: FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

1. The Holy Spirit indwells every believer. We are commanded to allow Him to fill (or fully control) our lives (Ephesians 5:18). Let us begin with real clarity about the definition here; the Holy Spirit wants complete control of us.
2. The filling (controlling) of the Spirit can be broken by:
  - a) Grieving the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) - sin, doing something you shouldn't.
  - b) Quenching the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19) - not doing something you should (like quenching a fire, allowing the flame to go out).
3. The filling (controlling) of the Spirit can be restored by confession of sin and full surrender to do the will of God (1John 1:9)
4. The Spirit produces the very character of the Christ in the believer: (Galatians 4:19, 5:22, 23, Ephesians 3:16, 17, Philippians 1:20, 21, 2 Corinthians 3:3)
  - a) The fruit of the Spirit:
    - i) Galatians 5:22-23 - Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control.
    - ii) Romans 14:17 - Righteousness, Peace, Joy.
    - iii) Colossians 3:12-15 - Compassion, Kindness, Humility, Gentleness, Patience, Forgiveness, Love, Peace, Thankfulness.
    - iv) 1 Thessalonians 1:3 - Faith, Love, Endurance, Hope.
  - b) Rejoicing in Christ (Philippians 3:1, 4:4).
  - c) Loving one another (John 15:12, Romans 12:10, Ephesians 5:2).
  - d) Striving for the faith (Philippians 1:27, Jude 3).
  - e) Putting away all sin (1 Corinthians 5:7, Hebrews 12:1).
  - f) Abstaining from all appearances of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22).
  - g) Submitting to injuries (1 Corinthians 6:7).
  - h) Subduing the temper (Ephesians 4:26, James 1:19).
  - i) Shunning the wicked (2 Thessalonians 3:6).
  - j) Abounding in the works of the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58 1 Thessalonians 4:1).

- k) Showing a good example (1 Timothy 4:12, 1 Peter 2:12).
- l) Following after that which is good (Philippians 4:8, 1 Timothy 6:11).
- m) Perfecting holiness (2 Corinthians 7:1, 2 Timothy 3:17).
- n) Hating defilement (Jude 23).
- o) Overcoming the world. (1 John 5:4-5)
- p) Adorning the gospel. (Philippians 1:27, Titus 2:10)
- q) Forgiving injuries. (Romans 12:20)
- r) Living peaceably with all. (Romans 12:18, Hebrews 12:14)
- s) Visiting the afflicted. (James 1:27)
- t) Sympathising with others. (Romans 12:15, 1 Thessalonians 5:14)
- u) Honouring others. (Romans 12:10)
- v) Submitting to authorities. (Romans 13:1-7)
- w) Being content. (Philippians 4:11, Hebrews 13:5)
- x) Walking worthy of the Lord. (Colossians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 2:12)
- y) Walking in the newness of life. (Romans 6:4)
- z) Walking as children of light. (Ephesians 5:8)
- aa) Glorifies Christ in his body. (Philippians 1:20, 21)
- bb) Christ is at home in his body. (Ephesians 3:16,17)
- cc) A lifestyle which honours God in the presence of men. (2 Corinthians 3:3)

5. The filling of the Holy Spirit in every believer only occurs in two dispensations:

- a) Church age Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:22,23
- b) Millennium - Joel 2:28, 29 (characterized by ecstasies)

**5. We must understand and apply Biblical truth into our daily lives, and grow up in the Grace and the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 3:18.**

**CHRISTIAN LIFE: FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

1. The filling of the Holy Spirit produces fruit in the life (love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance). (Galatians 5:22-23) Note that "fruit" is singular - all the characters are produced at the same time in the filling of the Holy Spirit.

2. The Fruit of the Spirit is also listed as follows:-

Romans 14:17 - Righteousness, Peace, Joy  
 Colossians 3:12-15 - Compassion, Kindness, Humility, Gentleness, Patience, Forgiveness, Love, Peace, Thankfulness  
 1Thessalonians 1:3 - Faith, Love, Endurance, Hope  
 Galatians 5:22-23 – below in three sections.

2. In principle, it is the imitation of God (Ephesians 5:1). The reason we are left on the earth after salvation is to produce fruit. (John 15:16, Philippians 4:17)

3. We produce fruit by hearing the word (Mark 4:20-28) and applying it to our lives. (Hebrews 4:2)

4. Failure to grow and produce fruit means divine discipline even to the point of the believer's early departure from this life. (Luke 13:6-9 John 15:2)

5. Rewards in eternity are distributed on the basis of faithful production. (1 Corinthians 3:10-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10)

6. Fruit is not to be confused with spiritual gifts. These are listed in (Romans 12:6-8; 15:18-19; 1Corinthians 12:8,10; 1Corinthians 12:28-30; Ephesians 4:1) and other places.

7. One can know Christians by their fruit (Matthew 7:16-20; Luke 6:43-45; 1John 3:10 & 11; John 15:8) especially by their love (John 13:35) but not by their gifts, as Satan can imitate them (2Thessalonians 2:9).

8. Three natural fruits represent some of the facets of the fruit of the Spirit in the Hebrew world view: Apples - love, Grapes - Joy, Pomegranates - Peace. Look these fruits up in a biblical concordance.

9. In Galatians 5: 22-23 the fruit of the Spirit is divided into three sections

[a] Love, Joy and Peace towards God;

[b] Patience, Goodness and Kindness towards others;

[c] Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control towards oneself.

## CHRISTIAN LIFE: MATURITY (Tie this together with the Doctrine of Stability next on this page)

Categories of Believers

1. Standpoint of Spirituality:

- a) Spiritual believer - the Holy Spirit controls the inside of the believer (Romans 8:6b).
- b) Carnal believer - the sinful nature controls the inside of the believer (Romans 8:6a).

2. Standpoint of Growth:

- a) Baby - one who has just received Christ as Saviour.
- b) Adolescent - one who has learned some doctrine but is not yet in the application state.
- c) Mature - one who knows and applies doctrine and spends a maximum amount of time in the filling of the Holy Spirit.

3. Relationship of Maturity and Spirituality:

- a) Spirituality is an absolute. The Holy Spirit either controls or He does not. One cannot be a little bit carnal. If he is carnal he is NOT spiritual.
- b) Maturity is speeded up by spirituality, but a baby believer can be either carnal or spiritual, and a mature believer can be carnal or spiritual.

## CHRISTIAN LIFE: STABILITY

1. God is able to keep us and bless us (Ephesians 3:20, Hebrews 7:25).

2. Stability comes when we know God; when we have grown up in his Word. Maturity brings with it stability (2 Peter 3:18, 2 Timothy 1:12).

3. The alternative to a stable life of faith is to be tossed about by every pressure; this occurs when there is no doctrinal application in the life (James 1:6, Ephesians 4:14, Revelation 3:8).

4. Believers need stability to stand fast against the wiles of Satan who is a danger to those with no doctrine: We are told to:

- a) Stand fast in the word 1Corinthians 16:13.
- b) Stand fast in our liberty Galatians 5:1 cf. Romans 14:1ff, 8:9-13.
- c) Stand fast in one spirit (no pettiness) Philippians 1:27.
- d) Stand fast in the Lord (in fellowship) Philippians 4:1.
- e) Stand fast in doctrine 2 Thessalonians 2:5, 16,17.

5. Strength and stability comes in a close relationship with the Lord. By faith we stand: 2 Corinthians 1:24, Psalm 59:17, 62:7, 144:1.

6. God has supreme power at His fingertips for us. Isaiah 59:1.

7. Our faith should stand secure in this power, for we are kept by it in all things, therefore we should be confident. 1Corinthians 2:5, 1Peter 1:5, John 16:33.

8. God is able to make us stand through the work of the Holy Spirit upon the word in our lives. Romans 14:4, Jude 24.

9. Strength and stability come from the impact of the Holy Spirit's work upon the word in our life as we believe and apply it. e.g. Sarah Hebrews 11:11, Paul 2 Corinthians 12:8-10.

10. Profile of the stable believer under pressure 2 Peter 1:3-16.

## CHRISTIAN LIFE: MATURITY - SIGNS OF MATURITY (ROMANS 15:1-15)

1. Helping others (v 1-3) The mature believer should bear the infirmities of the weak (v 1; cf. Galatians 6:2). Paul includes himself as a believer of mature strength.

- a) A mature believer is characterised by:
  - i) Knowing doctrine.
  - ii) Knowing promises.
  - iii) Spending a maximum amount of time by the filling of the Holy Spirit.
  
- b) A weak or immature believer may be:
  - i) A new believer.
  - ii) An ignorant believer who does not know the Word.
  
- c) A mature believer bears the infirmities of the weak believer by:
  - i) Giving information about the Word (doctrine, promises, procedures). This may be in private conversation.
  - ii) Giving advice based on the Word.
  - iii) Exercising grace; listening to and helping others with problems.
  
- d) The mature believer is not to "please himself" (v 1,2):
  - i) He is not to feed his ego or brag about helping others. It should never be done for self-glory or self-stimulation, but for God's glory.
  - ii) Christ as the supreme example (v 3):

He did not please Himself; but as a man He received more pressure than we will ever have. The Old Testament says, "the reproaches of Israel ('them') that reproached the Father ('Thee') fell on the Son ('Me') on the cross." Paul quotes a Messianic Psalm (Psalm 69:9). Christ was under maximum pressure when He bore our sins on the cross.

## 2. Knowledge of the Word of God (v 4)

- a) The Old Testament ("things written aforetime") was the only scripture existing at the time Romans was written. The canon is now completed.
  
- b) the purpose of the Word:
  - i) Learning - doctrine God wants us to know.
  - ii) Patience - faith in the long distance race. Believing moment by moment.
  - iii) Comfort - in trials and difficulties of life.
  - iv) Hope - for the future. Believers know where they are going.

## 3. Attitudes (v 5-6)

Believers are to see others from the divine viewpoint and be "like-minded one toward another". Their one purpose in life, after salvation, is "with one mind and one mouth, glorify God" (v 6). This is only possible from the divine viewpoint.

- i) We are all saved by grace. Christ died for us when we were His enemies (Romans 5:8).
- ii) We all have the same spiritual privileges and responsibilities (except spiritual gifts).
- iii) Every believer has a sinful nature but have different ways of expressing it.
- iv) We all get spirituality the same way (filling of the Holy Spirit) and all grow the same way, by the Word.

v) God loves each believer with the same amount of love, whether we are in or out of temporal fellowship.

## 4. Fellowship as the basis of grace (v 7)

- a) Believers are to receive one another as Christ received them.
- b) He received them in GRACE to the glory of God.

## 5. Ability to distinguish between Israel and the Church (v 8-12)

- a) Christ was a minister under the Law (v 8).
  - i) He was born, ministered, died, arose and ascended under the dispensation of the Law.
  - ii) Therefore all He said (except Matthew 16 and John 14-17) amplified the Mosaic Law, confirmed the four unconditional covenants to Israel and the future of Israel with Him as their King. Some principles He gave are re-stated in the Epistles as the Christian way of life.
  
- b) Before the Law was given (v 9) the Abrahamic and Palestinian covenants promised blessing to the Jews, that the Gentiles may glorify God for His mercy.
  
- c) Paul quotes (Psalm 18:49; Deuteronomy 32:43; Psalm 117; Isaiah 11:1-10). (Jesus Christ as the root of David and Jesse, is to reign over the Gentiles too.)

## 6. Faith that appropriates (v 13)

- a) The God of hope is to fill the believer with joy and peace in the sphere of believing. Faith is the means.
- b) Faith appropriates salvation, restoration to fellowship, filling of the Holy Spirit, doctrine, promises.

## 7. Knowing the operation of grace (v 14,15)

- a) A mature believer realises all he has is because of God's grace and he operates his life on the basis of grace.

b) Grace is manifested in the believer in:

- i) Salvation (Ephesians 2:8,9)
- ii) Prayer (Hebrews 4:16)
- iii) Suffering (2 Corinthians 12:9)
- iv) Releasing power (2 Timothy 2:1)
- v) Growth and stability (2 Peter 3:18)
- vi) Restoration and fellowship (Hebrews 12:15; 1 John 1:9)
- vii) Producing works (1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Corinthians 6:1; 9:9)
- viii) Christian way of life (2 Corinthians 1:12; Hebrews 12:28).

**6. We must understand and apply the love of God for the lost and the rebellious, and reach out to them in loving concern. We must also understand the strategy and tactics of the one who opposes every good work.**

**CHRISTIAN LIFE: EVANGELISM**

1. All believers are ambassadors for Christ, and are obliged to give the gospel to unbelievers. (Acts 1:8, 2 Timothy 4:5)

2. Two forms of witnessing - with the lips (2 Corinthians 5:18-21) and by the life (2 Corinthians 3:3)

3. The gospel is "good news".

4. Sin is not an issue. Jesus died for all sin on the cross. The penalty has been paid. The issue now is "Do you trust that Jesus Christ has died for your sins, and was raised from the dead to give life to all who believe on Him?" People choose to either rely upon Jesus Christ, or upon their own good works, to be saved. (Romans 8:1, 9:30-33)

5. What about the heathen who haven't heard?

- a) God is totally fair, and everyone has the chance to be saved
- b) Unlimited Atonement (Colossians 2:14,15)
- c) God's will - none should perish (2 Peter 3:9)
- d) Man's negative will - God consciousness - Gospel hearing.

6. Witnessing is impossible except through the power of the Holy Spirit. (John 16:8-13) The Holy Spirit convicts of

- a) Sin because of unbelief.
- b) Righteousness.
- c) Judgment because of Satan being judged (Matthew 25:41)

7. The natural man needs the Holy Spirit to understand the gospel (1 Corinthians 2:14)

8. The Bible is the weapon of witnessing. (1 Corinthians 15:3, 4)

9. Biblical Pattern of Witnessing. (1 Thessalonians 2:1-12)

- a) Effective contact (v.1 )
- b) The gospel must be given even under opposition. (v.2)
- c) The gospel must never be compromised or watered down - (v.3)
- d) The believer in whom the gospel is deposited is tested by God and should not be for the praise of man. (v.4)
- e) Flattery should never be part of the gospel. (v.5-6)
- f) Whilst the gospel should not be given to get praise from men it should be given in love without cost (v9)
- g) The gospel must be followed up (v 10) with discipleship and teaching (v11) so that the new believer can become spiritually self reliant. (v.10-12)

10. Your obligation to witness (Romans 1:14-16): you are a debtor (v14), you are ready (v15), you are not ashamed (v16)

11. Win souls, not arguments. Stay on the gospel, don't get side-tracked.

**ANGELS – SATAN'S STRATEGY AND TACTICS****STRATEGY**

Whilst God is trying to call out personnel to stand against evil forces in the Angelic Conflict, Satan is trying to confuse and blind minds as to what God's plan is. He does this by deceit. He tries to keep the clarity of the gospel from the unbeliever and to keep doctrine from the believer so that they will not grow.

His other strategy is to try and eliminate Israel by pogroms and anti-Semitism. It is said that Christ will gather the Jews not Zionism as is happening at the moment. If he could destroy all the Jews, which he cannot, he will destroy the Plan of God. Right at this moment God is working to protect Israel, even in their present unbelief in their Messiah.

**TACTICS**

These are the techniques used by Satan to try and achieve his strategy. His main tactic is implied in John 8:44 where he is seen as the father of lies. There is sometimes just enough truth in Satan's lies to hook the unwary into deception and falsehood. He is a liar and has been from the beginning. The only truth is Christ the Word. Any one who deliberately distorts the truth is working for Satan. Rejection of Christianity is a rejection of the truth. By application all religions that ignore the centrality of Jesus person and work are therefore false.

Christians as a whole have failed to move out into all the areas of life, and therefore have not claimed leadership in these areas, and they have been forfeited to the unbeliever. Such areas as literature, history, philosophy, politics, music, science and the like.

The Christian should be a conqueror ideologically and not militarily. During this time Satan tries to cause conflicts such as creation versus evolution, relativism versus absolute values, internationalism versus nationalism. In the international area he causes war and strife. In our "latter days" we see just how vigorous is the satanic control of so many areas.

Satan tries to confuse the believer. In Romans 6:6-11 the Bible says that the sin nature shall not have dominion over you. We are told to resist the devil and he will flee from you. Sometimes when we resist it does not work because the temptation is from your sin nature. You need to apply relevant Scriptures to your situation.

Satan will try and mislead you in the area of divine guidance. Satan can set up situations that will lead you out of the geographical will of God which can even extend to martyrdom. You need to do things in the Lord's timing. Satan also perverts Scripture, as seen in Luke 4:11, with the temptation of the Lord Jesus Christ where he misquotes Psalm 91:10,11.

When people wrote the Scriptures they did not sit around with a blank mind. They used their minds and were led by the Holy Spirit as to what to write. When they had visions or dreams their minds were not turned off. When confronted by the Lord Jesus Christ Paul spoke to Him, He used his mentality.

In 2 Corinthians 11 ministers can act as messengers from Satan. Part of the Satanic attack is to get people to look inwardly rather than at their position at the right hand of the Father. With the case of suffering and sickness its source is sometimes difficult to determine as it can be the purpose of God or it can be an attack of Satan. This is hard to discern.

Often the more spectacular manifestations is the method used to distract one from more important things such as studying and applying the Word.

With regards to the Word we have the teaching of false doctrine such as saying that Christ did not actually die on the Cross, that He was not truly human nor divine.

In relation to the gospel we have the picture in the parable of the Sower and the Seed of the bird coming down and taking away the seed that is sown. In regard to worship he will mock God through senseless words. Matthew 16 tells of Christ commanding Peter to get behind him as Peter is enthusiastic but has wrong concepts which Jesus saw as Satanic in origin as they did not conform to the Word of God. In Acts 5 Satan filled the heart of Ananias and Sapphira. He works in the children of disobedience.

Later on we will look at the strategies and tactics of the church. Spiritism and Occultism is something that the Christian should not dabble in. In Deuteronomy 18:9 the Jews were told not to seek guidance from spiritism or occultism. The main attacks on the church nowadays are not through cults, but through spiritism, political action to "save the planet", eastern religions and alcohol/drugs. This is an attempt to break down the mentality of the soul. By these means he is opening the person up to demonic forces and belief systems.

