

# KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

*"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."*

## THE LAW OF FAITH

### Part 3

The scriptures contain much teaching concerning the *Word of God*. In previous studies we have noted that there are five primary progressive steps in the revelation of God through His Word. They are:

1. The Creative Word
2. The Spoken/Written Word
3. The Manifested Word
4. The Living Word
5. The Corporate Word

The truth I will try to unfold in this message is exceedingly glorious in that it brings us to the revelation of God through His Word in a realm beyond something that touches us from without, that we see with our eyes, hear with our ears, or touch with our hands. The powerful, quickening, and transforming work of the Word of God becomes an *internal operation of God in the spirit*. As the glory light of His revelation shines into our hearts, things that belong to the old creation begin to pass away like the falling of a leaf, and, behold, an entirely new creation is raised up in the power of Christ's resurrection. This marvelous change is wrought in us by the quickening energy of the *Living Word of God*.

## THE LIVING WORD

The first chapter of the Gospel of John opens with these significant words: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God...*in Him was life*, and the *life* was the *light* of men. And the light *shines on in the darkness*, for the darkness has never overpowered it or put it out" (Jn. 1:1,3, KJV & Amplified). By the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God John declared that the Word of God was made manifest for all the world to see. Within this glorious Word was *Life*; Life with the potential of illuminating the darkened, death-filled realm of men. The Word, the depository of the Life of God, was not written upon stone, papyrus, parchment, or plates of gold; but the Word was made flesh and came and dwelt among us and the Light of Life shone forth in the world of men in power and demonstration of the glory of God. Then the beloved apostle concludes his remarks about the Word of Life saying, "There it was — the true Light was coming into the world: the true Light was that which *enlightens Every Man*" (Jn. 1:9, Amplified & Emphatic Diaglott).

No words could be more solemn or arresting than the statement of Jesus wherein He said, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, **dwelleth in me**...as the Father hath sent me, and **I live by the Father**: so he that eateth me, even he shall **live by me**" (Jn. 6:56-57). As the natural man must have sustenance from his physical environment to live, so the spiritual man

must have sustenance from his spiritual environment to live. After he has gotten Life you must give him food. What food shall you give him? Shall you feed him with knowledge, or with beauty, or with prosperity, or with blessings, or with religious exercises, or with creeds, or with commandments, or with gifts, or with power, or with programs, or with experiences? No! There is a rarer fare than all these — so rare, in fact, that few have ever more than tasted it; so rich that they who have will never live on any other fare again. It is this: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*” (Mat. 4:4).

Nothing can satisfy the appetite of a son of God but this — he hungers for the bread that cometh down from heaven! Nothing else will fill him. Nothing else will satisfy him. Everyone knows the world is hungry. But the hungry world is starving. They are eating, all of them, but they are eating junk food! The world has many meats and many drinks, but there is no nourishment in them. They are but sugar water for the flesh man who is dying. It has pleasures, and amusements, and excitement, and possessions, and works, but there is no nutrition there for the immortal craving of the *spirit*. It has worldly society, and worldly books, and worldly events, and worldly knowledge, and worldly lusts. But these things merely intoxicate!

The church world is hungry, too. Starving, in fact. Oh, it has many meats and many drinks, but there is no nourishment for the spirit in them. It has impressive rituals, and stirring programs, and moving ceremonies, and splendid ordinances, and pomp, and show, and candles, and statues, and incense, and temples, and cathedrals, and priests, and preachers, and creeds, and organization, and out-reaches, and abundance of activity. Its people get all involved “in the work,” and committed “to the work,” and are faithful in “giving to the work.” They do and do but in all this something other than *Christ* has become the **center**. The center becomes the movement, or the message, or the organization, or the program, or the ministry, or the works, or the experience, or the method, or the personality, or some other thing. But I declare to you that all these religious things and activities merely intoxicate and millions of Christians are drunk with them and in their inebriated hilarity think they know the Living Christ.

There is no **substance** in them! The divine ingredients of the celestial atmosphere of the kingdom of heaven are missing. Sons of God cannot live on that depleted food. So our spirit turns its eye from them all with unutterable loathing. “Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God which is proceeding from the mouth of God.” No possibility of suffering malnutrition or starving on this fare! It is eternal and incorruptible food for the sons of God to live upon. And notice — sons live on every word that *is proceeding* out of the mouth of God. That is how the Greek expresses it. It is not the ancient spoken or written word of God — it is the present *living, breathing* Word of God!

