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a.m.

Bcc. Pm.

"WORD STUDIES IN EPHESIANS: SAINTS"

Nov. 89

RECENTLY, WHILE WATCHING A CONCERT ORCHESTRA ON TV, THE CONCLUDING SELECTION WAS "WHEN THE SAINTS GO MARCHING IN." THE CATCHY TUNE SOON HAD THE AUDIENCE CLAPPING. THE SONG IS NO HELP THEOLOGICALLY BECAUSE IT DOES NOT TELL WHERE THE SAINTS ARE MARCHING NOR WHO THE SAINTS ARE! MOST PEOPLE DO NOT WANT TO BE CALLED EITHER SAINT OR SINNER. THE TERM SINNER SUGGESTS SOMEONE WHO IS TERRIBLY BAD AND THE WORD SAINT SUGGESTS SOMEONE WHO IS TOO GOOD FOR MOST. SINNERS ARE THOUGHT TO BE DRUNKARDS, GAMBLERS, SEX OFFENDERS, THIEVES AND PERVERTS, BUT GOSSIP, DISHONESTY, CHEATING, CRUELTY AND PRIDE NOT TO MENTION INDIFFERENCE TOWARD GOD IS SELDOM LISTED IN THE SINNERS CATEGORY! THE TERM SAINT IS SOMEWHAT LIKE THE WORD STAR. THERE ARE STARS IN THE SKY AS WELL AS PEOPLE ON EARTH WHO ARE CALLED STARS. (RELATE TO DEATH OF HENRY FONDA.) DOES SAINTHOOD RELATE OR REFER TO A GROUP OF SUPER INDIVIDUALS, GOD'S ELITE CORP OF SUPER PERSONS WHO HAVE ACCOMPLISHED UNIQUE FEATS ON EARTH? LET US EXAMINE THE BIBLE TO DETERMINE THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS BIBLICAL TERM.

I. THE IDENTITY OF THE SAINTS - 1:1,2:19

(1) ALIVE (2) Address

THE WORD SAINT IS A SYNONYM FOR BELIEVER, CHRISTIAN, BRETHREN, CHILD OR SON OF GOD. THE QUESTION ARISES: "WHERE ARE THE SAINTS TODAY? ARE THEY IN HEAVEN, NEW ORLEANS, ROME? IS THERE A SHRINE TO WHICH PEOPLE MAY GO AND SEE AN OBJECT REPRESENTING A SAINT? THE TEXT SPEAKS OF "THE SAINTS BEING IN EPHESUS." THE BELIEVERS IN THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS WERE SAINTS POSITIONALLY BY VIRTUE OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO JESUS CHRIST OR BECAUSE THEY WERE "IN CHRIST." THE WORD SAINT IS THE GREEK HAGIOS WHICH LITERALLY

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MEANS HOLY. I COR. 16:1 SPEAKS OF A COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS. APPARENTLY, THERE WERE PEOPLE IN JERUSALEM WHO WERE BOTH POOR AND ON EARTH WHO NEEDED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. IN WRITING TO BOTH PHILIPPIANS AND COLOSSIANS PAUL GREETED THE SAINTS THERE. PHIL. 1:1, 4:21, 22, COL. 1:2, 4, 12, 26. IN 1 TIM. 5:10, PAUL SPEAKS OF WASHING THE SAINTS FEET AS AN ACT OF HOSPITALITY. ROMANS SPEAKS OF THE SAINTS CALLING, INTERCESSION AND NECESSITY. (ROM 1:7, 3:27, 12:13.) IF YOU ARE IN CHRIST TODAY, YOU ARE A SAINT IN POSITION IF NOT SAINTLY IN PRACTICE. DR. BARNHOUSE USED TO TELL THE

STORY OF A SON FROM A CERTAIN ENGLISH FAMILY WHO DISGRACED HIS NAME AND FAMILY BY OUTRAGEOUS CONDUCT. THE FAMILY TOLD HIM THAT IF HE WOULD LEAVE THE COUNTRY HE WOULD RECEIVE A CHECK REGULARLY TO PERMIT HIM TO LIVE COMFORTABLY BUT IF HE REFUSED, ALL INCOME WOULD BE CUT OFF. THE BOY EMIGRATED TO CANADA AND RECEIVED HIS CHECK REGULARLY WHICH HE SPENT QUICKLY. OVER A PERIOD OF YEARS THE FATHER AND THE OLDER BROTHER BOTH DIED. BY BRITISH LAW, HE BECAME HEIR TO THE TITLE AND ESTATE OF HIS FAMILY. HOWEVER, HE HAD DROPPED OUT OF SIGHT AND COULD NOT BE TRACED. AFTER A PERIOD OF TIME HE WAS LOCATED DETECTIVES OPERATING A ELEVATOR IN A CHEAP MOTEL. 1 HIS POSITION WAS THAT OF A NOBLE EARL OF ENGLAND WITH ACCESS TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS. 2 HIS CONDITION WAS THAT OF AN OVERWORKER IN A JOB NOT IN KEEPING WITH HIS TITLE.)