**ANGELS: SATANIC REVIVAL**

1. Satan has evangelists. (2 Corinthians 11:13-16)
2. These evangelists preach another gospel. (2 Corinthians 11:3-4, Galatians 1:6-9)

3. Behind every Satanic revival is Satanic doctrine. (1 Timothy 4:1)
4. Satan has a communion table. (1 Corinthians 10:19-22)
5. Satan has counterfeit righteousness in his religious system. (Matthew 23:1-36)
6. In the satanic revival he has a smokescreen. (2 Corinthians 4:3-4)
7. Satan has an angelic organisation. (Ephesians 6:12)

What is our response to this knowledge of the enemy's strategies and tactics? By prayer we bind his deceits. By Bible teaching we expose his deceits. By praise and worship we proclaim victory over his deceits.

**7. We must understand and apply the principles of Christian service and serve the Lord with all our heart, our mind, our spirit and all our physical energy.**

**CHRISTIAN LIFE: SERVICE**

1. Our duty is to surrender our entire lives to God. (Romans 12:1)
2. Willingness is essential. (Judges 5:2, 8:25, Isaiah 1:19, 2 Corinthians 8:3)
3. Service in the big things requires by faithfulness in the small things, not being entangled with the "stuff" of this world. 2 Timothy 2:3ff
4. Monotony and difficulties are transformed into the opportunities with the correct attitude. (Matthew 6:33)
5. Everything we do should be "as unto the Lord". (Colossians 3:17)
6. Service to Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men. (Romans 14:18)
7. Our work should be completed. (John 4:34, 17:4, Acts 20:24, 2 Timothy 4:7)
8. The example of Christ. (Matthew 20:28, Luke 22:27, Philippians 2:7)
9. Qualities of our service:-
  - a) It is demanded. (Hebrews 12:28)
  - b) It should be immediate. (Matthew 21:28)
  - c) It is abundant. (1 Corinthians 15:58)
  - d) It is according to ability. (Matthew 25:22, Luke 12:48)
  - e) It is in co-operation with God. (2 Corinthians 6:1)
  - f) Must be exclusive (Luke 16:13)
  - g) In the power of the spirit (Romans 1:9)
  - h) Undertaken in Godly fear (Hebrews 12:28)
  - i) Motivated by love (Galatians 5:13)
10. It is :-
  - a) Following Christ. (John 12:26)
  - b) For him whom all Christians serve. (Colossians 3:24)
  - c) Service to God. (Acts 27:23).
11. It requires:-
  - a) Turning from idols. (1 Thessalonians 1:9)
  - b) Fasting and prayer. (Luke 2:37)
  - c) Ministry of the Word. (Acts 6:1-4).
12. Benefits of Service:-
  - a) It glorifies God. (Matthew 5:16, John 15:8)
  - b) It enriches life. (1 Timothy 6:18-19)

- c) It gives a pattern for imitation. (Titus 2:7)
- d) It encourages others in their tasks. (Hebrews 10:24)
- e) It shows neighbourliness. (Luke 10:36-37)
- f) It lightens life's burdens. (Galatians 6:2,16)
- g) It demonstrates love. (John 21:15-17)
- h) It demonstrates faith. (James 2:17-18, 1 Peter 2:12)
- i) It is Christlike. (John 13:12-15)

### **CHRISTIAN LIFE: SERVICE – SERVANT LEADERSHIP**

1. The unnamed servant in (Genesis 24) is the picture of the model servant as well as a type of the work of the Holy Spirit.
2. The model servant does not pre-empt his master (v2-9). We should wait upon the Lord and not run ahead of time.
3. The model servant goes where he is sent (v4,10). We should be in the geographical will of God.
4. The model servant does nothing else. God has specific tasks for every believer to perform. We should concentrate on our own area and not get sidetracked.
5. The model servant is prayerful and thankful. We should always realise where our power comes from and not get proud when we have spiritual blessings and prosperity.
6. The model servant is keen to succeed (v 17-18, 21). We should be keen to evangelise (Romans 1:14-16).
7. The model servant speaks not of himself but of his master. Who and what we are is not important, who and what Christ is of the greatest importance (v 22, 34-36).
8. The model servant presents the true issue and requires a clear decision. [v49] We should present the gospel and other doctrine clearly and expect results.

### **CHRISTIAN LIFE: SOLDIER: CHRISTIAN SOLDIER IN EPHESIANS 6**

1. General Scripture Ephesians 6:11-17.

This passage relates to the armour which the Roman soldier wore and analogises its use into the spiritual realm.

2. USE OF THE ARMOUR Ephesians 6:11

"Put on the whole armour of God." Ephesians 6:11a. We are instructed to "put on" (ENDUO Gk) - this means "to clothe" - it is a command by God to the Christian soldier. We are to "clothe ourselves" or to "dress ourselves". "Whole armour" (PANOPLIA Gk) - the complete armour "of God" (THEOS Gk) true source of the armour is God.

The whole armour of God is given in Ephesians 6:14-17. It comprises:-

- a) The Belt of Truth Ephesians 6:14a
- b) Breastplate of Righteousness Ephesians 6:14b
- c) Boots Ephesians 6:15
- d) Shield Ephesians 6:16
- e) Helmet of Salvation Ephesians 6:17a
- f) Sword of the Spirit Ephesians 6:17b

#### **PRINCIPLES:**

- i) The Roman soldier wore all his armour for his own safety and protection.
- ii) When the Roman soldier was highly disciplined he ruled the world.
- iii) When the Roman soldier became degenerate the Empire declined and fell.
- iv) The Roman soldier was in the army 7 days a week.

3. SPIRITUAL ANALOGY

- a) As Christian soldiers we wear our armour for our own safety and protection.
- b) When we are highly disciplined in the Christian life we are very effective in our warfare.
- c) If we become degenerate or apostate our Christian witness and effectiveness declines and we become casualties in the spiritual warfare.
- d) The Christian soldier is in the battle 7 days a week. A part time soldier never amounts to an effective soldier.

"That ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." Ephesians 6:11 b.

"to stand" (histemi (Gk) - to hold your ground. We are in a spiritual warfare and the purpose of the armour is to hold our ground against the foe. "the wiles (methodeia dia Gk) - tactics, cunning or fraud" "of the devil" (diabolos Gk).

We therefore have the whole armour of God to enable us to stand firm against the devil's tactics.

**PRINCIPLE:** By learning the tactics likely to be employed by your opponent the Christian soldier is able to go on the offensive using the sword of the Spirit - the Word of God. (verse 17).

**4. THE ENEMY (Ephesians 6:12)**

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world against spiritual wickedness in high places."

"Wrestle" - "the wrestling" (he pale estin Gk) hand to hand combat not wrestling as a sport. "not against flesh and blood" – not against other members of the human race, but against:-

a) PRINCIPALITIES (arche Gk) Ruling demons.

b) POWERS (exousia Gk) - Demons with authority, officers in the demon army.

c) RULERS OF THE DARKNESS OF THIS WORLD (kosmokrator Gk) - world rulers, demons close to the seats of government such as the demons of (Daniel 10:13, 20).

d) SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS IN HIGH PLACES (pneu matikos poneria Gk) - the demon army.

Quite clearly our fight is against a spiritual foe. From Hebrews 2:7 we know that as human beings we are inferior to angels. Therefore in order to have success against superior forces we must have God's armour firmly on each day in the power of the Holy Spirit, and remember 1 JOHN 4:4 at all times.

**5. BE PREPARED (Ephesians 6:13)**

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all, to stand."

Since the resurrection ascension and session of Jesus Christ the attack of Satan has moved from the line of Christ to the individual believer. Our dependence on the whole armour is imperative yet many believers reject part or all of the armour. There are many casualties as a consequence.

We are again exhorted to put on the whole armour of God.

**6. THE BELT OF TRUTH (Ephesians 6:14a, Isaiah 11:5)**

"Stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth."

The Roman belt was a wide girdle of leather worn around the waist from which hung the scabbard for the sword and loops for rations and equipment. The leather belt was supported by a cross shoulder strap studded with metal plates with thick leather strips hanging down to protect the lower body. The belt therefore was the basic armour on which the defence of the soldier was based.

**PRINCIPLE:** Our basic defence is the truth contained within the Word of God. The sword of the Spirit hangs securely to the believer by means of the promises contained within it. The greater our trust in the truth of God the greater our protection against the enemy.

**7. THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (Ephesians 6:14b, Isaiah 59:17)**

"and having on the breastplate of righteousness."

The breastplate (thorax Gk) was usually made of leather overlaid with metal strips. Shaped like a sleeveless coat it was in the higher ranks often covered with gold or silver. The belt held the breastplate firmly in place its primary function being to protect every vital area of the soldiers body.

**PRINCIPLE:** The righteousness of Christ protects us. We stand in his righteousness alone. He gave us his righteousness at the cross (2 Corinthians 5:21). Our continued protection through his righteousness is through the filling of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) (See topic Holy Spirit: Filling of the Spirit).

**8. THE BOOTS (Ephesians 6:15, Isaiah 52:7)**

"And your feet shod, with the preparation of the gospel of peace".

The boots (caligae Gk) were made of hobnail studded leather soles 15mm (1/2") thick secured with a leather tie over the instep and round the ankles. Good footwear is essential for the soldier with infantry still being essential even in these days of sophisticated armaments.

**PRINCIPLE:** In spiritual terms the feet are often analogised to service. The feet take one towards the enemy. The gospel of peace is a direct attack on the enemy. Peace in this context talks of reconciliation between God and man. (Romans 1:14-16, 2 Corinthians 5:18-20).

**9. THE SHIELD OF FAITH (Ephesians 6:16; 1 John 5:4)**

"Above all taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

The Roman shield (thureos Gk) was shaped like a door being made of glued planks wrapped in canvas or calf skin, the top and bottom edges being protected by iron. The shield was the most active of the defensive armour carried by the Roman soldier. Loss of shield often meant death to the soldier.

**PRINCIPLE:** The Christian soldier's shield is walking actively in the promises and principles set out in the Word of God. If we do not use our faith we can become spiritual casualties. Using the shield of faith we can claim -the 7,000 promises for the Christian walk including Isaiah 41:10; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 John 4:4.

**10. THE HELMET OF SALVATION (Ephesians 6:17a; Isaiah 59:17)**  
"And take the Helmet of salvation."

With the exception of the standard bearer who wore a wolf's head, every Roman soldier wore a metal helmet (perik Gk) usually of bronze over an iron skull cap. This protected the most important part of the soldier - his head.

**PRINCIPLE:** Before a person can be a soldier for Christ, he has to be born again. He has to wear the helmet of salvation. One of the wiles of the devil is to make the believer feel that he has lost his salvation. If a believer loses his assurance of salvation he takes his helmet of salvation off and is totally vulnerable to the attack of the foe.

**11. THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT (Ephesians 6:17b)**  
"and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God."

The sword referred to is the machaira or Roman short sword. The sword represents the basic offensive weapon for close combat. It was only effective when out of its sheath.

**PRINCIPLE:** The sword in its sheath is potentially devastating but it is only effective when it is used to combat and defeat the enemy. We must therefore conquer using principles, promises and doctrines from the Word of God.

**CHRISTIAN LIFE: REWARDS AND CROWNS**

1. Rewards and Salvation are carefully separated in the scriptures. Salvation is a free gift from God, rewards are for meritorious service in the power of the Spirit.

2. Salvation - a free gift to the lost. (Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 6:23, John 4:10) - an everlasting possession. (John 3:36, John 5:24, John 6:47)

3. Rewards - to the saved who faithfully work for the Lord. (1 Corinthians 9:24, 25, Revelation 22:12) - distributed at the Judgment Seat of Christ. (1 Corinthians 3:11-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Romans 14:10)

4. Rewards as Crowns:-

- a) The incorruptible crown - for faithfulness in exercising self control. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)
- b) The crown of glory - for faithfulness in suffering. (1 Peter 5:4)
- c) The crown of life - for faithfulness under trial. (James 1:12, Revelation 2:10)
- d) The crown of righteousness - for faithful testimony. (2 Timothy 4:8)
- e) The crown of rejoicing - for faithful service. (1 Thessalonians 2:19, 20, Philippians 4:1)

## **SUMMARY OF THE SEVEN FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES**

1. Consecration in life. We must understand and apply, the true nature of sin and evil, and their consequences in the life of the individual, the community and the nation.
2. We must understand and apply our knowledge of the perfect, holy character of God.
3. We must understand and apply into the fabric of our daily lives the choices we make to be either walking in the Spirit (Spirituality), or walking in the power of our "Old Man" (Carnality).
4. We must understand and apply Biblical Confession of Sin, and ensure we are letting the Holy Spirit truly loose in our lives
5. We must understand and apply Biblical truth into our daily lives, and grow up in the Grace and the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 3:18.
6. We must understand and apply the love of God for the lost and the rebellious, and reach out to them in loving concern. We must also understand the strategy and tactics of the one who opposes every good work.
7. We must understand and apply the principles of Christian service and serve the Lord with all our heart, our mind, our spirit and all our physical energy.

## **NOTES**

## **CHAPTER 2 - A CASE STUDY OF REVIVAL UNDER MAXIMUM PRESSURE**

### **THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE PROPHET EZEKIEL**

#### **REVIVAL BEGINS WITH A NEW APPRECIATION OF THE CHARACTER OF GOD**

**Ezekiel 1:1-3.** Like all of the Lord's key servants he has a time of quiet reflection and preparation before fully beginning his ministry; in his case five years of slave work on the "River Chebar" (likely the Royal Canal in Babylon). Ezekiel is a man who will challenge us like Jeremiah to find our path in life and walk it in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Many believers get frustrated when they find these quiet times, when not much appears to be happening, but they are normally times when we learn the great lessons of prayer, patience and determination. There will be times for us all when we have "quiet times", when not much is happening in our life, other than our physical money earning work. At such times we are to grow through application of the Word of God into all the normal details of our daily life, and wait for the Lord's door to open.

Paul had a similar time in Arabia, and in Tarsus, before the door opened in Antioch for the greatest service of any of the apostles. **Acts 9:20-25, 29-30, Galatians 1:16-24.** Paul wasn't inactive during this time, any more than Ezekiel, or than we are to be inactive as we wait on clear guidance. He worked for his bread, he witnessed, he studied and he lived a holy and moral life. In short he prepared in the small things for the great things later to be opened up for him. It is failure to serve in "small things" that hinders most young believer's service for the Lord; it is failure to serve in Sunday school, Bible class, prayer group, car park attendant, . . . etc. **Matthew 25:23-30, Luke 16:10-15, 19:14-26.**

If we love the Lord we serve his people in any way we can: if we do not serve the Lord's people, then we do not love the Lord as we claim to. If we do not daily serve and study and pray, the Lord will not be able to use us when he brings revival to the church and the nation. God uses prepared and positioned servants.

NOTE – in the seminar we will not read all the verses recorded here, only the bold typed ones, but the others are to be read as part of your own study and follow up to the class work. If you are using these notes to teach this topic – ensure you read aloud each verse/passage in bold type, but if time permits read aloud them all around the study group.

Ezekiel begins his ministry at the time appointed by the Lord, with the growth of false prophets in Babylon, and the arrival of a letter by Jeremiah to correct and rebuke them. That is the Lord's signal to rise up and preach the truth for Ezekiel, and it is a clear call. He begins straight away by opposing the false prophets of Babylon, who backed those of Jerusalem, and prophesied that the captivity would be over soon and everyone would return back to the city of Jerusalem with Jehoiachin restored to the throne. His first role as a prophet is thus to back up Jeremiah's letter that was received in Babylon at this time. Jeremiah 28:1 – 29:23.

Just as false hopes were given by evil lying prophets of the days of Isaiah as the Assyrians swept in to judge the Northern kingdom, so false hope was given to the sinners of Judah one hundred years later. False prophets may be known by their message, for it is always one that suits the desires of carnal men. If a message appeals to the carnal man, and does not confront behavioural and attitude problems that separate the natural man from God, then it is likely false!

Satan delights in a message of total positivity without any demands for holiness or dealing with sins; he has, since the very beginning preached a message of blessing without blood sacrifice! Genesis 4:1-15. Refer back to the doctrinal study, ANGELS – SATAN'S STRATEGY AND TACTICS. Satan likes "good news", but his news is deceptive and distracting from the truth of sin, judgment and the holiness required for service. Satan appeals to man's pride and this is exactly what happened here, with the foolish king Zedekiah plotting with other kings, lying to Nebuchadnezzar and planning for rebellion against him. Jeremiah 24:3ff, 27:3ff, 51:59ff.

Ezekiel, like Jeremiah, was considered a traitor to nationalism, and his early messages were ignored by the people and under the Lord's specific direction, he had to turn to novel ways to attract attention, and so he acted out many of his messages. These strange actions drew the crowds and then he spoke the direct message to them. He remained very unpopular until the city and temple were destroyed. Then only, were all the facts in for the exiles and they faced the terrible truth about the false prophets. So, he prepares for five years, then preaches for six years before he is accepted! (597 BC – 592 BC – 586 BC). 597 was the end of the second siege of Jerusalem, and Ezekiel is one of the captives, while 586 is the end of the third and final siege, from which few survivors arrive in Babylon, but the impact is great.

He not only had to face the hatred of the people, but also he faced the personal tragedy of the death of his wife. Ezekiel 24:16-17. Ezekiel, like Jeremiah, shared the suffering of his people and had to accept that Nationalism, though a legitimate and ordained part of the created order, was to be subordinated to submission to a foreign power at this time. He did not allow his love for country and desire for national liberty and self determination to distract him from the higher spiritual truth that his people needed to learn through their military and political defeat.

Ezekiel suffered greatly in his life, and this was not a result of his sin, but of the sins of his nation. Through his suffering the glory of the Lord was shown down the ages. **John 9:1-5**. In today's world the so called "prosperity gospel" is preached by many. It teaches that unless you are being physically and financially prospered then you are living in sin and operating beneath the level God intended for you. This has been discussed at various points in the study on Jeremiah (Refer to the EBCWA CD for the Jeremiah and full Ezekiel Commentary). Note also the passage **Hebrews 11:30-40**, and note that of the twenty categories of "blessed" saints, ten are prosperous in time and ten suffer, but all win eternally.

Like his older contemporary Jeremiah, Ezekiel did not receive great financial and other physical blessings, but he walked the path God had for him in his life time, and so has blessed others down the centuries and will have received spiritual blessings in the heavenlies that will have satisfied his soul. **Ephesians 1:3, 2 Timothy 4:18**, Hebrews 3:1, 11:13-16, 12:18-25.

This is another study, like all other Biblical study, that proves again and again, that the Lord's people are blessed, but it may not be in this world. It reminds us again that blessing here is an irrelevancy, for time is very temporary! Satan is interested in blessings in time that don't last. The Lord is interested in blessings in eternity that do last forever for us. Let us stand with the Lord and his mighty prophets and apostles. Refer back to the study on REWARDS AND CROWNS.