Is it not dreadfully true that the vast majority of Christians are living on words that *have proceeded* out of the mouth of God? They live on a by-gone revelation, a word sent to another people at another time, a historical creed, that which God spoke through St. Augustine, through Luther, through Calvin, through Spurgeon, through Whitfield, through Finney, through the Pentecostal pioneers, or through the Latter Rain prophets! It is stale bread, my beloved, spoiled meat, stagnant water, and a dead word. It is indeed a word that God *spoke*, but not the word the Spirit *is speaking*. It is a word that in some day of antiquity *proceeded* out of the mouth of God, but not the word that now *is proceeding* from His mouth. It is yesterday’s manna, and it has bred worms and now stinks. It is truth on a certain level, but not the *present truth*. But the word which *is proceeding* out of the mouth of God is **His Living Word!** “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit *is saying* unto the churches.” The living bread of the living Christ in His fresh and living revelation to His elect sons in *this new day* is meat that the world knows not of, meat that endures unto the life of the ages. In spring-time it is not sown, and in summer drought it cannot fail. In harvest it is not reaped, yet the storehouse is ever full. Oh, what possibilities of life it opens up!

The words came to me some time ago — the startling and remarkable words Jesus spoke when He stood in the earth and declared, “I am the bread that is come down from heaven, that if a man eat of it he shall never die. I am the *living bread*. I am the bread that is come down. I am the bread that is become personified in a body of flesh upon this earth. I am the bread that is *from heaven*.” Immediately the question presented itself to me — Why was Jesus the bread that *came from heaven*? Why did He specify *from heaven*? Why did He not simply say, “I am the bread of life, I am the bread God has provided on earth,” or some other characterization? At once I was reminded of the manna that fell in the wilderness — the manna that *came from heaven*, the typical bread that God sent *from heaven* to feed the children of Israel. Why was it bread *from heaven*? Why did not God simply create it there upon the ground? Certainly that is no more difficult a miracle than sending it down from heaven!

Immediately the spirit began to articulate within me the wonder of this mystery! It came to me so clearly and powerfully as a parable. Come with me for a moment and let us think of a number of astronauts who are soaring away from earth to a strange planet in some distant galaxy. Along their journey through the universe a problem develops with their spaceship. Eventually they are forced to land on an unknown planet in a different solar system. They make a successful landing, but are stranded there on the planet Timur. They know nothing of this world into which they have descended. As they step from their ship and begin exploration of the planet, it is discovered to have a very hostile environment. In fact, *everything* there is hostile to them in one way or another. All the vegetation on Timur is toxic to the human body. They cannot eat or drink anything there! They cannot breathe its atmosphere, nor can they partake of anything there, for everything in that environment is *death* to them.

The supplies they have from earth are finite, and will in time be depleted. So they contact earth, and immediately a rescue expedition is dispatched. As they are staring death in the face, the second spacecraft from earth arrives and lands on Timur. The second group of astronauts exit from their craft and say to those who are stranded there, “We are the men who have *come from earth*. We have the bread that is *from earth*! We have the bread that is not adverse to you. We have that which is compatible with who you are, and what you are. We have the food that is biologically adapted to your earthly, human constitution. We have come *from earth*, we have the bread that is *your bread*, it is from *your world*, it is from the place of *your origin*, it is that which *pertains to you*, and if you eat this bread you **will not die** — **YOU WILL LIVE!** This bread will sustain you, energize you, nourish you, and give you expression of who you are. This is the bread that is *from earth!*”

Now you see, the bread from earth was the bread from **home!** Once we understand our origin, where our “home” is in the world of *spirit*, and how we became trapped in this realm of *flesh*, which is made *death* to us, we will grasp the eternal significance of why Jesus *came down from heaven* into our darkness, into our bondage, into our ignorance, into our limitation, into our sin, into our false identity, into our distorted perceptions. He came down to the world of our natural life, of our carnal minds, or our physical and mortal sense of being — yes, into our sin and death — and He says to us as He steps, as it were, from His celestial spacecraft, I am the bread that is *come down from heaven!* If a man eats of *this bread*, he will live and not die! I am the bread that comes from the realm that *you came from!* I am from your *true world*, the world of the spirit, the world of the Father, the world of divinity, the world of God, the world of eternity. I am from that world and I have come to speak a word into you. The words that I speak to you are *spirit* and they are *life*. The words that I speak are spiritually adapted to your heavenly, spiritual constitution. They are compatible with who you are, and what you are. My Father is your Father. I am the bread that is come from the heavens of God’s Spirit! When you eat of this bread, of this word, you will live and not die!

From the things which we have said we must conclude that our condition on earth is not unlike the state of the astronauts on the planet Timur in our parable. The difference is that man’s

sojourn on earth began so long ago, so many millenniums in the past, and so many generations have come and gone, that we have forgotten where we came from and why we were sent here. We think we are like we are because we were born that way when we entered this world. We see only the physical, weak, carnal, human aspects of our existence. We say, "I was born in sin. I was born alienated from God. I was born dead. I was born Irish, and I *do* have a temper! I was born an alcoholic, I was born homosexual, I was born lustful, I was born prideful, greedy, hateful, or with my foot in my mouth." That's how we see ourselves when we look from the earthlies, with a carnal mind!