DR. IRONSIDES STORY ABOUT THE LITTLE GIRL WHO DESCRIBED A SAINT AS: "ONE WHO LETS THE LIGHT SHINE THROUGH." IS DIFFICULT TO IMPROVE ON.) ILLUSTRATE PERSONALLY REFERENCE TO MY FATHER'S ONLY SON. MY BEHAVIOR WAS NOT ALWAYS PROPER, BUT IT DID NOT CHANGE MY POSITION OR STATUS IN THE FAMILY. ONLY ACCEPTANCE AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS.

"more better"

II. THE HUMILITY OF SAINTS - 3:8

ONE COMMENTATOR SUGGESTS THAT PAUL WAS SO CAUGHT UP IN THE THRUST OF WHAT HE WAS SAYING THAT HE ~~BROKE THE RULES OF GRAMMAR~~ BY CONSTRUCTING A COMPARATIVE UPON OR WITH A SUPERLATIVE. THAT IS TO SAY, IF ONE IS THE LEAST HOW COULD HE BE LESS THAN THAT? HE COINED THE TERM "LEASTER." (IT IS SOMEWHAT LIKE OUR USE OF THE MOST AND MOSTEST.) THE TERM "LESS THAN LEAST" IS ANOTHER OF THOSE CLASSIC EXPRESSION USED BY PAUL TO DESCRIBE HIMSELF, SUCH AS, LEAST OF THE APOSTLES - 1 COR. 15:9, CHIEFEST OF SINNERS, 1 TIM. 1:15. PAUL, ONE OF THE BRAINEST OF GOD'S SERVANTS NEVER LOOKED UPON HIMSELF AS THE "GREATEST OF THE GREAT", BUT RATHER LESS THAN THE LEAST. PAUL LOOKED UPON HIS SACRED RESPONSIBILITY TO TAKE THE GOSPEL TO THE GENTILES AS A GREAT PRIVILEGE. HE WAS GOD'S INSTRUMENT, A BOND SLAVE AND NO CELEBRITY! IN TODAY'S WORLD, MAN WOULD HAVE SOUGHT TO ELEVATE PAUL, BUT PAUL SOUGHT TO LOWER HIMSELF BEFORE GOD. CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF PAUL WERE ALIVE TODAY. BOOKS FOR PROFIT, FILMS, SEMINARS, TV APPEARANCES, CAN YOU IMAGINE "SAINT SWEATERS AND SNEAKERS MADE OUT OF HOLY WOOL FROM A HOLY FLOCK AND WE KNOW WHO IS GETTING THE FLEECING! IN A TIME WHEN EVERYONE IS LOOKING FOR OR TO BE A TEN PAUL LOOKED UPON HIMSELF AS ZERO OR BELOW! YOU ARE AWARE THAT PRIDE IS NOT A SIN OF THE PEW ALONE, BUT ALSO THE PULPIT. IT WAS THE SIN WHICH RUINED LUCIFER, IT IS THE SIN WE DO NOT TALK ABOUT, IT IS THE SIN THAT TARNISHES ALL!

III. THE MATURITY OF SAINTS - 4:12

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THE CONTEXT OF THIS VERSE HAS TO DO WITH ~~SPIRITUAL GIFTS~~. WE LEARN THAT SOME OF THE GIFTS WERE ~~TEMPORARY~~ AND ~~FOUNDATIONAL~~ AND NOT PERMANENT. HOWEVER, SOME GIFTS IN THE CHURCH ARE FOR THE "PERFECTING" OF THE SAINTS.