Ezekiel lived by the Royal Canal (River Chebar) which apparently was just outside the main city of Babylon, with the other captives, but was, by year six (591 BC) in his own home, taking Jeremiah's injunction to the exiles seriously to build houses for themselves, for their captivity would be seventy years. Jeremiah 29:4-15, 28, Ezekiel 8:1.

He was a young man of twenty five when taken with King Jehoiachin and so, like Daniel would have been exposed through his early years to the messages of the prophet Jeremiah. The Lord brought these three men together in time for maximum impact in the time of crisis, each in their own way and to their own audiences.

This was similar to the provision of God one hundred years earlier, during the days of the Assyrian crisis in Israel and Judah, when the Lord brought four prophetic voices forward for the people to repent and be saved; Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, Micah.

The Lord does not leave his people without doctrine for the time of crisis, for the truth alone sets us free. John 10:10. When the Lord moves to revive a church and a nation, he moves with a number of people in different places at the same time, so that God's servants encourage one another. Our challenge is to work with our brethren to the glory of God and his church.

Ezekiel preaches from age 30 through until at least age 57. His last dated message is twenty seven years after he begins his work. Ezekiel 29:17. Traditions recorded later indicate he served until the years just before the decree of Cyrus, others that he died in his early sixties; we simply do not know other than the fact that he died before seeing the return of the exiles. He spoke, he lived his message, and he completed a written form of the message for the exiles to remember the Lord's words to them and then he quietly steps off the stage of history. This is our role also in this life; to play our part until our end. What most consider "success" in time is often apparently denied God's servants, and yet they are blessed.

Ezekiel is not an example of the so called "prosperity gospel", any more than Jeremiah is, for he lived and died a slave to Babylonian power, and on the way he faced the hatred of his people for many years, and the loneliness of the death of his wife early in their marriage. He had no children, and so no descendants to return with the exiles after Cyrus publishes his decree. He has however the same level of eternal blessing as Jeremiah. And all of us who share his words now are his children in faith. He has a large spiritual family, and in heaven you will not find him moaning the fact that he did not have earthly power, wealth, acknowledgement, or genetic posterity.

Those who care too much for such things, care for things that Satan can hook them on. Let us, in obedience to our Lord, focus on the spiritual rewards that he cannot target or rob us of. **Matthew 6:25-34, 20:25-28, Mark 10:29-31, 1 Timothy 4:8-9, 2 Timothy 4:6-8.** As we focus upon eternal realities, so we become of earthly use to our Lord, for we are beyond the distractions of the earthly prosperity that Satan uses to hook and hold his people, and distract the Lord's people from their task.

**Ezekiel 1:4 And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire.**

Each of the images here speaks of God's power, majesty and mystery, yet also of his focused energy upon the affairs of his people and his determination to judge them for their sins. The image of the whirlwind of power coming from the north, and clouds with fire, had been used before to speak of God's judgment. Psalms 18:7-15, 50:3, 97:1-6, 104:1-7, Isaiah 21:1ff, Jeremiah 1:13-14, 4:6, 6:1, 23:19, 25:9, 32. Habakkuk 1:8-9. The image was therefore clearly understood to mean that the Lord was pouring out his wrath upon his people. The image here is also similar to the words used by Moses to describe the mountain upon which he met with God. Exodus 19:16-19, 24:16-18. We are all, by these sights, reminded that our God is a "consuming fire". **Hebrews 10:28-31, 12:28-29.**

**Ezekiel 1:27 And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. 28 As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake**

The throne and the lights that flashed around it have given some the label for it as "The Rainbow Throne". The dominant colour again is that of shining bright metal; the sort that made mirrors in the ancient world. Fire has, as always, the significance of holiness, purity, power and activity. The throne and the one upon it is thereby tied to the angelic beings and the wheels as standing for the holy, pure, just and mighty power of the ruling God. Exodus 24:17, Daniel 7:9-14, Revelation 1:10-18.

Notice how John in Revelation has the various elements of Daniel and Ezekiel's visions drawn together on the Island of Patmos, so he sees that the one seen by all was the Lord Jesus Christ and he will rule over all the earth one day; He is the judge. It is glimpsing this fact that is an essential factor in the start of revival.

The rainbow is then seen in the space above the throne, and as with the throne generally, there is a bright light all around and behind it, giving it more depth of colour and brightness itself. This is a rainbow, yet it is far more glorious and awesome than any rainbow he has ever seen before. John also sees this throne and the angels representing the one who sat upon it, as they do here with Ezekiel. Revelation 4:1-3, 10:1-4.

It is not necessary, as some commentators do, to speak of the wheels moving the throne around as the wings move the angelic beings. The three elements here (angelic creatures, wheels and the One upon the throne) are kept separate, yet in the same frame for Ezekiel who sees them sequentially, then all together in the one composite scene. He is looking from time-space into eternity, and so is as baffled as we are reading his space-time attempt to describe things.

Rainbows are the promise of God that the world will not be destroyed by water again, but will be the visited planet, upon which Messiah will rule. This was an important hope, for the Babylonian invasion looked apocalyptic and final, with few of

the nation surviving. Was the nation to be wiped off the earth, as Noah's disobedient neighbours were? The answer is given in the symbol of the rainbow; most will perish, due to their rejection of their Creator Saviour God, but the remnant according to grace, will be delivered, though by the "ark of exile". Babylonian Captivity has become the means of deliverance for all who go there. The "days of Noah", like the rainbow itself, becomes an important symbol for the post-flood world of the importance of obedience to the Lord, as well as the principle of salvation of all who turn to him in repentance, the grace of God towards the remnant. Revival will come to the remnant as they accept God's plan for them.

The importance of the last part of the vision is key to our understanding of the whole. The King of kings and Lord of lords, who Ezekiel sees on the throne of the heavens is reminding him, and the exiles, that although the throne of David will soon be empty upon the earth, it's destiny is to have the true "Son of David" upon it one day, and for that ruler, who is God, to rule all the earth from Jerusalem. Psalms 78:70, 89:1-4, 132:11-18, Zechariah 12:7ff, Matthew 9:27, 21:9, 15, 22:41-46, Revelation 22:16.

With Babylonian power paramount it is important for the Jewish people to see that God is still on the throne and all men who sit upon thrones do so only at his pleasure and are removed for disobedience. Israel will soon be without an earthly king, but they had spent more time without one than with one, and the loss of the last corrupt members of a godly line should cause no excessive distress, for their King still sits on a throne and the king of Babylon bows to him. Daniel 2:46-49, 3:28-29, 4:34-37.

The response of all who get a glimpse of the glory of the Creator Saviour God is as Ezekiel's was here; they fall upon their face on the earth. Worship to the Lord God is the correct response and demonstrates the reality of the vision and the relationship of the prophet to the Lord. Those who do not bow in absolute humility have not seen the Lord in truth.

Revival begins when we see the Lord in truth! When you hear a so called "prophet" speak of the things of God and he does so with great swelling words and clearly is impressed by himself and his visions, then you know for sure you have a fake before you; do not listen to such a person. Those who have received a glimpse of the Almighty fall on their faces as dead men; they are overwhelmed and quiet before the majesty of the one who rules heaven and earth! Genesis 17:3, Leviticus 9:22-24, Daniel 8:17-18, 10:7-11, 16-17, Matthew 17:5-8, Acts 9:3-7, Revelation 1:17-18.

Revival begins when we bow before our Lord, and worship him as King of kings and Lord of all Lords, taking his words seriously. As we take the Word seriously, so the Holy Spirit seriously works through us. **John 15:7-14, 16-17.**

**Ezekiel 2:3 And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day.**

Ezekiel is now told the nature of his tasking for the Lord. He is to be sent to the Exiles and the Lord does not mince his words regarding their attitudes to himself and therefore what Ezekiel can expect as his servant. He stands with Moses, receiving more abuse than obedience. Numbers 20:10, 32:13-15, Deuteronomy 9:18-24, Ezra 9:7, Nehemiah 9:16-31. The Lord made a similar thing clear to the disciples and ourselves regarding what should be our realistic expectations for ministry acceptance. **Matthew 24:9, Mark 13:13, Luke 21:17, John 15:18-27.**

In the Gospel of John passage you can see how dealing with hatred depends on the filling of the Holy Spirit and is so linked by the Lord. To handle the hatred of all our friends is only possible with spiritual power. The Jewish people through this period will be reduced in numbers from hundred of thousands to a few thousand because of their rejection of the Lord their God. Rebellion against the Lord brings disaster with it.

Ezekiel stands in good company in speaking to those who refuse to hear. This is the lot of most prophets and preachers down the centuries. As pastors we must remember the Lord's Word on this matter and rejoice in revival, but not be discouraged by the rejection of the truth as we faithfully preach it. Isaiah 6:8-10, Jeremiah 1:7-10, 7:1-5, 25:3-7, 26:2-9, 36:18-24, Mark 12:1-11. No one is too bad to be revived by God's Holy Spirit! If they are still alive, keep praying for them, for there is hope! We are not held responsible for the lack of revival unless we do not preach the truth!

**Ezekiel 2:4 For they are impudent children and stiff hearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD. 5 And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.**

The Lord tells it like it is! These people have disobeyed the Lord, and that means they have not taken him seriously, and despised his words and his servants. They are "impudent". This word translates to be, "stiff of forehead", and means people who have set their faces against the one speaking.

We speak today about seeing people for whom "the shutters have come down"; they reject the words being told them. Their faces and their hearts are hardened against the truth, for they prefer to live the lies that bring immediate pleasure. I regularly deal with believers who have entered into sexually immoral behaviours and they keep doing them because they feel so good at the time! They set their faces and their hearts against correction, because they are enjoying their sin and do not see the consequences yet and prefer to not hear anything that might stop their sin! Proverbs 21:29.

It is clear to Ezekiel what the task is, and it is made clear that the majority will initially at least, not hear him at all, and they will actively harden themselves against him and his words. He is to ignore their response to him, and he is not to

beat himself up about their negativity, nor is he to blame himself, his methods, nor change anything about what he says. He has a task to say everything the Lord tells him and he is to ignore the faces of the audience.

This is not standard communications theory advice, but perhaps it is the advice that we all as pastors of the Lord's flock need to hear! We are today encouraged by many to change the message if it is not getting through, or at least change our methods. Ezekiel will use a variety of methods to get things across to these people, (he will preach, proclaim, act, use drama and stories) but the message will not be changed.

This man is an example to us today and we are to learn from all that the Lord tells him. At times we may get no positivity at all from the Lord's people, but we are tasked to preach the truth anyway, for they must know that a servant of the Lord has been with them. They must know the Word of God and so receive the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 10:12-16, John 16:8-11, Acts 13:46, 2 Corinthians 2:14-17. It is the Holy Spirit that changes people, not our persuasiveness.

When the men and women of God cease to hear and apply the Word they come under divine discipline, but when the pastors stop teaching them the truth the pastors come under double discipline! Luke 12:47-48, James 3:1-2. We are the light bearers of the Lord and are to let the light shine before all through the truth we proclaim and live. Matthew 5:14, John 8:12, Philippians 2:14-16, 1 John 1:5-10

**Ezekiel 2:6 And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.**

The message from the Lord is to have our eyes upon him, not upon the people or problems around us. Hebrews 12:1-3. When we are ordered by the Lord to do an action we can do it without fear, because his orders have provision and protection within them. There is no need to fear doing the Lord's clearly revealed will, for that is our place to be at that time; the only place for fear is where we are not where the master wants us. While this is easy to say and simple to understand, it may be difficult at times to apply, and this is understandable when we see total rejection or hatred from our audience. It is easy to doubt the Lord's direction at such a time.

It may also be that the normal human fear of losing everything impinges on the pathway before us. Fear of loss is a normal thing and pastors are not to despise themselves when they feel fear at times, for such things underlie our humanity and remind us that we are "sons of men", we are still afflicted by Adam's weaknesses at times and do not walk in spiritual power every moment. 1 John 4:15-19 is an encouraging passage, but it may convict and depress at times as we face the fact that we are in fear at this moment. The remedy is within the passage; draw closer to the love of the Lord for us and rest in his love, and therefore his perfect provision and protection within the plan for our life, at this time and forever.

Many great saints of the Lord have needed this encouragement to resist and reject fear as they resist sin itself. It is important to remember that when an order is given to a person, it is because they have fallen into the very thing being spoken of. **Ezekiel is frightened, and so will we be at times!** It is what we do with our fear that makes it sin, not the fear itself!

I personally love the work of the great Jewish psychiatrist Dr Viktor Frankl, a man who went through Auschwitz Concentration Camp. He says, "There are some things, that if that happen to you and you don't lose your mind, it is only because you didn't have one to lose!" Many great men faced fear and received the same encouragement from the Lord that Ezekiel does here, and we also can receive this same comfort. Gideon faced fear in Judges 6, Elijah faced fear in 2 Kings 1:15, David many times through the Psalms faces and resolves fears, Isaiah in Isaiah 51:12, and Jeremiah receives a similar encouragement to Ezekiel in Jeremiah 1:8, 17-19.

The briars and thorns are a reminder of the Fall and the curse of sin. When such things pop up in our gardens and troubles in life we do not need to weep and wail and ask the Lord why, we simply turn to Genesis 3:17-19 and remember that we live in a fallen world and such things are normal here until the Lord's rule over the entire planet after his Second Advent.

Ezekiel will have to face the "thorns" of life, facing hard slave based work, although being our equivalent of a university educated man as a priest. He would have to face the death of his wife and being childless and at times friendless. He would feel the sorrow of the Lord over sin and death and so share his sufferings. He would, through his sufferings enter into the closest fellowship possible with the Lord, that is the lot of those who share the pain of sin and death, and so minister to fallen mankind with the compassion of their Saviour.

**Many walk through life in rejoicing all the time, and be happy for them, but none of the choicest servants of the Lord in the scriptures were such people; God's servants did suffer, but found joy in the midst.** Even though we have seen the following verses before, read them all again now. Isaiah 53:3-8, 2 Corinthians 1:5-7, Ephesians 6:14-20, Philippians 1:20, 28, 3:10, 2 Timothy 1:7, James 5:10, 1 Peter 2:19, 4:13.

Some people are indeed like scorpions, with vicious bites in their tails, causing great discomfort, emotional distress and pain. We are not to be dismayed at such people, nor put off by their evil words, deeds and looks. The worst attacks on pastors will tend to come from amongst the flock itself. These people may be genuine believers but carnal and

disobedient, or they may be Satan's people insinuated within the church, but it is to be expected that great hurt will be caused by the very people you are called to serve and to whom you express the Lord's great loving care.

Do not be dismayed pastor, for you are in the best company, so draw closer to the Lord's love for you and the flock, and so stabilize yourself on an eternal truth, and let the carnal or the evil have their hatred, but keep yourself in the love of God and leave justice with the Lord, for he will deal with all such people. Proverbs 30:5-6, 11-14, Isaiah 51:7-8, Jeremiah 18:18-23, Amos 7:8-17, Hebrews 11:24-29, 1 Peter 3:13-20.

**Ezekiel 2:7 And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious. 8 But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee.**

There will always be many more false prophets than true at any time in history. There will be more negative than positive volition, but **that is irrelevant to our call to preach the truth**, for part of our role is to test and assay the hearers of the truth. Our role is to proclaim truth and by their responses then all who hear are judged. Our job is not to judge, the Word of God will judge them and show them for what they truly are, but our job is to do what we have been tasked to do; tell them the truth before the Lord their God.

Whether there is response or not, we are not to be concerned about anything other than faithfully and fully proclaiming the truth of God. In our day responses are counted and these are used to judge the ministry, whereas the Lord's only issue is that we faithfully, clearly for all to understand, fully, and consistently proclaim the truth he has given. Jeremiah 1:14-30, 23:28, 26:2, Jonah 3:2, 2 Timothy 4:1-5.

Ezekiel, like all pastors, is to focus only on one issue, and that is his love for, and obedience to the Lord his God, and then making sure of the message and giving it clearly and always. He must hear the words of the Lord, really understand them, and not rebel within against them, as his peers do. The challenge is to walk in the Spirit in total obedience to what the Lord reveals to him.

The Lord then, within the vision, gives to him a scroll and he is to eat the scroll. While this is a strange thing to do there is a message here; in our terms this would be to have a vision of eating a large Bible tract. The vision gives the spiritual direction; he is to ingest the Word of God, fully digest it and absorb it into every fibre and part of his being; he is to live the Word, then proclaim the Word. He is to feed on the Word of God, grow spiritually and mature in his relationship with his God, and so he will be able to serve in all situations he finds himself within

**REVIVAL COMES AS WE DEDICATE OURSELF TO THE REALITY THAT WE SEE REVEALED HERE!** God calls us to trust him and obey him and focus upon him, and then in prayer and worship serve him and feed his people with truth from his Word, and proclaim his truth to all who will hear it. A true shepherd of the sheep is not put off by obnoxious sheep! We are here to serve the flock of God, and at times the Lord's sheep can be very annoying! We are still to serve them the food the Lord has prepared for them from his Holy Word.

**Ezekiel 3:16 And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 17 Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.**

He must sit with the overwhelming revelation of the truth that he has seen (verse 15). Only after seven days does the Lord speak with him. Once again we confront the truth of the Lord's work through his prophets. Even to the key man in the right place for service, specific revelation is a rare thing, and the prophet spends far more days in quiet prayer than he has minutes of specific revelation.

Beware the fake prophets, for they are disclosed by their many revelations, for they fill their own heads with their own thoughts and say, "thus saith the lord", but they speak of their own vanity, not God. We will see many examples of these false prophets in Ezekiel, just as we saw them through Jeremiah; for in the times of crisis Satan has more of his people on the ground than ever before, in order that he may create maximum chaos amongst God's people.

The nature of the Lord's call is now spelled out to Ezekiel; he is to be like the city "watchman". His role is to give advance warning of disaster coming. He receives God's sovereign call; and so let us pause and remember that the Lord calls us with HIS CALL. He gives spiritual gifting, and spiritual calling, and power to fulfill the call. **1 Corinthians 12:7-13.** Let us humbly seek the Lord's call upon our lives and having identified our call, let us seek his strength to fulfill it. Holy Spirit power alone will enable us to do spiritual work; we cannot do any work for the Lord's glory in our human strength for that would lead to our glory!