When you look from the heavenlies, however, you see something else! You see the great truth that Jesus came into the world to reveal unto the sons of men. You came into this world out of the bosom of the Father! Before the Creator formed you, He knew you. He didn't know you in your present physical form as Joe Smith or Sally Brown, but He knew you *as spirit*. That wonderful prayer Jesus taught His disciples, which we call The Lord's Prayer, begins with the words, "*Our Father which art in heaven...*" Until men recognize by the illumination that the Spirit brings **who their Father is** and **where their Father is**, that is, the **realm where He begat us** — they remain lost and dying in the dense darkness of the carnal mind. Spiritually, they are no different than the adopted child who has never been told that he is adopted and has no concept of who his biological parents truly are or where he came from. He thinks he originated with his adoptive parents and knows not that his origin was actually someplace else. Our Father in heaven is not the one who gave us our physical life in the womb of our earthly mother. The only reason Jesus would tell the vast throng gathered around Him, "Call no man your father upon the earth, for ONE IS YOUR FATHER, *which is in heaven,*" is that we all must recognize that our life did not begin with our physical conception or birth. **Our true Father is not a man upon earth, but the Father of spirits who is in heaven!** Can we not see by this that our life did not begin on earth — it began in heaven! Nothing could be plainer than this. Over and over again Jesus taught the multitudes about their "heavenly Father." Once we know who and where our Father is it is easy to understand where our life began and from whence we came. Our birth, our beginnings were with God — our Father. Aren't you glad!

God spoke to you about His plan for your life, my beloved, before ever you were formed as an embryo in the womb of your mother. Paul states it so clearly when he says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as He hath *chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world*, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Eph. 1:3-4). The Amplified Bible reads: "Even as He chose us (actually picked us out for Himself as His own) in Christ Jesus *before the foundation of the world.*" Never doubt this for a moment — the only way God could have loved you, chose you in Christ, and picked you out for His own *before the foundation of the world* is that you truly existed in and with Him before the appearing of the worlds. Nothing can be plainer than that! Yet we have supposed that we were just recently, in this life, apprehended of God to sonship. I thought the work of God began in my life more than eighty years ago in northwest Florida and south Alabama. Now I find that the thing God is doing in us and in all humanity began in eternity! It didn't begin in time. It began before the ages were framed, before ever the sun kissed the mountains! God knew me, loved me, chose me, counseled me, and picked me out for His unique purpose before the foundation of the world. My origin was in God. God begat me of Himself *as spirit* before He exhaled me *as spirit* into a very unique body upon this earth. Thus I was born into this world as a *spiritual being* having an EARTHLY EXPERIENCE! And so were you, precious friend of mine, and so was every man who has walked planet earth. We were born with a spirit, as well as a soul and a body. "There is a *spirit in man*: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding" (Job 32:8). We came into this world with a God-ward side, with the inherent instinct to seek after God, with a yearning after Him.

Each of us was born into a mortal, physical body and into a world of darkness, sin, and death. But this was according to God's plan! Paul says that we are "in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, PROMISED US BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN" (Titus 1:2). This is indeed wonderful! We were born into this world with a promise from God — the promise of eternal life! That was our congenital condition — born with a promise! But this hope of salvation was not promised us when we came into the world, or after we were born into this life — it was promised us *before the world began!* How could God make such a promise to us at that time if our existence was yet future and we were not there *with Him* before the worlds appeared? Not only was salvation promised back there, but the kingdom was promised as well. "Then shall the King (Jesus) say to them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom *prepared for you from the foundation of the world*" (Mat. 25:34). The kingdom message deals with the conformity, maturity, and inheritance of the sons of God. This great plan was conceived and initiated in eternity, before time began. Yes, God *knew us* back there! "For whom He did *foreknow*, He also did *pre-destinate* to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the *firstborn among many brethren*" (Rom. 8:29). God foreknew us in the past — before the world began. That is also when He predestinated us to our sonship. Great is the mystery!