Not complete

PLEASE NOTICE THAT THIS DOES NOT SUGGEST THAT SAINTS ARE PERFECT, ~~THE PERFECTING~~, ~~WHATEVER IT MEANS, IS GOING ON NOW!~~ ALSO, PLEASE NOTE THERE IS ~~NO COMMA~~ IN THE GREEK TEXT. ~~THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY IS THE WORK ASSIGNED TO THOSE SAINTS WHO ARE BEING PERFECTED.~~ THE WORD PERFECT WOULD BETTER BE TRANSLATED MATURING. IT IS ALSO TRANSLATED COMPLETE, EQUIP AND WAS USED IN SURGERY ^① TO DESCRIBE THE WORK OF A PHYSICIAN OF SETTING A BROKEN BONE OR PUTTING A JOINT BACK INTO PLACE. ^② ~~IN POLITICS IT WAS USED TO DESCRIBE TWO POLITICAL FACTIONS GETTING TOGETHER.~~ IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IT WAS USED TO DESCRIBE THE ~~MENDING OF NETS.~~ THE ROOT IDEA OF THE TERM IS PUTTING A THING OR PERSON INTO A CONDITION IN WHICH HE OUGHT TO BE. ~~THERE ARE NO PERFECT SAINTS OR PEOPLE ON THIS PLANET - NONE!~~ THE GIFTS GOD HAS GIVEN TO MEN IN THE CHURCH ARE PRIMARILY TO ~~GET PEOPLE SAVED~~ AND THEN TO HELP THEM GROW IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE HENCE THE IDEA OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY. CHURCHES DO NOT CALL PASTORS AND ~~PAY THEM TO DO ALL THE WORK,~~ BUT RATHER TO FOLLOW THEIR LEADERSHIP IN HELPING OTHERS TO BE EQUIPPED TO DO THE WORK. MANY CHURCHES SUFFER FROM A LACK OF MATURITY ON THE PART OF ITS CONSTITUENTS. SANDERS ^③ SUGGESTS THAT MATURITY IS THE ABILITY TO MEET THE DEMANDS AND EMERGENCIES OF EVERY DAY LIFE IN A MATURE AND NOT IN A CHILDISH WAY. THE SPIRITUALLY IMMATURE MEETS AN ADULT SITUATION AND TESTS WITH CHILDISH AND IMMATURE REACTIONS WHICH PRODUCE TENSION AND STRAIN AND ALL THE ATTENDANT PROBLEMS. ^{1/3} "WHEN SORROW STRIKES, HE IS INCLINED TO INDULGE IN AN ORGY OF SELF-CENTERED EMOTION. IF FINANCIAL REVERSES COME, HE IS AT A LOSS TO KNOW WHY THIS SHOULD COME TO HIM, AND HE BLAMES GOD. WHEN HOPES ARE DASHED, HE LOOSES HEART AND DROPS HIS BUNDLE. WHEN ADVERSITY OVERTAKES HIM, HE IS SWALLOWED UP IN SELF-PITY. IN DOMESTIC DIFFICULTIES HE INDULGES IN TANTRUMS OR SULKS AND CREATES AN ATMOSPHERE

THAT MARS HOME UNITY. WHEN PLACED WITH OTHER DIFFICULT PEOPLE, HE FALLS A PREY TO CENSORIOUS CRITICISM AND GIVES AS GOOD AS HE GETS. WHEN HIS WILL IS THORTED BY GOD OR MAN, HE BECOMES REBELLIOUS AND BITTER." SANDERS CONTINUES BY SAYING THAT THE MATURE BELIEVER IS ONE WHO DESIRES TO BE HOLY INSTEAD OF HAPPY. A CHILD OR IMMATURE PERSON IS MORE INTERESTED IN BEING HAPPY THAN GOOD. THE IMMATURE IS FILLED WITH GLOOM AND INNER CONFLICTS WHICH RUIN HIS SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT. THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT SAINTS DO FAIL, MAKE MISTAKES AND SIN. ABRAHAM LIED, DAVID COMMITTED ADULTRY, PETER ATTEMPTED MURDER AND MOSES ACCOMPLISHED IT! GOD IS IN THE PROCESS OF PERFECTING HIS SAINTS ON EARTH IN THE HERE AND NOW. ONE OF THE GREAT DANGERS IN ANY CHURCH IS THE SPIRITUALLY IMMATURE CHRISTIAN. THESE SPIRITUAL INFANTS ARE EASILY INFLUENCED BY CRAFTY AND DEVISIVE PEOPLE. IN THIS PASSAGE PAUL SHOWS THAT SPIRITUAL GIFTS GIVEN TO THE CHURCH ARE FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING SPIRITUAL HEALTH. THE EVANGELIST BRINGS PEOPLE TO CHRIST, THE PASTOR TRAINS THEM IN CHRISTIAN TRUTH AND LIVING. SPIRITUAL INFANTS NEED THE PROTECTIVE CARE OF A LOCAL CHURCH MINISTRY. THERE IS GREAT DIFFICULTY IN NURTURING NEW BELIEVERS. CULTS PREY ON THOSE WHO ARE YOUNG IN THE FAITH AND THE YOUNG'S DESIRE TO FOLLOW FANCIFUL AND NOVEL IDEAS.