His call upon us is met with his provisions for us, and his spiritual gifts to us are for the glory of the Lord and the building up of his church. Acts 2:4, Romans 12:1-8, 1 Corinthians 12:28-30, Ephesians 4:11. We have all the spiritual assets we need in order to serve the Lord in this life and we need to sit before him in joyful contemplation of his provision in the midst of the stressors of the ministry God's Word contains his holy and purifying message to sinful and willfully ignorant mankind. His Word is a sword and it cuts through all our excuses, and all our false priorities, and all our foolish desires, and leaves us naked before Him without excuse for disobedience. The Word produces the "heat" of indignation and realization of the truth about our state. When we minister the Word of God we are cut through first, then we cut others. 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:11-13.

Let us recommit to the task of ministry and to receiving the blows of the Lord's sword upon our own lives first, for the Lord hates hypocrisy, and so he desires we sit with him in contemplation first, that we might be clean vessels for his use to cut through the hypocrisy of others. If we are hypocrites we cannot correct other hypocrites! Ezekiel must sit with the truths he has seen for seven days before he is ready to speak. Job 2:13, 42:2-6, 10, Jeremiah 23:9-12, Habakkuk 3:16-19.

We are to be the clean vessels of the Lord's service to minister truth in holiness to others. Read each of these verses in the order here and sit with them for a time, for we are to be like Ezekiel and sit with the Lord's demands upon our lives. Romans 9:19-24, 2 Corinthians 4:5-9, 2 Timothy 2:20-26, Hebrews 9:21-22, Revelation 2:26-29.

NOTE – follow up this seminar by re-reading these sections and checking out each and every Bible reference fully.

**Ezekiel 3:18 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.**

We have a solemn obligation to give all men the truth, no matter how bad they are. Proverbs 14:32. We can look at some people and say, "no, they are too evil, I don't like them, I won't speak to them". To fail to warn the evil man means the Lord holds us responsible for their death and damnation; in other words we are judged, receive discipline and lose rewards over such an attitude. Isaiah 3:10-11, Luke 13:1-5.

We are to tell the truth with bluntness and compassion on the lost. Jonah had this towards Nineveh, and with good reason, for the Assyrians had murdered many members of his own family and country, but the Lord rebuked him! The Lord rebukes us for our slackness in warning the most evil men to repent. Jonah 3:10 – 4:11.

Now don't go too far here, for we do not lose our salvation for such an attitude, for we cannot lose that, but we are judged if we do not do what we ought here, for the free gift of salvation we have received is for all mankind. The worst sinner has already been saved, that was Rabbi Saul (Paul), so no man you ever meet is to be denied the truth! 1 Timothy 1:15-17, 1 John 1:9 - 2:2. No-one alive cannot be prayerfully reached with the truth through the Spirit if Saul could become Paul!

**Ezekiel 3:19 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.**

The responsibility for response to the truth is with each man and woman, but for the prophet, pastor or evangelist, it is to give them the truth. Having done what we are tasked with in purity and with precision we have done our work and can leave them with their response. Proverbs 29:1, Jeremiah 42:19-22, 44:4-6, Luke 10:8-12, Hebrews 2:1-3, 12:24-25. The preaching of the Gospel is a sweet smelling savor to those who respond and are saved, but to those who reject the message and the messenger it is the smell of death and they will hate us, just as Jesus warned. John 13:16, 15:18-25, 2 Corinthians 2:14-17, 1 John 3:11-15.

**Ezekiel 3:20 Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling-block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand.**

We all may meet temptations and fall into them. None of us are exempt from temptation, and if we do not walk in the power of the Holy Spirit we can all fall into the grossest of sins. Those who consider themselves above temptation will fall. Because they have already fallen into pride and arrogance and they lead always to greater sins. Proverbs 10:8, 11:2, 16:17-19, 1 Corinthians 4:11-12, 9:24-27, 10:12, 1 Timothy 3:6-7.

We are to be without fears of what might happen to our lives, but we are to be fearful of sin and evil and be on guard at all times against its author who seeks to eat us for his lunch! 1 Peter 5:6-11. Those who do not fear sin and its consequences will end up falling into sin they could have avoided with foresight and preparation.

We are without excuse in these matters, for the orders for the Christian's daily life are clear; be filled with the Spirit, resist the devil, put your armour on, and stand for truth. Drawing close to the Lord in prayer, praise and Bible study defeats the enemy and sin in the life. One old saint is quoted; "let the Cross come between you and the world's temptations, or the world will come between you and the Cross". Refer back to the doctrinal study – WALKING.

The Lord does indeed lay "stumbling blocks" ahead of his foolish saints, in order to stop us, knock us onto our backs in our wrongful tracks, and so send us back to our knees in repentance and earnest seeking of guidance. We are to warn the foolish saints with the same vigour as the evil unbelievers! We are not to say within, "they are foolish, they never come to Bible Class, so I don't care about them!" God does care about them and you and I are to warn the obnoxious and foolish saint with the same sense of responsibility as to the unbelievers we meet. We are tasked with warning all we meet of the truth, when ever the Lord opens the door to speak spiritual things we are to take that opportunity to give the truth.

The death of the once righteous person, but who has gone into gross disobedience, is what we call "The Sin Unto Death" (Refer back to the doctrinal study on this earlier). All the past righteousness of such a person is as nothing, if they go too

far and must be eliminated from this world. The Lord moves against his own if they stray from the path of truth, and we as the Lord's pastors are to severely warn all believers who stray lest their blood be on our hands! Acts 5:1-11, 1 Thessalonians 5:14, Jude 20-25. Revival and its subsequent blessing begins when we all take the Lord's demand for holiness, pastoral responsibility, and honesty seriously.

The Lord is spoken of as a stumbling block also. Firstly we find this in Isaiah 8:11-15. The Lord's presence and message is a reminder to all men that they either build their lives upon his "rock" or they trip up on the "rocky" truth of their sinful mortality. They often will get offended at the Lord because of this, but they have no reason to, for they need to seek his face and deal with their sins, which are the source of their fall! Romans 9:31-33, 1 Corinthians 1:22-25, 1 Peter 2:4-8.

The Lord is either the corner stone of the building of our life, to his glory, or he is the "rock of offence". We need to be sure that if we preach this message, that we have the Lord firmly in our lives as our corner stone, and that we ourselves are not tripping our own selves up with persistent sin!

**Ezekiel 4:12 And thou shalt eat it as barley cakes, and thou shalt bake it with dung that cometh out of man, in their sight. 13 And the LORD said, Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, whither I will drive them.**

This was something that would only be done when all animals were dead; it was an extreme measure and would defile the eater of the bread. Ezekiel was a priest and so to empty his own toilet container, dry his own faeces and then use the dried matter to cook his bread was a forbidden and awful thing to do. He was to do this in the open sight of the people. This was forbidden as a matter of the Mosaic Law, but is here ordered by the Lord to teach a principle. Leviticus 5:1-3, 7:21, Deuteronomy 23:10-14.

It was such a disgusting thing to do that all the people will speak of the priest who plans to do, or does such a thing. As they stand with disgust and see him do this, and ask what it means, so then he is to tell them what it means, just as with each action the Lord will direct him to. This man is ordered to do this for 390 days! The smell of any dung fire is awful, even when the faecal matter was dried and somewhat deodorized, and the taste of the bread made over such a fire would be tainted.

Ezekiel is still to say grace over and eat this bread for the full period of time. He is to actually suffer to ensure the message gets across, and so must all pastors be ready to suffer any indignity to get the truth across to God's foolish people. **There is not such thing as the dignity of the clergy, only the dignity of the truth**, and all legitimate means are to be taken to get it across. This is the order of the Lord and it is to be published as the Lord's order to the prophet, although he will find this too hard to follow and the Lord will modify it for him (verse 15).

**Ezekiel 6:6 In all your dwelling places the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate; that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, and your idols may be broken and cease, and your images may be cut down, and your works may be abolished. 7 And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and ye shall know that I am the LORD.**

These people had accepted the compromise religion of paganism in order to give themselves "good luck" and prosperity, for the pagan religions centered around prosperity and fertility. Why do Christians today follow the stars and horoscopes and practise Feng Shui and other "good luck" practices? It is a deep part of our pagan past and is always with us, and is to be resisted and fled from! 1 Corinthians 6:18, 10:14, 1 Thessalonians 5:22, 1 Timothy 6:10-11, James 4:7.

They were keen for the "comforts of home", they wanted wealth and pleasant days in the sun with prosperity and a polite religion that didn't interfere in their immorality and sexual pleasures. Like their ancestors they sought the "leeks and garlic of Egypt". Like Solomon their hearts were led astray by lusts that they failed to resist. They wanted life style – the Lord wanted holiness before him, and obedience to his Law. Numbers 11:5-10, Deuteronomy 17:16-20, 1 Kings 10:22-29, 11:1-10.

It was this pre-occupation with life style and keeping up with the nations around about that led to lust replacing holiness. We are not called to be like our neighbours in wealth and it's showiness, but to be different to them and a witness to them. We are called to cause them to lift their eyes to heaven, not to the car we have in our garage, or the size and wealth of our house and it's contents!

When God's people get distracted by the trappings of the wealth of this world they cease to minister heavenly things, and they have already entered into idolatry, which is defined as the worship of things ahead of or alongside to God. It is this last fact that escapes the notice of most; they think they can have it both ways! The result of trying to live in both worlds is death and destruction of all you have worshipped.

We are specifically ordered to not be "entangled" by the things and cares of this life. 2 Timothy 2:3ff. We are strongly told to separate ourselves from even the appearance of evil in order to serve the Lord with a pure witness to the truth. Refer back to the doctrinal studies on CHRISTIAN LIFE – SERVICE, and MODEL SERVANT

**Ezekiel 6:10 And they shall know that I am the LORD, and that I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them. 11 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.**

Verse ten reminds us that these people really thought the Lord would let them by with their sins and not judge them at all. This same false viewpoint haunts our own day; with people speaking of the “god of love” and indicating by their talk that the Lord will not judge sin and in the end all will be forgiven and we will all be there in heaven, with the evil members of the family somehow purified and good.

This fantasy religion has been around since the beginning of time. It is as false now as it was in the days of Ezekiel and Jeremiah, but it has as many adherents now as then! The vast majority of people alive today believe in an after life, and believe that “all will be well then”, so that they are in heaven without any payment accepted for sin, for sin and evil are not acknowledged. **Jeremiah 5:12-14, 44:16-19.**

It is the blood-less religion of Cain that we see here and right through until now, for Satan’s main strategy has always been to tell mankind that, “it doesn’t matter; God will overlook it!” These are satanic lies and lead men to death! We must correct this or that person will go to hell under satanic delusion. Refer back to the doctrinal study, ANGELS – SATANIC REVIVAL. Also refer to **Ezekiel 6:19, 7:3, 7:6-9.**

**Ezekiel 8:12 Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? For they say, the LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth.**

The most shocking thing was not the old pagan shrine hidden within the Temple; the real shock was that it was being used for worship by seventy leading men. Was this in fact the very Sanhedrin of Israel? Each man was there with an incense burner in his hand, and they were being led by a son (includes grandson) of Shaphan, who had led the revival under Josiah. 2 Kings 22:3, 14. While some descendants of this family were positive to the Lord and his prophets (Jeremiah 29:3, 36:10, 39:14, 40:5), some were evil, as here. Families were divided by the truth of the Word of God and were found on both sides of the great eternal divide. The truth always divides friends and families, as it convicts of all forms of self centeredness and there will always be some who select pleasure now above eternal reward. Matthew 10:34-39.

Each of these men have a censor in their hands. This was a thing set aside for the priests alone. Numbers 16 records the deaths of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, for burning incense before the Lord when they had no right to. Worship that is acceptable to the Lord is godly and biblical and both the men, and their families, of the days of the Exodus, and these men in the days of Ezekiel, are neither godly nor biblical in their worship.

Both groups claimed to be worshipping the God of Israel, but wanted to do it their way and wanted to add in elements of paganism and further, wanted to argue that all worship was acceptable to the creator, who they argued all people worshipped, each in their own way. What they were doing was, as we have seen, what Cain did. They had rejected the need for blood sacrifice for sin; they had likely rejected the notion of sin itself! They rejected the Mosaic Law’s clear instructions regarding a set aside priesthood and in arrogance claimed a right and place that was not theirs.

We are reminded as we read this, that we need to follow instructions and not act as if the details do not matter to God, for they do. They acted as if the Lord does not see anything, but he sees all things, even to the inward thoughts of the heart. Psalms 51:6, 73:11, 94:7-12, Isaiah 29:15. Let us pray before our God now, that we daily be obedient to the Lord and so open the door for his anointing to lead a revival amongst our own people, as Ezekiel led his people back to true faith.

## **CHAPTER 3 - BIBLICAL REVIVALS**

### **AN OVERVIEW OF TWENTY FOUR BIBLICAL REVIVALS**

We will spend some time going through each of the biblical examples of revival, and in each we will ask the following questions.

1. What is the role of the prepared believer who leads the revival?
2. What is the role the Lord takes? What is the Holy Spirit doing amongst the people?
3. What is required of the people? How does their faith “work out”, and be expressed?
4. What is the application of these principles to ourselves in our cultural context?

Take your time and read through each passage. If you are working in a group, discuss each revival together using the four questions above, and any others you find useful. Pray over application of the lessons from each revival into your own society and the needs of the church within it. Let the Holy Spirit apply the truths of each revival to your situation.

### **REVIVALS FROM THE BIBLE**

Twenty four Biblical revivals and Reforms are recorded here to be examined.

1. Jacob - On his return from Bethel he ordered his whole household to put away their false gods and to wash and change their garments. The false gods were buried. Jacob then built an altar to the Lord. (Genesis 35:1-4)
2. Moses - This occurred when the Israelites saw the parting of the Red Sea as a mighty act of God. Moses led the Israelites with the Song of Moses whilst his sister Miriam provided the music. (Exodus 14:31-15:21)
3. Samuel - He exhorted the nation to put away false gods and prepare to worship the one true God. (1 Samuel 7:3-6)
4. David - When the Ark of the Covenant was brought into Jerusalem for the first time. (1 Chronicles 15:25-28, 16:1-43, 29:10-25)
5. David - At the dedication of the materials for the future Temple. (1 Chronicles 29)
6. Solomon - At the dedication of the Temple. (2 Chronicles 7:1-3)
7. Asa - Who removed the idols and Sodomites out of the land. (1 Kings 15:11-15)
8. Jehosophat - Who led a revival when he cleansed the Temple and ordered the sanctification of the Levitical priesthood. (2 Chronicles 19)
9. Elijah - After the contest with the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel. (1 Kings 18:21-40)
10. Jehu - When he exterminated all worshipers of Baal and their temples. (2 Kings 10:15-28)
11. Jehoida - As High Priest he led the people in a covenant to turn from their idols and worship God. (2 Kings 11:17-20)
12. Hezekiah - He cleansed the Temple resulting in a revival. (2 Chronicles 29-31)
13. Manassah - When this wicked king became a believer he ordered the destruction of all idols. (2 Chronicles 33:11-20)
14. Josiah - When in cleaning up the Temple the Book of the Law was accidentally discovered. Its public reading before the king and nation had a profound effect. (2 Kings 22-23)
15. Ezra - When as a result of his preaching on separation the nation Israel turned from their practice of marriage alliances with the heathen in the land. (Ezra 9-10)
16. Nehemiah - After he had rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, Ezra publicly read and taught from the Word of God, causing a great revival. (Nehemiah 13)
17. Jonah - Despite a negative attitude, his preaching caused a mass conversion of the Assyrians at Nineveh. (Jonah 3)
18. Esther - Following the repentance of the Jews with the overthrow of Haman. (Esther 9:17-22)

19. John the Baptist - Who preached of the coming Messiah, warning them to repent. (Luke 3:2-18)
20. Jesus - When, after speaking to the Samaritan woman there was a revival in Samaria. (John 4:28-42)
21. Philip - Whose preaching regarding the kingdom of God produced a great revival in Samaria. (Acts 8:5-12)
22. Peter - At Pentecost after his great sermon. (Acts 2)
23. Peter - At Lydda after he had healed Aeneas. (Acts 9)
24. Paul - At Ephesus during his third missionary journey. (Acts 19:11-20)

Jesus speaks of the principles behind revival and the response of people to the Word of God in Matthew 13:16-32, 36-43.

**NOTES**

## **CHAPTER 4 - BRITISH AND AMERICAN REVIVALS**

### AN OVERVIEW OF SOME REVIVALS – SEEING THE “WAVES OF THE SPIRIT” THROUGH THE YEARS FROM THE SIXTEENTH TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURIES.

As we study the moves of the Holy Spirit upon the Lord's church through the ages we see the same principles applying as we saw in the days of the Bible itself. I will cover only a very brief overview of some of the moves of the Spirit in Britain and the United States, mainly because these are so well written up and easily studied. Reflect, as you study these events upon the history of your own church within your own city or nation.

As a man in my sixties now, I can look back and see several “Waves of the Spirit” which swept through my local church area over my life, and I see that the healthy state of the church today is due to the faithfulness of the saints of early days who heeded the call to renewal and revival in past days, and the pastors today, who weekly call the flock to repentance from sin and lead the people in worship in holiness before the Lord their God. In my old area of Blockhouse Bay, here in Auckland, New Zealand, the Holy Spirit has moved in power in these time frames.

1. Establishment of the “Green Bay Mission” in the 1920s, as the result of the vision and money of one man who built the church, and supported the first preachers, with the result that many were saved and there was the firm and stable establishment of an evangelical witness in the local area.

2. As the area grew after WW II a godly Bible scholar became the pastor and preached thoroughly through the Bible for a number of years, sowing biblical seed. The church was small but they heard the Word consistently and had a mid-week prayer meeting where they waited upon the Lord in prayer and with solid Bible study to back it.

3. The harvest occurred during the late 1950s when Billy Graham conducted a crusade in Auckland City, and I still remember, as a little boy, the joy of the people as they returned late at night from the bus journey to those crusades, which ran every night in a football stadium for over a week. There was revival that was seen in an increase of the children's Sunday School to nearly 500 children each and every week attending through the 1960s.

4. In the mid 1960s there was a local crusade for evangelism with a visiting American preacher, and I, with many of my teenage friends was led to the Lord. The youth Bible Class became the new power house of the church, with over 50 youth attending breakfast together every Sunday for fellowship and serious study of God's Word.

5. In the late 1960s the Charismatic revival swept through the churches, leading to the rebirth in power of the local Anglican Church and the expansion of the Baptist Church. The momentum of this revival carried on through until the 1990s when the ALPHA seminars began, leading to a new “Wave of the Spirit”, and expansion of the church into the community, with many more saved.

6. Currently Weekly Bible study Cell groups (after John Wesleys' model – as we will see below) are the power house of the local churches with more serious Bible based preaching strengthening the saints for the next wave.