Christ Himself is the Living Word of God! Once, two thousand years ago, He was the *Manifested Word*, the Word *made flesh*, the man Christ Jesus, born of a virgin, raised in the village of Nazareth, manifested to the people of Israel with mighty signs and wonders in the power of the Holy Spirit. But today He is no longer that man walking the shores of blue Galilee, proclaiming the kingdom of God and healing the sick, raising the dead, and casting out devils. Oh, no! He is more than all that. He is now the resurrected One, the ascended One, the glorified One who has ascended up far above all heavens that He might *fill all things*. Consider with prayer and meditation the things I now say, for Christ is the *Universal One*, the *Living Word*, the quickening, transforming, life-giving One poured out for all creation. The first man Adam was *made* a living soul; the last man Adam was *made* a quickening spirit. Surely we understand that the word "made" denotes a transition, a change in form. The first man Adam was first created as a *spiritual man* in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Afterward he was *formed* of the dust of the ground and God breathed into him the breath of life and man *became* a living soul (Gen. 2:7). The spiritual man was infused into the earthly form and was then called a "living soul". We may also well say that with the last Adam the process was just the opposite. Jesus came into the earth as a physical man like unto other men, and then by the power and glory of resurrection, ascension, and glorification He *became* something altogether different and transcendently greater — a *quickenning spirit*. This universalized Christ, this immortal, omniscient, omnipotent Christ is this day the LIVING WORD OF GOD! "For the Word of God is *alive and full of power* — making it active, operative, energizing, and effective..." (Heb. 4:12).

Even now at this very moment the divine life of the ever living Word of God is at work within us, changing, transforming, lifting us up into the kingdom of our Father. The life of Christ is not something outside ourselves. I have been wearied a little because so very often through the years I have heard God's precious people singing such songs as "Oh Lord, Send The Power Just Now." Or "Jesus Is Passing This Way." I rejoice that there are indeed those special "times of refreshing" that come from the presence of the Lord but I can assure you, precious brother, sister, that you will never know the glorious reality of sonship to God so long as you live in that consciousness and mentality of "times of refreshing." The consuming desire within my heart in this new kingdom day is that God's called and separated people might with me become aware of the *abiding* presence and life of God. Surely that is what it means to us when Paul commands, "let the Word of Christ (the Word which Christ is) *dwell* — that is, *have its home* — in your hearts in all its richness..." (Col. 3:16). As the years have passed since I first heard the call of the Spirit unto the blessed realm of sonship to God, there has come to me an ever increasing assurance that I am dwelling and walking in His presence, for He is not

momentarily “passing my way”, but has been impregnated into my earthen vessel as the incorruptible seed of the Word of God which liveth and ABIDETH FOREVER.

The Christ of God is no longer far away; He is no longer without; He is here. No longer need saints ask, “Who shall ascend into heaven to bring Christ down from above, or who shall descend into the deep to bring Christ up again from the dead? The Word (Christ, the Living Word) is nigh thee, even *in thy mouth and in thy heart.*” How exceedingly wonderful are the words of scripture, “Know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ *is in you?*” (II Cor. 7:5). “At that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in me, and *I in you*” (Jn. 14:10). “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but *Christ liveth in me*” (Gal. 2:20).

I would say to you again that the life of Christ, the life of sonship, is not something outside ourselves. The idea is not that Christ is in heaven and that we can stretch out some mysterious faculty and touch Him there, or that He can by some mysterious means draw nigh to us and touch us as He passes by. That is the vague form in which many babes in Christ conceive of the truth, but it is contrary both to Christ’s teaching and to the analogy of nature. Life is not a visit from a force, but a resident tenant of the spirit of man. The life of a tree, or of an animal is not bottled up somewhere in the skies and administered by doses from time to time into the tree or the animal by some external agent. The life is IN every plant and tree, every animal and fish and fowl, inside its own tissue and substance, and works there in mighty power to form even that which is contained in the life. Life is definite and resident.

The life of sonship is not derived from the occasional touch of Jesus as He “passes by,” nor from the weekly refreshing or reviving that comes to our weary souls as we gather together in our church meetings. Oh, yes, the rain and the sun fall upon living things and make a contribution, but they ***do not give them life.*** They only nurture the life that *is within* so that it is strengthened to rise up in the fullness of its powers. Thank God for the fellowship and encouragement of those of like precious faith, but I declare to you that the life of sonship can only be known, and only grow and mature as we become sensitive to the glorious and eternal reality of CHRIST ABIDING WITHIN, conscious of His spirit speaking, His hand guiding, and His power continually transforming the spirit, the soul, the mind, and the body from within into the image of Him who created them. With my poor and puny ability I cannot make the truth of Christ’s indwelling life to be a living, transforming reality to your heart. None but the Spirit of God can perform this wonderful and divine act of illumination. He alone can take the things of God and show them unto you! Nevertheless I can confidently assure you that, the moment the grand and glorious fact of His indwelling life grips your heart and fills your mind, the reality of His divine indwelling will immediately begin to transform your life.

“You have been *born again*, not from a mortal origin (seed, sperm), but from one that is immortal, by the *ever living Word of God*” (I Pet. 1:23). The closer we come to the kingdom, the more do those destined sons of God know what it is to be lifted beyond the pale of natural things to behold the glory of the realm where Christ the Living Word dwells in the Spirit. The mixture is even now being removed from the hearts of a firstfruit company and many are being enabled to ***see Him*** in a new and living way! It is no longer beholding Jesus of Nazareth by the sea or in the mountain — it is by beholding the resurrected, ascended, glorified, universalized CHRIST THE LIVING WORD OF GOD that changes us from glory to glory, from earthly to heavenly, from corruption to incorruption. The new spirit and the new heart are born of the incorruptible seed of this *Living Word*, for they are naught but Christ raised up within. Oh, the mystery of it! It is the glory of His presence and the power of His life that transforms the ragged garments of our mortality to raiment which is white and glistening.