We look for the Lord's next move! This is the correct attitude for all believers, as we daily seek the Lord's renewal of our spiritual life, that we might walk through the day in the Filling of the Holy Spirit and that we might be ready to play our part in any revival that is to come. The two things that emerge from my home church are solid Bible teaching and regular and solid prayer for the Holy Spirit to move upon the people through the Word that they knew thoroughly.

With this in mind, let us look at some of the historic revivals through the years 1520-1920. I pick this period because it is so well studied and you will find many church history texts and websites with these things covered well for follow up reading. Please build on this study and make it more relevant to your own nation's spiritual history.

### **1. THE REFORMATION REACHES ENGLAND**

Like all great moves of the Holy Spirit, no single man gets any credit, but many men and women play their part as spirit filled obedient believers. The first group, well able to be studied, that lays the foundation for revival is the LOLLARDS. They were a preaching lay order established by John Wyclif (1329-1384) who did the first complete English language translation of the Bible and sent these preachers out with parts of it in manuscript form to preach to the ordinary people in their own language the saving words of God. Many hundred of the Lollards died as martyrs, as the organized church persecuted them. Only in heaven will we fully hear of their wonderful work to reach the lost and bring revival to England. Hebrews 11:32-40.

Wyclif's wonderful work of trying to get the Bible into the language of the common people was followed up by John Tyndale who in the 1520s made a new English translation, building on Wyclif's earlier work. Tyndale was strangled and burned to death in Brussels in 1536 on the orders of Henry the 8<sup>th</sup> of England. His dying words, “Lord open the eyes of the king of England”. Wyclif's work had been influential in Europe as well, and in Bohemia a similar movement occurred led by John Hus, and these two men's work kept the flame of truth burning until rekindled by others.

The sadness of Tyndale's death, is that reform had already started in England under some of the Anglican bishops, but they were unable to stop his murder. They used the king's divorce as a reason to split from Roman Catholic control and establish a national church in England, and then they rewrote the prayer book, published an English language Bible (based on Tyndale's work!) and re-organized preaching so that the people were evangelized in their parish churches. There was great opposition, many old priests leaving the newly reorganized churches and with many godly martyr's deaths for the faith through the rest of the century on both sides of the divide.

The reforms ran from 1534-1553, when the Roman Catholic queen Mary came to the throne and promptly stopped all reform and persecuted the leaders of the revival, burning at the stake the leading bishops of revival. Over five hundred died in the flames that followed. There was fanaticism on both sides, but the Bible triumphed through frail men.

Mary died in 1558 and Elizabeth the First came to the throne and a new age of revival began with the Bible lifted up again, and the growth of evangelical churches through into the next century. Both queens are buried together in a side chapel in Westminster Abbey in London; together in burial, but are they different in their eternal destinies?

## **2. THE PURITANS 1580s – 1660s.**

The next "Wave of the Spirit" occurs under the leadership of the group called the Puritans. They were a mixed group, but most were influenced by the work of John Calvin in Geneva. They believed in holiness of life, power in prayer and the lifting up of the Word of God. They were used of the Lord to revive spiritual life in all levels of English and Scottish society, and established many churches in those countries and the new colonies of the American East.

Their revival power dwindled over the next century and they lapsed into cold legalistic formal religion and so the Holy Spirit was quenched within the majority of churches within their movement. From their midst however, amongst the small remnant of spiritually alive believers, the Lord raised up a new revival force on both sides of the Atlantic, which drew on the true roots of the old Puritan movement.

## **3. THE "GREAT REVIVAL" OF THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

By the late 1690s the period of history called, either the "Age of Exploration/Discovery", or the "Age of Progress" had begun, with many scientific and geographical discoveries. Unsaved man was excited about the power that he appeared to have and be wielding, and saved men were often distracted by the excitement of the time. Pride led them all astray, and as with all the time before, sexual sins and other sinful pleasures were encouraged by the wealthy and powerful to further ensure they controlled the masses. As the Romans had discovered, the mass of people will not revolt against the powerful if they are tranquilized by, "food, wine and entertainment! (bread and circuses)"

The Lord is never without witnesses, and the Holy Spirit moved upon a number of people on both sides of the Atlantic to prepare them to lead the next revival for the dead and formal, religious, but not spiritually powerful churches. Polite and respectable religion, where God is safely in heaven and not too interested in mankind is the devil's religion, as we saw in the days of Ezekiel!

The full revival begins in the 1720s in America with the preaching of a number of men in different places and within different denominations. Most of their names are barely known now, but are known to God. The men who we remember most are Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield and the Wesley brothers, John and Charles.

Jonathan Edwards recorded his journey to revival in his "Journal" and published it later to the encouragement of the churches world wide. The common availability of cheaper books made the spread of truth easier and the preachers of revival used the new technology, just as we utilize all new technologies today to spread the Living Word.

He notes in his "Journal", that revival began for him on 12 January 1723. He records on that day that the Holy Spirit moved upon him, so that he, "dedicated to God my all in all; God for my whole life". This commitment of himself was backed up with solid Bible study and prayer fourteen hours a day over the next years. It would be around ten years before his preaching in Northampton brought the wave of the Spirit that revived the churches there.

In 1740 George Whitefield arrived from Britain and started holding open air meetings, (which he had pioneered in Britain in 1737), with up to 20,000 attending, and the revival began to spread beyond the churches into the communities and all the churches that held to Scripture and were open to the Holy Spirit were blessed by it. Splits occurred in the denominations with the people open to revival establishing new churches and groupings.

Whitefield said of the old fashioned churches that stayed outside the revival. "The reason why congregations have been so dead is that dead men preach to them". Having led the Great Revival in Northampton Jonathan Edwards was voted out of his church in 1750, and spent the next eight years working in the mission station in the back woods ministering to the Native American Indians. Remember this fact, for many believe that God's people will always welcome revival, but only God's spiritual people do, for the rest prefer polite and powerless religion that makes no demands!

The two other key men of the Great revival were the two Wesley brothers, John and Charles. Both men went to university and started the "Holy Club" there, as a gathering place for people concerned about the sinful state of the nation and the sorry state of the church. It was however a sincere but legalistic group; religious, serious, but not Holy Spirit filled. Both men went into Anglican ministry and headed for America to "minister", but in their spiritually powerless legalism.

It was a disaster. First they faced an Atlantic storm during which they feared the ship would sink. A group of Moravian missionaries were aboard the ship and they alone lacked fear, and their faith rebuked the arrogant young Anglican clergymen. While in Georgia John fell in love with an attractive and noble born young woman and then acted like a prize fool when she rebuffed him for a wealthy and more powerful husband! He even refused them communion at his church in sheer jealousy! He held to his religious ways, as a "High Church", very formal Anglican priest. He refused to conduct a funeral for a non Anglican believer, and argued with people over legalistic details in the church services. He also refused fellowship to any who rebuffed him! At this point in his life his "fruit" was pure Old Sin Nature – Legalism and Evil!

He left the American colonies quite rightly in disgrace, knowing that he "had the form of godliness but lacked the power". **2 Timothy 3:1-6.** He was an unsaved minister, who groaned at sin, desired holiness, but lacked a sense of forgiveness and knew nothing of the power of God in his life. He went to America to "save the Indians", and returned asking, "who will save John Wesley?" He was a religious unbeliever, but he was saved by God's wonderful grace, three days after his brother Charles, at a meeting in London on Sunday night 24 May 1738, by the simple reading by a nearly illiterate man of the preface to Martin Luther's book on Romans.

Wesley surrendered to the grace and mercy of God and trusted him alone, not his learning, his dog collar, nor any other thing, but the blood of Christ shed for him. He describes that night. "I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter to nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt that I did trust in Christ, in Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the Law of sin and death."

He then headed to Germany and visited the home of the Moravians who had so impressed him on the boat to America and learned a great deal from their simply faith and godly lives. He then with others gathered for an all night prayer meeting on the night of 1<sup>st</sup> January 1739, praying and worshipping the Lord, seeking his grace and power for a new year of ministry and real revival. The Holy Spirit moved upon them powerfully that night and they began their ministry to the lost in earnest, now with a sense of the Lord's call, and the Lord's perfect timing.

Whitefield had already begun and they soon copied his methods of open air preaching, whenever a church as closed to them. His father's old church was closed to him by the local religious authorities, so John Wesley stood on his father's tombstone and preached to the crowd. He preached in natural amphitheatres around the country to crowds of up to 30,000. He rode over 250,000 miles on horseback around the country side, and visited America several times to be part of the on-going revival there. He preached from 1739-1791.

He was Arminian in his philosophy, Whitefield was a Calvinist, but both men loved the Lord and each other and their theological differences did not halt their friendship or comradeship in the work. Whitefield asked that Wesley preach his memorial funeral message, much to the frustration of his legalistic Calvinistic colleagues, who were not Spirit Filled. Unity was the fruit that sealed both their ministries. They disagreed on some doctrines, but were united to bring glory to the Lord, and lacked the pride that has ruined many ministries before and since.

Charles Wesley preached, with John, at the Methodist church that may still be visited and worshipped within at Bunhill Fields in London. John is buried out the back of the church, and you may visit his mother Susannah's grave in the cemetery opposite the church. Charles wrote over 7000 songs and hymns that became the songs of the Methodist church and others until our own day. His organ, that he played to the Sunday School children upon and wrote his songs is still in the Sunday school hall beside the church. Any Christian visiting London must visit this church, walk through Wesley's house, and pay respect and honour to these two men and the others buried in Bunhill fields Cemetery over the road.

Off John's bedroom is his prayer room; his desk with open Bible, and prayer stool still there, where he prayed and studied between 4 and 6 every morning he was there. On one of my visits to this place I took my oldest daughter, then only thirteen. We had visited Westminster Abbey and other great churches, and as we stood in John Wesley's prayer room I asked her what she felt. She answered with hushed voice that this was the most amazing place she had ever been.

We walked from there back down London Wall Road, past the Barbican, and went to St Paul's cathedral. Having spent some time there I asked her another question. I said, "Abi, what is the holiest place we have visited on this trip?" With a look of awe in her eyes she instantly answered, "John Wesley's prayer room". Two hundred years after the man died you can still feel the wonderful prayers that were said in that room. Prayer releases Holy Spirit power, and that power changed Britain and America and set them, I believe, upon the path of greatness and world leadership for the next two hundred years! Let us never under-estimate the importance and power of godly prayer.

#### **4. MISSIONS REVIVAL**

For many years mission activity had been lost to the main line churches, but from the Great Revival there was a move amongst many to establish missions to the new world that was being discovered, and to the old world that had been ignored. Within ten years of Wesley's death mission societies had sprung up, as well as prison reform, slavery abolition movements, labour law reform, orphanage ministries in the cities of Europe, and early Bible Colleges to train local ministers who were denied entry as "NON-conformists" to the old University Colleges in Great Britain.

In America many of the great universities were established by men saved during the great revival as places for young men to train for ministry and missions. All this laid the foundation for the next great wave to sweep through Britain and America.

#### **5. 1860s TO THE MODERN WORLD**

The work of the early open field evangelists was built upon in America and the United Kingdom with "Tent Meetings", where evangelical messages were preached for weeks at a time in communities by spirit led men. People "sighed over sin" and sought the Lord's power to clean up their violent and alcohol sodden communities. Many God called evangelists were lifted up. Systematic Bible teaching became established and people looked for great preaching and became hungry for spiritual food.

The Mid-week prayer and Bible study meeting provided the power house for weekly renewal and power in the churches, that then reached out to their own communities and supported missions world wide. There was a growth of large churches with a specific Bible ministry, and the Bible became a subject for serious study in the growing number of Bible Colleges and Theological Colleges.

D L Moody is the most well known from this period and established both a major church in Chicago and a series of Bible Colleges, printing presses and para-church organizations to support a variety of social improvement causes. Satan's counter attacks were launched by liberal theology out of Germany, denying the historical truth of the Bible, but the Lord lifted up scholars like Sir William Ramsey to demonstrate that the Bible is very good history indeed, and many good theologians to rebuff and rebuke the evil ones. The Azusa Street Mission Revival begins the modern Pentecostal movement in 1906, with a three year period of spiritual re-ignition amongst the people who attended.

Satan launched severe attacks upon the church and the Jewish people in the twentieth century, with two world wars, the Holocaust, and the inroads of liberal theology in the theological colleges destroying evangelism in many denominations. But for every place that went into cold formal deadness, there were two living, Spirit filled institutions established. Look at the statistics and see the decline of all liberal denominations and the growth of all bible believing and preaching groups. The Billy Graham Crusades, then those of many others, the Charismatic revivals of the 1960s and 1990s all challenged the church and its members to live lives empowered by the Spirit for the Lord.

World wide television and radio ministries saturated the globe by the 1990s, bringing both truth and the lies of false prophets into the lounge of most believers! The internet was making major inroads into every home in the developed world by 2005, and the advent of super cheap computers with CD readers was advancing to the point where a full computer could be produced for less than \$100-00 USD by 2009. We have never been better fed, or more easily misled than today. The internet masquerades as a source of knowledge but it is an easily manipulated forum for narcissism, but we can use it to spread the truth, just as Wesley did on horseback and in natural amphitheaters.

Our brethren need discernment and the filling of the Holy Spirit more than ever before. The lessons of the time of the Great Revival need application within every church. Let us examine the application of all we have studied so far into our own churches into our own cultural contexts here and now. Let us look at some modern revivals before we apply the lessons of history into our own churches.

#### **GUATEMALA CITY 1990 (As told by Harold Caballeros)**

In digging the foundations for their new church they discovered a mound of earth at the back of the property – it turned out to be an ancient mound of the ancient pagan snake god Quetzacoatl. It was in fact only part of a mound built by hand in 200 BC that was 30 meters wide, 15 meters high and 21 kilometers long! The church realised that the nation of Guatemala had been dedicated to this god. Their plan emerged over time – it had the following elements to it.

1. Enlist an army of "Prayer Warriors" (intercessors) to pray for the city for one hour a day. They were called to pray that the people might be led from darkness to light. John 16:8-11. Also to dedicate the nation to the Lord Jesus Christ and end all prayer with the statement "Jesus is Lord of Guatemala". In Cali, Colombia, 60,000 prayer warriors met in a hired soccer stadium and prayed for their city, while others met in a circle around the entire city – the revival began!

2. Identify the demon forces arrayed against the Lord in the city and fully rebuke them in Jesus name through prayer, before the evangelistic offensive began, through it and after it. Their challenge was not to slacken their grip on the Lord through prayer to bring down the strongholds of the enemy. Ephesians 6:12, 2 Corinthians 4:4, 10:4-5.

3. Organize the evangelistic meetings, with three teams under the God-anointed and appointed leader.
  - A. The prayer warriors to pray for the binding/defeating of the enemy and the salvation of the lost
  - B. The preaching team – to powerfully let the Word of the Living God loose in Holy Spirit power.
  - C. The Pastoral teams to work with those who gave their lives to the Lord
4. Over time they came to the following elements for following up the lost who were found by God!
  - (a) Care for them like “little lambs” – get them into pastoral “flocks” – cell groups.
  - (b) Disciple them, with prayer partners and with systematic studies to ground them in the truth of the living God through their increasing knowledge of the person and work of the Lord who had saved them.
  - (c) Ensure they had all the things they needed for spiritual growth – bibles provided and fellowship with saints to stabilize and encourage.
5. Christian Education initiatives were undertaken to teach the next generation and stabilize the present one. Discipleship programs develop into the “Train Track” of Bible study, then onto Bible School to train those Spirit gifted as Bible Teachers and pastoral workers so that the “mother” church planted new churches.

### **ARGENTINA - 1970s and following years - OMAR CABRERA and CARLOS ANNACONDIA**

“The Holy Spirit has taught me that we must go at his speed without striving. We must be knowing that in all things God gives the true growth. It is not achieved by our abilities or personal methods, just like the seed, no amount of desire or effort on our part will speed it along; it needs time to grow.”

#### 1. Their preparation for ministry. CONSECRATION –

Fasting and prayer - Exodus 34:28, Daniel 10:3, Matthew 6:17.

A vision of the Passion of Christ – translated into a passion for the lost, and the sleeping saints. Matthew 27:45-55.

“An Iron resolution not to give up” - Luke 9:61-62, Hebrews 10:38.

We are not like “hirelings” – and so we need to serve with all our heart. John 10:12-13.

NO ENTANGLMENTS WITH THIS WORLD - 2 Timothy 2:1-10.

#### 2. The preparation of the ground – by prayer

Holy Spirit power alone brings light to fallen mankind - John 16:8-11

The Holy Spirit is set loose by anointed prayer – the fire of anointed prayer must not go out.

“Lord give me a passion for the message of the Cross lest I die!”

#### 3. Our careful, thoughtful, prayerful and protected, sowing of the seed

#### 4. The harvest being gathered in. the fruit of “Biblical Evangelism” is the growth of powerful evangelistic churches that reach more and multiply without the pride of their ministers holding onto their people.

### **HONDURAS - 1974 and following years - RENE PENALBA**

CLEANSING FROM SINS THAT HAD FOULED WITNESS TO THE LOST, AND THEN GENUINE RECONCILIATION WAS THE PRIORITY

The main obstacle (Roadblock) to revival was lack of reconciliation amongst believers. The evil spirit of division and strife indicated that the Holy Spirit was not in charge of the people involved.

1 Corinthians 3:1-23, Galatians 5:14-26. Remember prayer is not answered if there is resentment or bitterness between the husband and the wife. 1 Peter 3:7.

We can bind and loose, or be bound and lose! Matthew 18:18-19.

If we have anything against our brethren let us deal with it now – **Matthew 5:23-24.**

Dr J Vernon McGee tells the story of a great revival in a church in the American South in the 1920s. A major evangelistic campaign had gone for weeks in the town with no impact; people came but were apparently unmoved, but dedicated prayer continued to be offered up by prayer warriors for the town. This passage above was also faithfully preached and through the night after it was preached a leading man of that town seriously repented of his life decisions, and did real business with God over his attitudes and actions towards his fellows. The fruit of this repentance was seen that night for he went around that town through that night, and made peace with all those he had offended. The following morning revival broke out.

In Hebrews 12:14, the “root of bitterness” is rightly identified, for it stops more spiritual work than any gross and immoral sins. All of us need cleansing to do the Lord’s holy work. James 4:7-8. Our appeal - Acts 3:19.

Also be wary of a pattern of sin in a church or family – we have Old Sin Nature weaknesses, but also demonic attack is not to be underestimated when the Lord’s work is powerful in a place. Is there any pattern of sin or evil in the past of the community? Has there been feuding, murders, or adultery, or thefts, or pride? Prayer targeting these things will reveal the enemy and the remedy through community repentance.

### **NIGERIA - EMEKA NWANKPA**

#### **THE QUALITY OF ANOINTED LEADERSHIP**

God selects and calls his leaders for the work. God does not work with committees but with his called servants! If we have been called we are to draw strength from the great leaders of the past and follow them. Abraham – victory followed by challenge, Genesis 14, then intercession in Genesis 18.

Amos 3:3 - Can two walk together except they be agreed?

The power of prayer saved the Pastor’s school from a wild mob of looters during a riot – he stood with obedience before them and they turned away. Biblical leadership is placing yourself in the pace of obedience – even if it has danger. His strength strengthened the other believers in their own obedience in life and prayer.

Obedience to the Lord’s direction and the challenging of falsehood is crucial to advance biblical work and keep the saints safe and well fed on truth. John 21:15-24.

### **DEALING WITH CORPORATE SIN – BRAZIL - NEUZA ITIOKA**

ACHAN’s sin nearly brought disaster to Israel and the whole nation took responsibility for it. Just so we as believers are to stand in the breach that sin has made in our nation, take responsibility for sin and confess our nation’s wrongs before God. By so doing, we build our own heart of love for our nation and so position our self for the Lord’s anointed use later.

Joshua 7:1ff. Also refer Nehemiah 1:1ff, and then Daniel 9:1ff, then into the New Testament 1 Corinthians 5:1-2.

If there is a pattern of national or community sin, we need to take the responsibility to stand in loving care for our people, for our community, before the Lord and pray for the Lord’s forgiveness and blessing upon our people. We are in effect praying for their salvation by so doing! 2 Chronicles 7:14.

### **ALMOLONGA CITY - (GUATEMALA) 1975 onwards - MARIANO RISCAJCHE**

CALLED LEADERSHIP. God’s call came to save and anoint Mariano in 1974 – “I have chosen you to serve me”.

The analysis was done to discover that the great evil of the town was centered in the cult of Maximon – the Mayan god of alcoholism and other evils. By prayer focused, with signs and miracles wrought by God, and thorough Gospel preaching there has been a change to this town, from evil and poverty to good and prosperity. The battle continues – there can be no relaxation in the spiritual warfare we are called to.

### **THE LUKE WARM CHURCH - 1950s, 1970s, - NEW ZEALAND**

Revelation 2:4 3:16, Matthew 9:11-17. The danger of self centeredness and prosperity preaching that led to immorality. Gifts are for service not self satisfaction and the breakthrough of that understanding begins spiritual revival! 1 Corinthians 12:7-21. The church was revived when they stepped out of their smug, and self satisfied place of wealth and saw they were in fact “poor” and needy for spiritual power and life, and so opened themselves to revival of spirit through prayer and the Word.

**FAITH COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH      SINGAPORE 1986FF    LAWRENCE KHONG**

Church growth by prayer, and devotion to the basics we have already seen. From a congregation of a few hundred this church grew to 8000 in 10 years, with over 16,000 people making professions of faith in the Lord in this time frame.

Elements.

1. celebrate the Lord in music, prayer, giving, and Bible teaching
2. eliminate committees and have God anointed leaders taking responsibility with others helping.
3. active staff recruitment
4. discipleship program running to help young converts grow
5. cell group focused church
6. train, equip and send out people to minister elsewhere.
7. regular prayer warrior meetings to pray for the city/state of Singapore
8. strengthen marriage and family life by all means.
9. reach out to meet needs for the local community
10. have specialized outreach groups

Transform the hearts and minds of the people = they will walk in the Spirit and transform their society.

Romans 12:1ff.

Christ Centered	Bible Centered	Holy Spirit Controlled
Society related	Individually applied into daily life	

Their pastor states that the following are his principles for Church Growth.

1. Live in the “fear of the Lord”.
2. Intense prayer and fasting for the city and nation.
3. Caring for new converts with cell group ministry led by anointed, trained, people.
4. Establish Christian schools and training colleges.
5. Build strong marriages and families.

**NOTES**

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **WHERE TO FOR OURSELVES, OUR LOCAL CHURCHES AND OUR NATIONS?**

#### **SUMMARY OF TWELVE KEY CONCEPTS FOR CHURCH APPLICATION**

##### **1. COMMIT TO WHOLE CHURCH PRAYER AS THE CENTRAL PART OF EVANGELISM AND REVIVAL**

The process of soul winning does not begin with you as a believer talking to an unbeliever about the Lord Jesus Christ. The process of revival does not begin with you heading out to preach revival to the dead church. It begins with you as a believer talking with God. You need to walk powerfully with God, before you walk in any power with men, and you need to live in the Word before you speak any words from the Word.

We need to realise that God has a plan here and that you and I are part of that plan until our death. Evangelism is not our work it is the Holy Spirit's work through us, in accordance with his plan, not our thoughts. **Isaiah 55:7-9**. Read these words of the great prophet and reflect upon their significance for speaking with men about the things of God.

You need to walk close to Him for the sake of the evil that is out there. If you are not walking closely with the Lord you are walking on a very slippery path into danger. Evangelism is speaking about the things of God in the presence of the enemy who hates everything about God. Revival is restoring power to a dead church to defeat the enemy. This is a serious "Angelic Conflict" activity, and a dangerous one if you are one step out of the plan and purposes of God. In Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit we can claim **Romans 8:28, 1 John 4:4, 17-19**.

Evangelism and Revival activity is moving into a high gear spiritually, practising spiritual awareness, to meet the need of the unbeliever/Carnal believer with whom the Holy Spirit has led you to come into contact. It is battlefield living that ought to be part of our every day life. It is leading the truly "Normal Christian life" and answering questions that they may ask.

In order to evangelise you need to apply the Word of God that you know, to your own life first, and allow your love for the Lord to be seen to have already been effective in your life. The battle against sickness, depression and problems in your life are all problems that you have to face and demonstrate victory over. If you are announcing victory, yet you have been defeated and stayed defeated, then what is the "good news"? You cannot proclaim victory and power if you haven't had any experience of such things, for without life reality, your words are lies, deception and hypocrisy!

When you preach repentance and/or give the gospel you are walking into the enemy's camp, approaching one of the enemy's soldiers and saying to them, "Why don't you join us?" This is called espionage and is dangerous. When you are evangelising you are trying to recruit Satan's soldiers from under Satan's nose.

This is why evangelism is more dangerous than most other things you may do as a believer. Because of the danger you need special spiritual protection, Holy Spirit power, and clear orders from your Commander in Chief on which you are operating, or you will be defeated and humiliated.

All Revival preaching, and all Evangelism is using the sword of the Holy Spirit under Holy Spirit power to fight the enemy. Prayer is, as we have seen, needed in the area of evangelism. It is of course required in all areas but even more so in the area of evangelism and revival. The victory is not going to come because of your physical, social, communications, or intellectual abilities it is going to come through the spiritual realm. To win victory in the Angelic Conflict entails prayer at the highest possible levels as we must go in prayerfulness and meet others prayerfully.

You need to be like a boxer, quick on your feet and looking for openings which will be provided by the Holy Spirit for you to launch immediately into revival or evangelistic preaching. You are a person under the control of the Holy Spirit, filled with the Holy Spirit, talking to another person who has been prepared by the Holy Spirit for the Word of God. John 16:8-11(below discussed again).

You have to constantly remember that greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. 1 John 4:4. This gives confidence for the conflict, but **it is still a conflict**. Whether it is your special spiritual gift or whether you are just a believer without the specific gift of evangelism you need the Holy Spirit to empower and guide you in evangelism.

Pastor Michael Cocoris, noted in 1983, "Perhaps if we prayed more we would win more. In Acts 1 and 2 the disciples prayed for ten days, Peter preached for ten minutes and 3000 were saved. Today churches pray for ten minutes, preach for ten days and three get saved." C H Spurgeon's last words to his church were, "Pray more, believe more, and so receive more (from the Lord)". Prayer alone changes things.

**PHILIPPIANS 4:4- 7.**

Turn to and read, **Philippians 4:4-7**, also follow this up by reading, **Ephesians 6:18-20, Colossians 4:2-6, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-21**. All these passages bring out the need to go into an evangelistic situation in prayer. It is our daily prayer life which prepares us for the intense prayer in evangelism. If you are relying on prayer you can get what God provides rather than your own natural abilities, which will only produce what your human strength can provide. It is no accident, that with each great revival, and each great evangelistic offensive in history, the men and women of God who led and supported them were people who were in the habit of constant prayer; they talked with the Lord often through each and every day.

Also in 1983, Pastor A C Dixon said, "When we rely on organisation, we get what organisation can do. When we rely on education, we get what education can do. When we rely on eloquence, we get what eloquence can do. Nor am I disposed to undervalue any of these things in their proper place, but when we rely upon prayer, we get what God can do."

Turn to and read again the central passage for the work of the Holy Spirit upon the unbeliever. **John 16:8-11**. This describes the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the unbeliever and the carnal believer who has walked away from living fellowship with the Lord. Notice that the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment. He convicts the unbeliever of the sin of rejection of Christ as Saviour, convicts the carnal believer of the sin that has separated them from their Saviour, convicts both of God's righteousness being the standard to be reached, and convicts the unbeliever of the judgment that they, with Satan, deserve to receive in the Lake of Fire, and convicts the fallen believer of the great discipline they will receive for despising the blood of the Lord that saved them.

If you are praying for an unbeliever you ask that the Spirit will convict them in these three areas. If you are praying for the revival of a dead church and nation, you pray for the same ministry into the lives of the dead believers, that they may face the eternal consequences of their sinful lives.

Turn also back again to and re-read, **John 6:44, 4:63-66**. The Holy Spirit not only convicts of sin He enlightens the Word of God on the fallen and the lost, and gives them the power to respond. God provides all that is needed for each person's salvation, and that is the reason why they are judged if they reject the message. A person has seriously got to reject God to be lost! Revelation 20:10-15. Once saved, the believer faces the biggest challenge; which is the renewal of their mind and life. Romans 12:1-2. Barriers exist to obedience in the Lord's work in the life, and these are not always only spiritual, or satanic. They are often simple bad habits of thought and behaviour, and they must be targeted and eliminated. In the modern world this is called CBT, or Cognitive Behavioural Technique, but it is actually a Pauline concept.

## DOCTRINE

### **COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY ACCORDING TO ST PAUL**

(Study each of the Biblical passages and discuss the concept behind them with the group).

#### **ROMANS 7:14-25 - THE "WRETCHED MAN" – FACING OUR SINFUL REALITY**

(Unless we face the facts, we live a lie and are open to deception from all sources; human and angelic.)

#### **ROMANS 8:1-18 - THE GLORY OF KNOWING THE POWER OF THE INDWELLING CHRIST.**

(There is hope for all who face the facts of their Old Sin Nature and the greater power of the indwelling Lord and Holy Spirit, 1 John 4:4-6, for then we are "plugged into" the power for spiritual victory)

#### **EPHESIANS 4:20-32 - PUTTING OFF THE OLD AND PUTTING ON THE NEW**

**COLOSSIANS 3:8-16 - PUTTING OFF AND PUTTING ON**

(Our old behaviours are the result of our early "programming" and the choices we have made later; all of this being laid over our genetic strengths and weaknesses, but in Christ, and through the Holy Spirit's power we can re-program our inner computer.)

#### **EPHESIANS 5:17-29 - THE RELATIONSHIP OVERFLOW OF THIS CBT TOOL**

**COLOSSIANS 3:17-19 - RELATIONSHIP OVERLLOW OF CBT**

(If the Holy Spirit is active in our life there will be evidence of it in our daily walk through life, and especially in our relationships with loved ones and others we meet. No change = no Spirit!)

#### **PHILIPPIANS 3:10-17 - FORGETTING THE PAST AND FOCUSING FORWARD**

(It is not a "one shot decision" to make change, for the old patterns are tenacious. They must be identified, understood, targeted, replaced and we must rebuild new patterns through the Holy Spirit's work upon the Word of God, to firmly establish and live and celebrate daily in the new life we now have.)

**PHILIPPIANS 4:4-9 - FILLING THE MIND WITH POSITIVE THOUGHT PROCESSES SQUEEZING OUT THE NEGATIVES FROM LIFE**

(The mind acts like a vacuum; it will suck in all evil around if there is not positive pressure from good working out from the centre of our being. We squeeze evil out by leaving no room within for it to grow.)

**COLOSSIANS 2:20-22 - SAYING NO TO THE "EASY FIX" OF LEGALISM**

(The great “cons” of Satan are initially focused on down playing sin and evil so that believers are neutralized by them uncontrolled within their lives, but if that fails he has an even better plan to neutralize the grace of God within us. This plan is the “super-spiritual” plan of legalism, whereby foolish men get to feel really superior because their sins are more refined than their neighbours! Legalism is false spirituality that feeds off the great sin of pride and arrogance, the very opposite of God’s grace and mercy, and the complete opposite of the servant heart of the Lord Jesus. Matthew 7:15-20.)

**COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL TOOL FOR THOUGHT STOPPING**

When an annoying person says something, or an unwanted thought occurs, we can allow them or it to “rent space in our head” and not be paying for it, except in misery to ourselves!!! All unwanted mental “clutter” weighs us down and can create great frustration within. It is a result of the Fall of Adam and Eve, and an ever present reminder that we are all fallen creatures, with an easy tendency to sin but also to simply be distracted by the insignificant details of daily life.

This simple Biblical and Pauline technique below may assist you to plan to deal with a specific problem that really irritates you; for example, “crazy” drivers on the road, an annoying customer, or a dysfunctional neighbour, or a dysfunctional thought pattern you have within yourself coming from early experiences or early bad choices.

The good news is, this tool can be used to deal with our own annoying behaviours also, and is a powerful way to stop yourself doing something that childhood software errors, and poor adult choices on top of the old tendencies, may have programmed you to do! This helps you label such “software errors” as “not me” (that is, not my real born again nature, but a reflection of my Old Sin Nature), and enables you to get control over them and re-program your responses to unbidden thoughts and impulses.

First identify the situations where you find yourself responding in an unacceptable manner. Write these situations out, identifying the precipitating events, the thoughts you have, the feelings associated, and the things you then say or do that make you ashamed or annoyed. Programmed bad reactions waste time and energy – and bluntly, life is just too short to waste on such things. Bad responses also hurt the people we love and need to be eliminated before they eliminate our relationships!!!

Once you have your “hit list” of problem situations, ask the following questions of each.

**1. WHAT LABEL CAN I USE TO PUT THE PERSON/SITUATION INTO A FUNNY or PROFESSIONAL BOX?**

Find a funny label (or at least a neutral one) for the annoying precipitating event, thought or person. This can be used when the event occurs and it will take the heat of your reaction out of it. You label it as a “thing” rather than accepting it as an integral and permanent part of yourself, for in Christ, and through the Holy Spirit’s power, it is not!

**2. TELL YOURSELF THE TRUTH.**

“The truth is....” Think of a statement that powerfully expressed the reason why you will not let a “twit” or “idiot thought” rent space in your head, but rather you will walk your genuine life path in Christ!

**3. TAKE ANY IMMEDIATE ACTION TO REINFORCE THE TRUTH.**

Identify any action to immediately take to reinforce your true path in life rather than your old reaction which reflected your bad programming from childhood.

EXPERIMENT with these steps and test yourself in all problematic situations. End with celebration and worship in which you acknowledge the truth to the glory of God.

Review with your counsellor, mentor or pastor. Build strength in this by daily feeding upon the doctrines of the Word of God to build your hold on the truth that will always set you free from satanic deception, false priorities, and blindness to consequences of wrong actions.

## **2. MAKE A TARGET LIST OF UNBELIEVERS FOR SPECIFIC PRAYER AND PREPARATION**

Make a list of unbelievers you wish to evangelise and pray that you may have the opportunity to have access to them and to talk to them about the Lord. Pray for them by name specifically once or twice a day. Do the same with the dead churches, pastors and people who the Lord lays upon your heart and pray earnestly for their revival. Then, in obedient expectation of the Holy Spirit's movement upon them, look for opportunities but do not force them.

By thrusting the gospel message of repentance down their throats you will magnify the offence of the Cross, but worse, you are out of step with the Holy Spirit. Pray for God's timing and prepare and pray until the Lord orders the advance and opens the door, then you walk with the Spirit. Remember all the great moves of the Holy Spirit through history were in God's timing and utilized prayer and Bible saturated, Spirit filled, prepared believers!

If you witness for Christ you will walk with the one whom the Lord sends, the Holy Spirit. Find out what the Holy Spirit has done with that person first, before you open your mouth. When you have ascertained that, the Holy Spirit will reveal what Scriptures are to be used. Evangelism and Revival preaching is you walking with the Spirit not you walking with yourself.

Prayer must always precede witnessing as shown in **Luke 10:1-24** where we are told to pray, verse 2, before we go in and speak, verse 3. In Acts 4:29 they pray for boldness, followed by speaking with boldness in verse 31.

In **Colossians 4:2-4**, Paul tells us that he did not talk to everyone in the ancient cities he went through, he walked through and talked only to those upon whom the Spirit was moving. Whenever he spoke publicly, he was in prayer that he might recognize the Spirit's moving and he followed up with those who clearly had been led by the Spirit to reflect upon his words. Read through the EBCWA study on ACTS and see this illustrated in every chapter.

If someone does not want the gospel, nor is prepared to accept their need for repentance, do not force it on them. If you approach them, and you say that you would like to share Christ's burden for their life with them, and they say that they are not interested, you withdraw. Do not batter down the doors, but let them know where they can come if they want to hear.

Many people think that by ultra aggressive evangelism they are doing great things for God but by their attitude they are bringing discredit to the name of Christ. The Holy Spirit breaks down the barriers. We are issued with the sword of the Spirit not the crow bar of the demolition expert!

## **3. GATHER YOUR PRAYER WARRIORS FOR ARTILLERY SUPPORT IN THE BATTLE**

Have a group of prayer warriors set aside for prayer. This is a function that the older people can do much better than the younger and more physically active as seen in the Pastorals. **1 Timothy 5:3-16**. It is far better that they are praying than sitting up awake listening to talkback radio or TV, morning, noon and night.

When prayer is answered we can all be thankful, for we are all part of the work. Every church member should have a list of church members for no other reason than they might pray for them. They should all know who the elders and deacons are. They should each have responsibility for a certain group within the church. By having groups praying for the church you will see the place prosper.

The greatest expansion of my own ministry was associated with just having three old ladies who prayed daily for the students of the Bible College who I was teaching. God's revival was released upon the students through the faithful daily prayers of those three old ladies.