Fantastic changes lie ahead for all who separate themselves unto God. Tremendous changes will transpire as soul and body come under the dominion of Christ in our spirit, for mortality shall be swallowed up of life. This corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this

mortal shall put on immortality. Oh glorious victory! The sons of God shall arise into that blessed realm beyond time, and space, and matter, and the carnal mind, not to be as *He was*, but to become as *He is* — to realize and walk in the fullness of God's glory for evermore. Oh glorious and wonderful realm! It is the realm beyond the veil where we may enter and tread the highways and fields of our celestial citizenship. It is the realm of the Son of God, the realm of the Living Word! It is the inheritance of the sons of God! The sons of God are the "Living Word" kind of men, and these are they who shall become healing for the nations, a government of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and might, of knowledge and fear of the Lord. From the life of those who enter that realm shall flow forth such glory and blessing that the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea and nothing shall hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain! Let there be no doubt in the mind of any who read these words that this is precisely what it means to be **BORN AGAIN BY THE INCORRUPTIBLE SEED OF THE EVER LIVING WORD OF GOD!**

### **FAITH BY THE LIVING WORD**

Many years ago the Lord raised up within me an intense desire to search out the mysteries of faith and the Word of God whereby we may grow up into Christ and lay hold upon the fullness of our sonship to God. In my search I discovered the various aspects of the Word of God by which faith is ministered to the called and chosen elect of the Lord. The first and most elementary revelation of God comes via the Creative Word. The vast and glorious creation of God *testifies* to the majesty and power of the great Creator, inspiring faith within us to be assured that the mighty God truly exists. The second step in our knowledge of God came to each of us through the Spoken/Written Word of God — through the words of God's prophets and the writings of holy scripture. These are able to make us wise unto salvation. The third step in the unfolding revelation of God through His Word came as the Manifested Word — Jesus Christ in the flesh, expressing and manifesting the character, nature, will, and power of God through His life, His teaching, His works, His death, and His resurrection. No man has seen God at any time, but the only begotten Son of God has revealed Him, has in His very person led Him forth into view where He can be seen. Through Jesus we see God as He had never been made known to the sons of men before!

For the past two thousand years the vast majority of the Lord's people have known God primarily through these first three dimensions of God's Word. The thing we must surely have noticed about these first three expressions of the Word of God is that they are all *without* — *outside of ourselves*. The Creative Word is proclaimed by the unmeasurable expanses of trillions upon trillions of galaxies, as well as the mystifying marvels of earth itself, but every atom of it is above us and around us and beyond us. When we come to the Spoken/Written Word, it is clear that the voices of the prophets and the blessing of the printed page are likewise items outside of ourselves that we hear with the ear, touch with the hand, and see with the eye. The Lord Jesus, the Manifested Word of God, likewise was a man who trod the paths of the land of Israel, who was buried in a tomb, who rose from the dead and was seen of many for the space of forty days, after which His footstep followers beheld Him with wondering eyes as He ascended into the heavens where He now sits enthroned at the right hand of the Majesty on High.. He, too, as that man of Galilee is without. It is only when we come to the *glorified* Jesus Christ — THE LIVING WORD — that there is a mighty change — the Word is no longer without, this Word is *within*, and I have no hesitation in saying that this Living Word is **ONLY AND ENTIRELY WITHIN!** Oh, the wonder of it!

We have already stated that *faith comes by the Word of God* — by the revelation of God unto us. When we see Him as He is, faith is evoked in our hearts to embrace His goodness and purpose in our lives. The Word of God involves the revelation of the *will* of God. Is not this why the beloved apostle Paul penned these penetrating words: "Brethren, be not children in *understanding*: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in *understanding* be men" (I Cor. 14:20).

Paul prayed for the Ephesian brethren to this end: “The *eyes of your understanding* be enlightened: that ye may *know* (by understanding) what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” (Eph. 1:18). Later on in the same epistle he admonished, “Wherefore be ye not unwise, but UNDERSTANDING WHAT THE WILL OF THE LORD IS” (Eph. 5:17). To the Colossians Paul also wrote, “For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the *knowledge of GOD*” (Col. 1:9-10). Christ, the Living Word of God, and thus the expression and substance of the will of God, has now been sent forth into our hearts in mighty spirit power to the end that we may now live by the *understanding* that comes from the WORD WITHIN. “And we know that the Son of God IS COME, and hath given us AN UNDERSTANDING, that we may KNOW HIM that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is...eternal life” (I Jn. 5:20).