## **4. SET A CLEAR AND BIBLICAL PRAYER AGENDA FOR EVANGELISM/REVIVAL**

So, our prayer agenda for evangelism/revival is clear. We are all to pray for:-

1. Conviction upon specific people. John 16 : 8 - 11.
2. Enabling and empowering upon all who hear the Word. John 6 : 44, 63.
3. Opportunity to witness the needed truth to those the Spirit has prepared. Colossians 4 : 3.
4. Boldness for all giving the message. Acts 4 : 29, Ephesians 6 : 19.
5. Peace and security to enable witnessing to occur. 1 Timothy 2 : 1- 4.
6. Deliverance from evil people who oppose us. 2 Thessalonians 3 : 1- 2.

7. For more labourers to join the work. Luke 10 : 2.
8. For all believers to grow up in the grace and knowledge of the Lord. 2 Peter 3 : 18.
9. For all to grow the fruit of the Holy Spirit that all might see their lives and praise God for them. Galatians 5, Ephesians 4, 1 Corinthians 12.
10. Face the fact that the gospel “seed” will be attacked by the enemy. Matthew 13:18ff.

## 5. COMMIT YOURSELF TO PREACHING THE WHOLE WORD TO THE WHOLE WORLD

Turn to and read **Acts 5:42** - This passage gives the church's activity on a normal day. Daily there was preaching and teaching of Jesus Christ. This was a regular function of the early church. If you have a church which has one teaching session a week it is not following the Biblical pattern.

Preaching means explaining what the Scriptures mean, and then giving application to the individual. Preaching follows preparation and prayer.

The apostles studied with the Lord, walked with the Lord, and served the Lord for three years, and they were now ready to go out. They are preaching with power as they know who they are talking about, they know what they are talking about, and they have a message which is prayerfully relevant to their hearers. They are speaking of the one they love, in the power he gave them, with the truth that he has burned into the fabric of their daily lives. Many are baffled as to why the Lord cannot use them powerfully! Unless these things are true for you, you need revival! You can't be preaching it unless it is a daily reality for you!

After Jonathan Edward's commitment to the Lord he spent ten years of fourteen hour days in study and prayer before he was ready to lead the revival! Do not hurry God by foolish prayers, for the Lord God our creator and Saviour is not rushed!!! Draw close to him and learn to walk with and listen to him!

## 6. TEACH PRIVATELY AND PUBLICLY IN CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE PLACES

There were two spheres of teaching and preaching, in the early Jerusalem church; the Public area of the Temple courtyard and the Private home churches. In the area of the Temple mount there was a large area where the rabbis were able to teach. It was in the outer court under the colonnades (Porch or Stoa of Solomon) so that the Gentiles were able to come and listen, and it was there that the apostles taught all who were interested. They went where people would know to come to hear; they positioned themselves for their teaching ministry where those with positive volition would come to hear teaching ministry.

We can learn from this. Where in our society do people go to find the truth about God? That is where our public teaching should be. In Jerusalem it was the Stoa of Solomon, in Greek towns the market place or local synagogue. These were the places that Paul targeted as places where serious seekers would go. They were the market places of some towns, but the synagogues of others. Paul would identify where serious seekers of the truth went, and he headed there to preach the truth.

Where do serious seekers of the truth go today in your community? I would suggest that interested unbelievers will go to the local churches that they know about, if they are known as places where the truth is to be found, and the people are welcoming of seekers. In days of global terrorism and natural disaster people are looking for answers. Our challenge is to have churches that function and provide logical answers to any who seek truth.

Another area for social witnessing was the private houses of the wealthy church members. Large houses in Palestine and the Empire generally had a central courtyard where quite a number of people could meet in semi privacy, and could fellowship over a meal. Privacy was important for teaching and worship, which was for the fellowship, encouragement and strengthening of the saints, rather than the evangelistic emphasis of the more public venues.

In Jerusalem the private houses became the only place to meet once access to the Temple and synagogues had been denied by the religious Jews who were threatened by the Christian message. This was quite late, about 63AD, after James had been murdered in the Temple courtyard while at prayer. Saved Jews then looked on their houses as individual evangelical, worship, Bible teaching and prayer centres. So should we. How are we using our houses?

The early church grew from the initial big meetings in the Temple with 3,000 saved in Acts 2 and 5,000 saved in Acts 4. Within weeks there were 8,000 new converts who dispersed in most cases to places throughout the Roman Empire. As they returned home after their period in Jerusalem celebrating the Passover and Pentecost they took the gospel with

them. The big meetings lasted for only a couple of years or so before the Jewish authorities commenced persecuting the early Church. But even as late as 63AD they continued to meet and teach in the Temple when they could.

## **7. BUILD POWERFUL CELL GROUPS FOR PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY**

The home bible study meeting became the main thrust for evangelism in the early church as a result of persecution. This led to real growth in the centuries to come. It was going to be 200+ years before church buildings themselves were going to be erected. For those 300 years it is going to be generally unsafe for Christians to "go to church".

At different times and places, for up to 50 years at times, it was possible to come together through the first three centuries, but mostly from the years 85-312 AD, the Roman authorities persecuted the Christians.

There was a period just before the last great persecution when some of the churches grew quite large, but the home fellowship was always the back-bone of the early church. In addition to meeting in houses, the church also used to meet in forests, cemeteries (the Catacombs) and in the fields, but meeting in private homes was considered the most preferable, for obvious reasons of comfort and protection from the elements.

## **8. THE LOCAL CHURCH SHOULD OPERATE AS A FAMILY AND GROW GOD'S WAY**

There were two meetings on the Lord's Day; the first before dawn was a worship and praise time, before they all went off to work as the sun rose. Remember Sunday was a working day until the middle of the fourth century. The second meeting was a more leisurely one after work was done in the early evening. At the second house church meeting after 6pm everybody had a shared meal. The food would be brought in and the women of the house would co-ordinate its division. In the evening as they came together, after the working day, they would share this love feast (shared meal).

The meal would be accompanied with water and wine. If you drank the water in some cities without wine you would get sick. Timothy had become somewhat ascetic and had started drinking water without wine and had become sick so Paul asked him to mix some wine for his stomachs sake. 1 Timothy 5:23. Ephesus in Timothy's day was built on marshes and sinking and the water table was polluted. This is not an instruction to drink alcohol, but a simple medical piece of advice into that local situation. Today we would say, boil the water for ten minutes and make, and share a cup of black tea with the now safe boiled water! This is the norm in Africa – where water is often unsafe – even if certified as "treated".

The early church tried whenever they could to meet centrally in one place, to mutually strengthen each other in a hostile environment. As the church grew, other home churches were formed under the town pastor (later, in larger places, under the city Bishop). Each home group had an elder and if the church grew they would divide and grow.

Eventually you had one man who supervised the churches in an area. He was called the bishop and was the one acknowledged by the elders as the leader of the Christians in that city. The bishop would also co-ordinate relief measures where a group had been persecuted and perhaps some fathers martyred leaving widows and children. These bishops were the first targeted by the Romans for death under persecution.

Over time the Bishops ruled the church, and the senior bishop in Rome ruled the other bishops. This was not the early apostolic pattern but had developed within a hundred years of their death, and may still be relevant in local situations, where a godly pastor establishes a number of churches in an area and they look to him for leadership; he has become their "Bishop". We should not be afraid to use such a term for God's called pastoral leaders.

They had, in effect, two mottos, in the early apostolic church. The first motto was that "every home was a recruiting, training and worship centre for Christ", and the second, "each person be a witness". These mottos are still God's plan! They are still the standard, but few achieve it because of spiritual deadness. If you commit to this godly way of establishing your church, you will see the Lord increase the size of your church each year. We ought to pray that each year we will be led to at least one person who will be converted. If you want an evangelistic target, then the apostolic target for Christian growth is 100% per year. If this target is not being met, then pray for revival in the church!

When you take over a church you teach them where they are. At the end of the first year you give them a challenge of a 100% increase this year. We must be constantly reminded of the God given task as Christians to be ambassadors for Christ. In Mark 1 Jesus calls us to be fishers of men, we are told to fish for souls; that is why he has left us here; not to sit around eating fellowshiping, and drinking, waiting for his return.

**DOCTRINE - CHRISTIAN LIFE - EVANGELISM – NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN****SUMMARY**

1. The pastor of the local church must practice a Bible saturated, spirit controlled life. By his systematic teaching of the Word he must encourage people to apply it in their life. The vessels that the Lord uses must be clean.
2. You must have a co-ordinated prayer life in the Church. This consists of the mid week prayer meeting and organising your prayer warriors. You need specific weekly prayer sheets.
1. You need to have weekly meetings with your deacons and elders to plan strategies for the church. You need to have that for a prayer plan for the week. It is good to have this on Sunday morning over breakfast so that the prayer points can be noted down and duplicated by the pastor for the morning service. This gives current material. You plan your visitations, your speakers and how it can be co-ordinated in with the overall preaching plan. There also needs to be a home fellowship strategy and a strategy for the Bible class and Sunday School.
4. In the preaching everything must tie into the evangelistic, witness function of the church. He must emphasise that they are ambassadors and evangelists.
5. The minister encourages the people to find the fish. Every week they should be reminded of their work in this area.
6. Every believer should have his own list of people who he is praying constantly for. He should have a list of ten unbelievers and as one is converted a new name should be emplaced on the list.
7. The church contacts should be followed up as part of the strategy. This is the importance of a Sunday School. The Sunday School should be well known in the area. The unbelieving parents who send their children to Sunday School should be followed up by the minister to show friendliness towards them. You may be their only Christian contact.
8. There needs to be a church service follow up. Every visitor should be made to feel welcome but not embarrassed. Never ask a visitor to stand up. After the service have a coffee time and a special room set aside for visitors. It is an advantage to have a service which finishes a bit earlier. The minister follows up the visitors and lets an elder go on the door.
9. Organise visitation and be visible with walking through districts and greeting those you meet. This is far better than driving and parking. The morning should be in the study. Have a meal at home to have time with your wife or family, after lunch visitation.

With walking you get exercise and need to be away from the mobile phone's intrusion. Turn it off while you are visiting; this gives people the message that you are focused and will not be distracted by anyone else. Plan to visit three or four locations only. Drive to a central location and walk. If you are seen on the street people get to know you. You have raised the profile of the church. You are swimming in the sea with the fish. Sit down with street kids, help an old lady. The church needs to draw on the local area. You need to be decently dressed but not suit and tie unless that is expected in your area. To the Jew as a Jew, to the Greek as a Greek! 1 Corinthians 9 : 20 - 22. By this Paul means, **be appropriate** to whatever social and cultural context you find yourself in,, so that by your dress and manner they say, "here is a person from God".

**9. UTILIZE ALL FOUR GOSPEL/REVIVAL MESSAGE OPPORTUNITES****FOUR AREAS OF EVANGELISM**

There are four areas of evangelism; the Christian's personal life and work, the home group meeting, the gospel service and special evangelistic outreaches. While evangelism is a very present part of the church's life you cannot have a gospel service every week in the sense that you allocate a complete service to a gospel appeal. However the gospel must be given every week so that all visitors who come into every service, without Christ and without hope and without eternal life, leave having heard the good news.

It is of critical importance that you do not get away from your systematic verse by verse bible teaching, as that is at the heart of all revivals through the centuries. If you have two services on a Sunday and one during the week you only have three opportunities per week to teach the truth of God's Word systematically. Christians need to hear the whole counsel of God in the form of a wide area of Bible doctrine not just the gospel again and again. It is important that there is a gospel appeal at the end of each service however so that the unbeliever who comes in might know what they need to be saved. It is equally important that any carnal believer is challenged to deal with sin and evil in their life every week, so that none are without excuse before the Lord.

## THE GOSPEL IN THE SERVICE

There are three ways to meet the unbeliever in the church meetings:-

- [a] At the end of each service you commit the final moments to those who are unbelievers, or out of living fellowship with their Lord through carnality.
- [b] Where the gospel comes up on a verse by verse basis you teach it thoroughly. You can make your Sunday evening service a gospel service in the sense of a verse by verse analysis of the four gospels in turn. This will give you a number of salvation passages. Such a regime would take probably six to seven years at which time you could return to the beginning.
- [c] The third way is to have a gospel service in the traditional "Great Revival" sense.

It is probably best to have a combination of all types. If people know what you are going to be teaching on they can be doing some pre-reading or invite people along to the service with some confidence as to what the subject is going to be. You must, I believe, teach verse by verse, as the benefits far outweigh any perceived problems with the method. The Holy Spirit revealed the truth systematically and "verse by verse", and so can use a systematic approach, through the value it has to the people, far easier than any hit and miss topical teaching approach.

If there is going to be a special evangelistic gospel service it is important that there are people, well in advance, praying especially for the salvation of unbelievers and the conviction of the sleeping saints. If you have a gospel service you follow it with a fellowship time for follow up. Some people will accept in the church but more will afterwards with quiet fellowship and challenge from believers. The Church Café or lounge may be the place where a great deal of evangelism takes place after each service. A fellowship time after each service allows the unbeliever to reflect on his/her situation. The critical question is how to maximise the time with the spiritually needy in an unthreatening but challenging way.

In addition to this there is often an opportunity for a Holy Spirit gifted evangelist/revival preacher to conduct a rally in the church or local community. The best late 20<sup>th</sup> Century example would be Billy Graham who was set aside by his local church for evangelistic purposes. The Biblical pattern of evangelism is not to bring in the expert because the church has failed, but rather to be constantly seeking, in the local church and beyond it, for the spiritually gifted person who the Lord can use in your locality within the culture of the people you are planted within.

You bring in the gifted man when the Lord opens a door, and you make sure that the local church is doing the other things right, for only then will there be the lasting results. We must not shy away from using the gifted, set apart, evangelist, nor make them the replacement for the church doing the other things regularly. All Biblical methods are to be utilized in accordance with the Lord's plan for the local area, under the Holy Spirit's guidance.

Get your week by week prayer warrior groups and regular evangelism going, and verse by verse teaching, then you must stress the need for prayer in every believer's life, and the fact that they need to make their houses evangelistic centres. Once you have your church running spiritually you are in the best position to bring in the specifically gifted evangelist. If the church is spiritually dead the evangelist will be facing a very difficult task trying to stoke a fire that has gone out. That is not the evangelist's job, it is yours as the called pastor of the flock!

## SPECIAL CAMPAIGNS OF EVANGELISM – BASIC PRINCIPLES APPLIED TO THE CHURCH

Let us remind ourselves of the foundational principles as they apply into special evangelism campaigns.

- [1] You need to handle the saints before you wrestle with sinners. The church needs to be prepared, and consecrated to the task of reaching the lost, well before you discuss evangelistic outreaches. Leadership especially needs to understand the concept of "Servant Leadership". Ensure you study through our Book 112!!!
- [2] There should be a group of prayer warriors praying for the evangelist, and their work upon the lost and the carnal saints. Every believer in the church ought to be targeting ten unbelievers to come to be confronted with their need to be saved, having first confronted themselves and their need for spiritual renewal. This should be done 3-6 months before any proposed rally. They must have their friends, people who they have regular contact with informed of what is going to happen.

The church should be praying and the individuals should be praying for, and visiting people in their own area. The prayer, "Lord send us a revival", is far too general. Let the local church decide exactly what the Lord has revealed to you he wants to do, who HE wants touched with the message and prayer for that specifically! God likes prayers that are specific and likes answering such prayers specifically. He is a God of detail; he is into solving practical details. The church must be consecrated, focused, and prepared. The church needs to be praying for the spiritually needy at least six months in advance.

**NOTE:** It is necessary to plan in the church. If you are a pastor you must have a planning conference, or prayer retreat, every year and work out what you believe the Lord wants you to do. You need to train prayer warriors, ushers and get lists of people to pray for. All need to start speaking to those who are to be asked to come along. We are to prepare them for the offer you are going to give them in the future. It is no good sitting around and then arranging a series of evangelistic meetings for the following week and expect some startling results. This is emotional nonsense, and you will not find any precedent for it in Acts. The early church planned and prayed and set aside people for the tasks.

- [3] How long should the special outreach be? Moody, Billy Sunday and Finney had evangelical crusades that lasted several months. A two week long campaign would appear to be a minimum. If believers have a dozen people on their list for prayer, let them ask them individually to dinner and take them to the meeting afterwards.

You show them concern, and you show them fellowship. You show them love over the table so that when they go to the meeting they are in a receptive frame of mind, the Holy Spirit having had the opportunity to work upon them through the fruit of the Spirit in and through your life first.

Every member must be willing to attend every session. Nothing short of total commitment is required

- [4] Choosing the evangelist. God the Holy Spirit uses all sorts of people. It must be a Spirit gifted person with a proven track record, someone who is known by their holiness of life and accuracy to the Scriptures. We should not dictate to God as to who the evangelist should be, we must approach the issue prayerfully and see who the Lord leads to us. It is not the man/woman in the pulpit that is important; it is the message. While the evangelist them self is not important it is important that he/she is consecrated and filled with then Holy Spirit. Go for the Spirit of God and holiness of life, rather than be impressed by the "big names". Remember the warning of scripture, that there are always more fake than true preachers and prophets out there! A fake, ungodly preacher, whose life is carnal and teaching false, will create greater evil than anything else.

- [5] Logistics - you need a venue and seating arranged. You need to think in advance. Make sure that there are counselling rooms or places. Make sure that you have all the portable items needed in a box and ready to go before the day. Check the lighting and sound system. Guard against theft! By lack of planning and security you give the enemy too many opportunities to side track you from God's purpose. If a thief steals the sound system because you haven't thought about security, you have allowed the enemy to win before you have started to speak!

- [6] Administration - Make sure that the music is co-ordinated with the message and is appropriate. Choose the hymns carefully, or have a spirit filled and gifted song leader choose them under the Spirit's leading and watch the service be brought together by God. The Spirit works with all things "in order" rather than hit and miss or chaos. You can find that the music group can be the centre of rebellion in the church; you must be sure of their devotion to the Lord. Self centred musicians and preachers must be REVIVED spiritually, for until there are Christ centred they will be a distraction or a source of rebellion against the plan of God. Spirit filled musicians/preachers are powerfully used, but ego-filled musicians/preachers are of the devil himself!

Sometimes you can have people sing with gusto false doctrine, so ensure the words of the songs are true biblically and powerfully sung. It is not "musical amateur hour" that will embarrass. If a person hasn't got a voice trained and ready for singing, no matter how keen they are, they do not sing! The Lord will provide the skills and gifts needed, and so your job is to pray and expect to discover the right people to do the right things. If people need training tell them! A godly person accepts correction, an arrogant person will leave; and so let them go! Weed out or bring revival to the self centred, for the enemy within the church must be converted or eliminated before the church's power is restored.