How many of us were saved *before we understood* that we were lost and that Jesus died and rose again for us? Was it not when we came to *understand* the simple gospel of salvation through Jesus that faith was evoked in our hearts to trust Him and receive Him as our Saviour and Redeemer? This came by an operation of the Holy Spirit in and by the Word. Show me a man who doesn't understand that he is lost and I will show you a man who has never been saved. Show me a man who doesn't understand that Jesus is the only way to God and I will show you a man who has never experienced the glorious and eternal reality of the living God. All faith comes by some dispensation of the Word of God. Faith comes by UNDERSTANDING BY REVELATION THE WILL, PROVISION, AND PURPOSE OF GOD. Great is the mystery!

My father was raised up in the Mennonite denomination. As a Mennonite he did not *understand* that people today could be filled with the Holy Spirit and manifest the supernatural gifts of the Spirit. When some Spirit-filled brethren came into his barber shop and commenced to witness to him about the Holy Spirit baptism, he argued with them that this had all passed away with the apostles. For some time these brethren continued to witness to my father and for five years he was unable to understand the truth they were declaring. Finally though, the Spirit began to work within and my father became so stirred and challenged by this thought of the Holy Spirit that he decided he had to have an answer as to who was really *right* — himself, what he had always been taught, or these brethren and their testimony. One day he closed his shop, went into a room, and placed his Bible on a chair. He knelt before the open Bible and told the Lord that he was laying aside all that he had ever been taught and that he was also laying aside all the testimony of these brethren who professed to have a further experience in God. He said, “Lord, I want to know *the truth from your Word*, I want *You* to answer me!” He purposed to read the New Testament through as though he had never read it before.

Based on his knowledge that the beloved physician, Luke, wrote both the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, he chose the Gospel of Luke as the only one of the four Gospels he would read. He began there making a notation of every statement of Jesus concerning the coming of the Spirit...the promise of the Father. He then began in Acts and read of the promise: “Ye shall receive *power* after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” He read of the mighty manifestations of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Then came chapter two, verses thirty-eight and thirty nine: “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the *promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*” And suddenly — he UNDERSTOOD! The Spirit Himself came to my father in that blessed moment and put these questions to him: “Son, are you afar off?” “Yes, Lord,” he answered, “I am afar off from that day, that place, and that generation.” “Have I called you?” “Yes, Lord.” He remembered the time when as a ten year old boy the Spirit had gripped his heart and he had walked down the isle of a Mennonite church building and Christ had changed his life from that day. Then the Spirit thundered to him, “Then — THE PROMISE IS UNTO YOU!” In that remarkable instant it became so crystal clear to him that it was the

*same promise* that was for him — not something different, not something less, not the Holy Spirit *minus* the glorious manifestations of Pentecost! Right there on that momentous occasion ***faith was evoked*** in my father's heart, and God filled him and subsequently my mother with the Spirit and later all of us children as we grew in the Lord. The point I want you to see is this: None of us ever received the Holy Spirit baptism UNTIL FIRST GOD HAD MINISTERED AN **UNDERSTANDING OF HIS WILL BY HIS WORD!** And although the truth was *verbally expressed* (the Spoken Word) by the dear brethren who testified to my father, and though it lay *concealed* within the pages of the Written Word, it was the Spirit Himself, THE LIVING WORD OF GOD, the WITNESS WITHIN which unveiled the truth within himself and raised up the faith to apprehend the promise. What revealing light of revelation teaches us the beautiful truth that it is not the Creative Word, or the Spoken Word, or the Written Word, nor yet the Manifested Word which brings us life, and light, and truth, and reality — it is ***the Living Word within*** which is the source of all spiritual understanding, truth, and experiential reality. That is the mystery!

In every case it is *understanding* which evokes *faith* to appropriate the promise and purpose of God — the *will of God*. I write these things because I know that in every dimension of your forward walk in God **you must not seek for faith**. Faith does not come by asking, nor can it be obtained by seeking. Faith comes only and always **by the Word of God**. Seek rather to understand the Father's will. Seek to hear the Voice of the Living Word of God within yourself. Only the Voice of God can reveal the will of God. The will of God can never be known by flipping the pages of the Bible and landing our finger on some random verse of scripture. It comes by KNOWING HIM! "Let the Word of Christ (not scripture verses) dwell in you richly in all wisdom." And once you hear His Voice whispering through the mists of your clouded vision there will come the understanding of the will of the Father by the Spirit — and that very understanding will ***birth the faith*** within you to arise and enter into your inheritance!

Those who are apprehended in this hour to walk in sonship to God are being brought into harmony with the *will of God*. The firstborn Son of God spoke the great truth, "My meat is to *do the will* of Him that sent me" (Jn. 4:34). The ones *sent by the Father* are *sons*. The words of the little chorus say it so powerfully:

He that is with me, is He that hath sent me,  
And He that hath sent is One —  
This One is the Father, and there is no other,  
For I and the Father are One.  
No man knows the Father save he who is brother  
To those in the order of sons;  
This sonship reveals Him, the One who has sent them,  
For they and the Father are One.

Precious indeed is the promise given in I John 5:14: "If we ask anything *according to His will*, He heareth us...and we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." If we ask anything — no exceptions — no limit to God's confidence in His sons! And why? Because He trusts them to ask right things "according to His will." He is guiding them, even in what they ask, if they are truly sons after His own heart; so God sets no limit to His power. If anyone is doing God's will let him ask anything. It is God's will that he ask anything. Let him put His promise to the test. "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but *understanding what the will of the Lord is*" (Eph. 5:17). The law of faith is truly very simple. Understanding comes by divine revelation — the Living Word of God. Revelation reveals the will of God. Sons ask only for those things that are according to His will. It is the revelation of God's will that *evokes faith*. Therefore, let him ask anything according to the Father's will and he will *know* that he will have the petitions that he asks. It is indeed wonderful!

Notice here what the true basis of sonship prayer is. The prayer that is answered is the prayer after God's will. And the reason for this is plain. What is God's will is God's wish. And when a man does what God wills, he does what God wishes to be done. Therefore, God will have that done at any cost, at any sacrifice. Thousands of prayers are never answered, simply because God does not wish them! They have absolutely nothing to do with His plan, purpose, or desire. If we pray for any one thing, or any number of things we are sure God wishes, we may be sure our wishes will be gratified. For our wishes are only the reflection of God's! And the wish in us is really equivalent to the answer! It is the answer casting its shadow backwards. Already the thing is done in the mind of God. It casts two shadows — one backward, one forward. The backward shadow — that is the wish before the thing is done, which sheds itself in prayer. Such prayer is working together with God by asking and decreeing the thing that is in His heart. The forward shadow — that is the joy after the thing is done, which sheds itself in praise. Oh, what a rich and wonderful reality, this!

Asking anything, getting everything, willing with God, praying with God, decreeing with God, praising with God! Surely it is too much, this great promise. How can God trust us with a power so deep and awesome? Ah, He can trust His sons with anything! Not His babes, but His *sons*, the mature ones. He is teaching us. Patiently. We are learning. Are you still asking for all the petty, selfish, carnal things you used to demand from God? If not, you are learning sonship. "If we ask ANYTHING ACCORDING TO HIS WILL." That takes revelation! Well, if we do, we will ask nothing amiss. If we do, we will ask nothing to consume it upon our own lusts. It will be God's will if it is asked. It will be God's will if it is done. For they are come, these sons, TO DO GOD'S WILL! May God grant that you and I may learn to live this great and holy life, considering the solemn words of Him who lived it first, who lived it all: "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF MY FATHER which is in heaven."

The Lord has graciously led my wife and I for many years. Various times we have been called upon to step out into new directions in God, burning all bridges behind, bridges of fellowship, bridges of doctrine, bridges of means and methods, as well as bridges of sustenance. Many times we could not see by the natural eye any way to fulfill the walk set before us. Early in our journey the Lord sent us to the mission fields three times without any guaranteed support from any quarter. Later we spent several years under-shepherding local assemblies of the Lord's body accepting no salary so as not to become a hireling. At times we traveled cross-country with and without the family, simply at the word of the Lord, with no pre-arranged itinerary. We took the only few dollars we had and published the first Kingdom Bible Study in 1970 when the Spirit spoke to me to put into print these holy truths of sonship, the kingdom of God, and the reconciliation of all creation — sending them out *free of charge* to the Lord's called and separated remnant across this great land and around the world. The Lord instructed us *never* to put a price on any word of God that He had so freely given us by the Spirit. Furthermore we were commanded to never *ask* for donations to support the work, nor were we permitted to make known any "needs" or to employ any *subtle gimmickry* to induce people to contribute. The Lord's way always is, "Freely we receive, freely we give." And freely HE SUPPLIES! God always has His way to support His work — and if it cannot be supported without begging or using gimmicks on God's precious people then it simply *is not His work*. In each case we knew that we had heard from God — and *understanding the will of God* evoked the faith to step out upon His Word and see it gloriously fulfilled in us and through us. What a marvelous LAW OF FAITH!