A hymn is a poem written by someone to express doctrine and should complement the Bible teaching. The key element in the service is the teaching of the Word of God and not the singing. The purpose of music in the service is not to entertain or attract attention, although good music will do both, it is either to prepare the way for the evangelist and preacher, or to express the things learned.

The music can make a tremendous contribution to the revival. It is therefore important that it is done right or it can ruin the whole thing. It is critical that the director of the music is a spiritually mature person. Remember the impact of Charles Wesley!

Get the tracts printed and/or Bibles ordered. Are you going to have Bibles or are you going to give tracts out?

Advertise the meeting with several billboards with changing messages as you get closer to the time. Work out what is the best way to attract the target audience, and use that medium(Internet, phone, bill board). Advertising is the saturating of the consciousness of the unbelievers that something is going to happen and that it is of enough importance that you are willing to do a lot of work for.

- [7] The Appeal. You need to let the evangelist know what the church policy is and agree with them as to what form of appeal will be used. There is a private appeal, a public appeal and a congregational one that was used to a great effect by Spurgeon. He would give the gospel message most weeks but no appeal was ever given, rather

he expected the congregation to look around, notice any person clearly moved by the Holy Spirit and approach that person, pray with them, and lead them to the Lord. He preached God's Word five or six times a week for several years to get to the stage where he had trained his congregation to that level. I believe that is what we should do as pastors! Do not let theological differences regarding the appeal divide the group.

- [8] The Preaching. "The New Testament evangelist has a definite ministry", said Finney. Like the early preachers and evangelists, the modern evangelist's preaching should be practical, direct, hunting after sinners, the sinner should feel the guilt and shame of sinful rejection of the Lord and not feel that he/she is just unfortunate. Sinners must be told that there is something that they can do, which is repent, and fall at the feet of their only hope. Any excuses of the sinner should be annihilated and any objection to the gospel rebuked, and the true biblical concept of repentance also dealt with in the preaching.

It is important for the evangelist to make their point in the first five minutes of the address. During this period you have to convince these people that you care for their souls and their criticism will be deflected. We are told in **Hebrews 4:12** that God's Word is the sword. A preacher must use it efficiently and effectively. You should not baffle them with great words, but let the Holy Spirit convict them with great texts. You want them walking away saying how great the Lord is, not how great an orator you are. Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-4. Let the Holy Spirit loose upon the people, through prayer saturated Bible teaching; lift the Lord up and he will draw those to himself who will be saved. John 3:14, 8:28-32, 12:31-33. Read these verses and let them be at the heart of your evangelism.

Remember, when God wakes up sleeping sinners they often wake up cross. Do not expect everyone to thank you for giving them the gospel. Preach about sin, its penalty, and magnify the saving sacrifice of the Cross, and the power of the Empty Tomb, because faith in the risen Christ alone saves.

## **10. LIFE AND WITNESS FOR THE PASTOR AND THE EVANGELIST**

If we are to be God's servants, we must set ourselves a high standard in our speech, our manners, and behaviour, and we should be known by our gracious life. The answer is found in the life that is moment by moment controlled by the Holy Spirit. Let me give you a test to apply in this area. Prior to talking in any particular situation you have to ask, regarding what you might say, is it true, is it necessary, is it honouring to Christ? If you cannot say "yes" to all of them you should not speak at all. Read **Matthew 12:33-37**, and reflect upon your life and witness.

When we do not control what we do or say we are dishonouring to the Lord. We are not talking about something that is cheap we are talking about something that was bought by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are heralds of the King of Kings so the Word of Truth should come out of our mouth, not words of dishonour. We are always, at every moment ambassadors for Christ, and we must live and talk like it.

It is easy to lose control and live like a pagan but if you are going to be an evangelistic pastor you need to be in control. You need to be thinking in each situation, as to what you are going to say, both in the light of His Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within you. As Christians we have liberty, but total freedom for ourselves may enslave others. We have to use our liberty in such a responsible manner that it does not infringe on the liberty of others. As Christians we must act responsibly (Ephesians 5:15), and our central responsibility is to the Lord and to stand for him in the midst of the devil's world. As we have already seen we are to be beacons in dark places. **Matthew 5:14-16**.

## **11. DEDICATION TO THE TASK OF REVIVAL IS TO BE TOTAL.**

Open your Bibles to, and read, **1 Corinthians 10:22-33**. Note that the standard of the pastor and the evangelist is that you put everything second to serving Christ. All your attention is on him so that you do not offend those to whom you speak, in order that nothing you do might ruin your chances of talking to them about Christ. Many get offended at this point and ask whether we can live at all! You have to stop taking things personally and take them, "as unto the Lord". You are here to serve him not meet your own needs.

Paul said that whilst he could drink some wine and eat meat he was willing to forgo that for the opportunity of winning a person to Christ. We have liberty in Christ to do anything that is not prohibited by God, but if it interferes with our witness we do not go ahead with it.

Spurgeon agrees with Paul and said that if a thing that you can legitimately do is causing a problem with a person who is lost you should give it away so that you are able to approach them with the gospel. If there is something in your life that you enjoy doing but is a stumbling block, you stop it for the cause of Christ. Galatians 5:11, Romans 9:33, 1 Peter 2:8.

You do not put a lamp on a hill and then cover it over. We are the lights of the world and the gospel should shine through with clarity. We are talking about a holy life. The Lord wants his servants to be purely burning lights; to be people who will "trim their own wicks" to ensure that there is no smoke in the flame.

This means the elimination of anything that might stop our light shining purely for the Lord. We are to be sanctified and remain under the law of the Spirit of God in Christ Jesus. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4. We are to make sure that there is nothing in our life that might "blind" the unbeliever to the truth, or confuse their decision making by making false issues.

## 12. LOVE IS THE EVIDENCE (FRUIT) THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS PRESENT.

In **1 Corinthians 10** we have in verses 31 through 33 this truth expressed; the function of the believer is that the Lord Jesus Christ might be glorified. The basis is agape love, a concern for the other person and not yourself. Our "rights" are secondary to our responsibility to the Lord. The true servant of the Lord does not "stand on their rights", they stand on the Word and seek to serve the one who gave it.

It is this agape love that is calm and focused on the Lord's work. When someone insults you, you do not insult them back, you give them the truth, insight and doctrine back. They have given you hatred, but you give them love. Whatever you do you do it unto the Lord. Do not expect to be patted on the back in the Lord's service. Do not wait for it from man. Our job is to encourage the unbeliever towards salvation and the carnal believer to sanctification. We need to fight back with the truth in love, not by being bitter or vindictive. **John 15:7-27**.

This is illustrated in, **1 Corinthians 13:1-13**. Turn to this passage and read it. It shows our motivation is to be with love. Is this your testimony? If not, make it so by confession and dedication. Remember, for the unbeliever the stakes are high; if they do not repent they are going to spend eternity in hell and you should not wish this on them despite what they may have done to you.

You see, that the Biblical definition of "good manners" is far higher than the world's standard as the world's books teach you to be a hypocrite. You love the unbeliever/carnal believer enough to give them the gospel message, and enough to stop anything in your life in order to give it to them. As a minister you must have this as your motivation. In the church you will find "ugly" and at time obnoxious saints, to whom you give the Word of God every Sunday.

As a minister you give, and give out of godly love for them. We should forgive them until we lose count. Matthew 18:22. When people offend you do not take it personally, take it to him and cast it on the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 5:6-11.

Turn to and read Paul's words in, **2 Corinthians 6:1-10**. Paul goes through all the things he endured willingly while still not taking any offence. He had his back cut to ribbons many times he was beaten and imprisoned. At Philippi he ended up singing hymns in the prison, and by his witness, in the midst of suffering, he led many to his Lord, for his eyes were on his Lord rather than on his wounds. Let this be our witness.

Let us move on to other considerations that set the pastor apart from others as a servant of the Lord. You need to be neatly and appropriately dressed, to the culture you are witnessing in, you need to show people that you care about your dress, meeting people where they are.

You should always be polite; if a person has a title you should always use a title. Your language should be wholesome, building people up rather than pushing them down to the lower standards of man.

Be careful of telling jokes, for this is the technique of man, you don't find it within the Scriptures. You should be concerned where that person is in their culture, finding out what sensitivity they have, so that you do not unknowingly offend.

For instance if you are going to have fellowship in a Samoan house you always take a plate of food, or some gift for the host/hostess. If you come with just a Bible under your arm you will be received politely but you will have offended them unless you bring a gift of prayer and encouragement. You must not add to the offence of the gospel by your attitude that you do not add to the natural offence of the gospel. You must not get into sin with them nor disobey or compromise God's Word.

### PROVISION FOR THE VISITING EVANGELIST/REVIVAL PREACHER

1. You make sure that there is accommodation. Do not put people up in a home, unless there is space for them to work there. Having the prophet's chamber is a good thing for a visiting minister, that he has a bed, a desk, light, privacy and time. It does not have to be "five star", as the godly men of the past lived with those they served in humility. **Philippians 4:11-12**. A man who cannot praise God's provision for a tent, equally to the Hilton hotel, is not a man/woman of God! A demanding servant is a contradiction in terms!
2. Make sure that you give the servant of the Lord things that they can eat. Many people kill ministers with kindness, or ruin their constitution with too many local delicacies. Do not be a trial to him.
3. It may be appropriate to put them up in a motel/hotel where there is everything available, although be very wary of this, as it is not a biblical pattern.

4. You need to ensure that the evangelist's expenses are covered so that he/she is not out of pocket coming to you. You can also give them a love offering to bless them in the Lord. Organise it without embarrassing them. The early church had a basic rule here; if they ask for money, they are a fake!
5. You take up offerings from the believers only, the Lord wants the unbeliever not his money. It has to be given in privacy as unto the Lord.
6. The payment of the evangelist must be done in a dignified and biblical way. All things must be dignified and moral. Ensure that the preacher/prophet of the Lord is always chaperoned by someone at all times, so none can accuse them of immorality!
7. Never take money for the church in a revival campaign, for money can be a stumbling block to those who are spiritually needy.

If there is an evangelistic campaign in the church every church member should attend. If the evangelist requires support in a particular area the church should be willing to give it. If they have come to save souls you should do everything you can to assist them.

### **ATTITUDE OF EVANGELISTS**

Good manners should also be seen on the part of any guest speaker. If you are the speaker remember these points.

1. You should not criticise pastors or churches in their meetings. You may not like the way that they do their business, but it is not your concern.
2. Do not complain about your accommodation - Philippians 4:11-13. Use your good manners even if you have to relocate to ensure you can sleep.
3. Do not be eager about love offerings, dropping hints about how much you need. You do not ask for money, you trust the Lord alone to provide through his people. The Lord can be trusted. If you don't believe that, you have no business serving; you need to be served!
4. If you are doing the Lord's work you will be all right and he will provide the money. The reason you will be short of provisions is because you are short on spirituality. Philippians 4:19
5. Do not write back to church members to obtain funds, always communicate through the pastor.
6. Always honour the pastor, for he is God's leader in that place and to be honoured as such.
7. Sometimes an evangelist will split a church from its pastor and take a portion of the church for themselves. This is an evil and the Lord's judgement is upon such a person; stand well away from such a person lest the Lord strike you down with them!
8. The visiting team should get up early in the morning and be seen in the community. A puritan from the last century said that he wanted to have the light going on God's Word by the time that his first parishioner made his way past his window on the way to work at the local mines in the morning darkness. A servant of the Lord who rises after his people will not serve the people as well as the Lord expects.

### **DOCTRINES**

#### **CHRISTIAN LIFE: AMBASSADORSHIP**

1. An Ambassador does not appoint himself, he is appointed by the nation he represents, the king he represents, the person he represents. We are appointed by God. (2 Corinthians 5:20).
2. An Ambassador does not support himself. We are sustained and protected by God (Philippians 4:19).
3. An Ambassador does not represent himself. We represent God on earth. (Matthew 28:19-20).
4. An Ambassador does not belong to the nation to which he is sent. Positionally we are in heaven, experientially we are in the world. (Philippians 3:20, John 15:19).
5. All Ambassadors have instructions in written form. We have the Word of God. (1 Thessalonians 4:1-2).
6. An Ambassador representing his country does not treat any insult as personal. (Matthew 5:11-12).

7. When an Ambassador is recalled from a country it is tantamount to declaration of war. After the Rapture there will be massive warfare on earth. All Christians will be recalled at the Rapture.(1 Thessalonians 4:13-17).

## **CHRISTIAN LIFE – LAWS OF LIBERTY AND RESPONSIBILITY**

### **1. THE LAW WHICH WE ARE NOT UNDER - THE MOSAIC LAW**

Christ fulfilled the requirements of the Mosaic Law (Matthew 5:17). If the Holy Spirit has control over us we automatically fulfil the righteousness of the Law.

### **2. THE LAW OF LIBERTY**

This law is directed towards oneself. Biblically speaking you have the right to do certain things that will not cause you personally to fail the Lord in any way. (1 Corinthians 8:8)

### **3. THE LAW OF LOVE**

This law takes other believers into consideration. In effect this law says that because of your love for the weaker brethren and in order not to offend or upset them you refrain from doing certain things which you have the liberty to do.

You refrain not because they are wrong in themselves but rather you wish to help other believers rather than hinder them. (1 Corinthians 8:9)

### **4. THE LAW OF EXPEDIENCY**

This law concerns the unbeliever. It is expedient that your life tells the world of Christ. The unbeliever has set up standards of conduct for the Christian.

Therefore you refrain from or do certain legitimate things - not because they are wrong but because they may offend an unbeliever and prevent him from seeing the real issue that Christ Died For His Sins (1 Corinthians 9, 20-23)

### **5. THE LAW OF SUPREME SACRIFICE**

This law is directed towards God. It involves the believer forsaking a completely legitimate function in life in order to more perfectly serve the Lord. Missionaries often function under this law when they live in primitive conditions on the mission field. This law can also operate under Australian conditions. (Matthew 3:1-6)

### **6. PRINCIPLE:**

As Christians we have liberty, but total freedom for ourselves may enslave others. We have to use our liberty in such a responsible manner that it does not infringe on the liberty of others. As Christians we must act responsibly. (Ephesians 5:15). The sole focus of the believer's life is to be like Jesus and that involves Biblical Evangelism as the heart of our life. We are left here to reach the lost, and revive the spirit of the carnal saints; both bring glory to our Lord!

## **CHRISTIAN LIFE - LOVE**

1. Love for God is total appreciation for all He is and has done.

2. Words for love in Greek language:

a) eros (sexual love) not used in the New Testament

b) storge (comradeship) not used in New Testament

c) agape (concerned love for others, great esteem for the loved one, reverence, a love that springs from adoration and veneration, and is a love of the will that chooses the loved one and devotes self to them to the exclusion of lesser objects. It may mean a self denying and compassionate devotion to the loved one)

d) phile (a love that embraces and kisses. This love is that of the affections and speaks of friendship and all one will do for a friend).

3. Our Lord makes it clear to Peter in John 21: 15-19 that he wants Peter to love him with agape love that flows from a deep occupation with the Lord. Agape, as a love of the will, must work out in service of the Lord, and this will express the believers love (agape) for other believers also.

4. Do not love of the things the world has to offer (1 John 2:15-17).

5. True love of God will always lead to love of the brethren (1 John 1:3 -11, 1 John 3:1-3, 10, 4:7 -12, 19).
6. Love is expressed in worship and in service (1 John 5:1-5).
7. Love for God will flow and grow from knowledge of His word (1 Corinthians 2:9).
8. This deep love will be expressed in witness for the Lord to others (2 Corinthians 5:14).
9. God loves every believer with perfect and unchanging love because we are united with His beloved Son.

## **SUMMARY OF TWELVE KEY CONCEPTS FOR CHURCH APPLICATION**

1. COMMIT TO WHOLE CHURCH PRAYER AS THE CENTRAL PART OF EVANGELISM AND REVIVAL
2. MAKE A TARGET LIST OF UNBELIEVERS FOR SPECIFIC PRAYER AND PREPARATION
3. GATHER YOUR PRAYER WARRIORS FOR ARTILLERY SUPPORT IN THE BATTLE.
4. SET A CLEAR AND BIBLICAL PRAYER AGENDA FOR EVANGELISM/REVIVAL
5. COMMIT YOURSELF TO PREACHING THE WHOLE WORD TO THE WHOLE WORLD
6. TEACH PRIVATELY AND PUBLICLY IN CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE PLACES
7. BUILD POWERFUL CELL GROUPS FOR PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY
8. THE LOCAL CHURCH SHOULD OPERATE AS A FAMILY AND GROW GOD'S WAY
9. UTILIZE ALL FOUR GOSPEL/REVIVAL MESSAGE OPPORTUNITIES
10. LIFE AND WITNESS FOR THE PASTOR AND THE EVANGELIST
11. DEDICATION TO THE TASK OF REVIVAL IS TO BE TOTAL ON THE PART OF THE ENTIRE CHURCH.
12. LOVE IS THE EVIDENCE (FRUIT) THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS PRESENT.

## **THE FINAL CHALLENGE**

THE CHALLENGE TO ALL LEADERS OF THE CHURCH TODAY IS TO RESEARCH OUR OWN NATION'S NEEDS AND PREPARE OUR HEARTS AND LIVES FOR REGULAR EVANGELISM AND REVIVAL FOR OUR GENERATION.

IS YOUR CHURCH READY?

ARE YOU READY FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT TO MOVE IN POWER?

A book/seminar like this one is designed to take you from your comfortable place and challenge you to find where God wants you to serve, for renewal of his church, or revival of it if the people have been asleep too long.

What is your task before the Lord in this matter? We are here to fulfill the Divine Commission not be comfortable in our work and leisure. Matthew 28:18-20.

I want to challenge you to do certain things as a result of this overview.

1. Audit the fruit production of the members of your local church! Speak about fruit twice as much as you speak about gifts, and raise awareness of God's standards.
2. Ask yourself, is there evidence for the world to see of Holy Spirit filled lives here?
3. Test your nation. Read through the signs of God's judgment over the nation Israel in Leviticus 26, and Deuteronomy 28-31, and ask yourself, where are we as a nation in these chapters?

4. Begin prayer meetings for revival. Speak of sin, salvation, repentance and power to live for God.
5. Teach the whole counsel of God's Holy Word and so stoke the fire of revival!

Dr John C McEwan  
Dean EBCWA  
Auckland New Zealand

2 August 2015