Multitudes of Christians equate faith with something ecstatic, some religious experience, or a "spiritual feeling" we must work ourselves into, some feverish emotional height we must attain to in order to possess it. We have tried to *work* faith up, tried to *pray* ourselves into it. We work at it, endeavoring to *talk ourselves and God* into it. "Now Lord, you know that you said in your Word..." as though God needs to be reminded of His own faithfulness and love. What we

are really trying to do in such exercises is to *convince ourselves* of God's promise and ability, to **CONJURE UP A FAITH THAT WE KNOW WE DON'T HAVE!** It is distasteful to admit it, but the plain truth is that in many cases we are trying to *put God in a corner*, using His words against Him, in an effort to *force His hand*. NONE OF THAT IS FAITH NOR DOES IT LEAD TO FAITH. So let me say to you again, dear reader of these lines, DON'T SEEK FAITH! Don't *work* at it. Cease *struggling* to believe. Let us rather *seek the Lord Himself*, seek intimacy of fellowship and vital union with Him, seek the revelation of *His will*, and in the glory of His presence and the wonder of His Word raised up within our hearts FAITH WILL COME. The more intently we listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit, the more we heed His dealings in our lives, the more faith will be evoked within us both powerfully and effortlessly. Think of it!

Instead of seeking faith seek to know the Father's will in your life. Relax! Rest in the Lord, feed the inner man, grow in the spirit. I have no hesitation in telling you that the problem with many of God's people is that they are trying to have faith to do things that God has never commissioned them to do. "You have not, because you ask not. You ask, and receive not, because you *ask amiss*," the apostle James admonished. We must always be fervently aware that God must bring every son to the place where he not only does what the Father is doing, but *he doesn't do what the Father isn't doing*. We must not run in human zeal or invent God's program out of our fleshly minds or carnal will. We must never run ahead of God. For only the revelation of *God's will* will *evoke living faith*. There is a divine principle in God which I can assure you works every time and never fails! **WHEN YOU TRULY KNOW THE FATHER'S WILL BY THE SPIRIT YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY RECEIVE THE FAITH TO FULFILL IT.** That is the mystery!

This is how the great heroes of faith in Hebrews 11 accomplished their mighty feats. They received a revelation of what God required of them and became thoroughly convinced of it — so convinced that they were able to walk it out regardless of the odds. They were *convinced!* And that is precisely *what faith is!* The many verbs used by the writer in Hebrews 11 are most instructive. By faith Abel *offered* sacrifice. By faith Enoch *pleased* God. By faith Noah *prepared* an ark. By faith Abraham *went out...* by faith Abraham *offered up* Isaac. By faith Isaac *blessed* Jacob. By faith Joseph *made mention* of the departing of the children of Israel. By faith Moses *refused* to be called the son of Pharaoh. By faith they *passed through* the Red Sea. By faith they *compassed* the walls of Jericho. Yes, my beloved, by faith **THEY JUST WENT AHEAD AND DID IT!** By the faith that came to them through the understanding of what they *must do*, they overcame! How often have we tried to conjure up faith on the basis of what we would *like to do*, or wish we *could do*, or *suppose* that it would please God for us to do. When true faith comes you will know what you must do and you will do it because the faith of God propels you along to do it. Simple — but powerful!

In this new kingdom day God is forming a vast company of sons upon the earth in whom the Word of Christ is coming to dwell richly in all wisdom. These sons know that they must give themselves to God in this hour to walk with Him and Him alone, to seek after Him with all their heart, to follow hard after their God. They know and are totally convinced that they must leave behind and shed from themselves every vestige of the babblings of religious Babylon — the carnal church systems of man — to abide in vital union with their Lord and only Head. They know that they must learn *His ways* and be conformed to *His image*. They are weary of seeing the whole world under the sway of the flesh, the world, and the devil, while Christians play with their spiritual toys and all the religious foolishness which they believe to be the most important things in the world. These sons have the assurance in their deepest heart that they must grow in faith, in strength, in obedience, in nature and character, and wait upon the Lord to bring forth **HIS NEW THING** in the earth that will bring deliverance to creation. They know that someone must pay the price to walk with God *by faith* just as Enoch walked with God by faith before he was translated, that they too may be *changed, transformed, and empowered* to bring God's promised salvation to all men and every nation. They know that a great *glory is soon to be*

*revealed in the manifest sons of God* — those who have forsaken all to wait upon His fullness just as Simeon and Anna waited in the temple for the manifestation of the firstborn Son of God in the earth. They know that they shall arise to reveal the glory of God in the earth in this great Day of the Lord. They know they shall reign with Christ over all things. They know the pathway of sonship to God even as Jesus, the firstborn Son, knew His path two thousand years ago. They know. They KNOW! Oh, yes, these sons are CONVINCED! And this *understanding* of the Father's plan, purpose, and will for the approaching days of this new and glorious kingdom age is even now evoking in a company of the Lord's body a mighty, irresistible, unconquerable FAITH which shall cause the adversary to be bound and the salvation of the Lord to be revealed before the face of all mankind.

To be continued...

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