IV. THE PURITY OF SAINTS - 5:3

WHEREVER CHRISTIANITY HAS GONE IT HAS BROUGHT STANDARDS OF MORALITY. CHASTITY AND VIRTUE ARE SYNONYMOUS WITH THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. THE GREAT CULTURES OF THE PAST SUCH AS GREECE AND ROME LAYED GREAT EMPHASIS ON KNOWLEDGE BUT LITTLE ON MORALITY. 1 PETER 2:9 SAYS: BUT YE ARE A CHOSEN GENERATION, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PECULIER PEOPLE: YE SHOULD SHOW FORTH THE PRAISES OF HIM WHO HAS CALLED YOU OUT OF DARKNESS INTO HIS

To let

MARVELOUS LIGHT. " THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT SPIRITUAL BIRTH REQUIRES SPIRITUAL BEHAVIOR. FOR THE CHRISTIAN, SEXUAL IMMORALITY IN ALL OF ITS FORMS IS PART OF THE PAST! (2 COR. 5:17) IT IS TRUE, THAT A SAINT MAY STUMBLE BACK INTO THE DARKNESS, BUT GOD'S INSTRUCTION TO HIM IS VERY CLEAR. (COMPARE 5:4 - 3:11)

"FOR OF THIS MUCH YOU CAN BE QUITE CERTAIN: THAT NEITHER THE IMMORAL NOR THE DIRTYMINDED NOR THE COVETEOUS HAS ANY INHERITANCE IN THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST AND OF GOD. DON'T LET ANYONE FOOL YOU ON THIS POINT, HOWEVER PLAUSIBLE HIS ARGUMENT. IT IS THESE THINGS WHICH BRING DOWN THE WRATH OF GOD UPON THE DISOBEDIENT. HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH MEN LIKE THAT - ONCE YOU WERE DARKNESS, BUT NOW YOU ARE LIGHT. LIVE THEN AS CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT. THE LIGHT PRODUCES IN MEN QUITE THE OPPOSITE OF SINS LIKE THESE - EVERYTHING THAT IS WHOLESOME AND GOOD AND TRUE. LET YOUR LIVES BE LIVING PROOFS OF THE THINGS THAT PLEASE GOD. STEER CLEAR OF THE ACTIVITIES OF DARKNESS; LET YOUR LIVES SHOW BY CONTRAST HOW DREARY AND FUTILE THESE THINGS ARE. - PHILLIPS TRANSLATION)

Person THE STORY IS TOLD OF A PASTOR WHO WAS APPROACHED BY A PHYSICIAN IN HIS CONGREGATION WHO EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT HIS HEALTH. THE PHYSICIAN SUGGESTED THAT THE PASTOR ENGAGE IN A CERTAIN KIND OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY WHICH WOULD TAKE HIM INTO AREAS OF ENTERTAINMENT WHICH BOtherED THE PASTOR. HE THANKED THE DR., BUT SAID HE COULD NOT ACCEPT THE INVITATION OR SUGGESTION TO DO THIS CERTAIN ACTIVITY. WHEN ASKED WHY NOT THE PASTOR SAID: "DR., YOU ARE PHYSICIAN, A SURGEON. WHEN YOU OPERATE, YOU SCRUB YOUR HANDS METICULOUSLY UNTIL THEY ARE CLEAN. YOU WOULD NOT DARE OPERATE WITH DIRTY HANDS. I AM A SERVANT OF CHRIST. I DEAL WITH PRECIOUS SOULS. I DON'T DARE DIRTY MY LIFE LEST I CONTAMINATE THEM AND ME. WHAT IS TRUE FOR PREACHERS IS ALSO TRUE FOR PARISHIONERS."

*Jack Kaley - Test - Jets
Get drunk -*

V. THE ENTREATY OF SAINTS - 6:18

IT IS NOT UNUSUAL FOR SAINTS TO PRAY FOR SINNERS. IT IS UNUSUAL HOWEVER, FOR SAINTS TO PRAY FOR SAINTS - AND THAT IS WHAT PAUL IS SUGGESTING IN THIS VERSE. THERE ARE SEVERAL INTERESTING FEATURES ABOUT PRAYER IN THIS VERSE. (1) PRAY ALL THE TIME. (2) PRAY EVERY KIND OF PRAYER. (3) PRAY WITH PERSISTENCE (4) PRAY FOR CHRISTIANS EVERYWHERE. (5) PRAY FOR PAUL. LET US CLOSE WITH TWO OBSERVATIONS ABOUT PRAYER. (1) LET US PRAY FOR YOU - NOW. (2) PRAY FOR YOURSELF. THE BIBLE HAS A PRAYER-YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO PRAY. LUKE 18:13.

THIS PRAYER WILL MOVE A PERSON FROM THE CATEGORY OF SINNER TO THE CATEGORY OF SAINT.

ROBERT K. SPRADLING

Dec
PM
1-93

JUNE 13, 1982
A.M.

"THE HOLY SPIRIT'S SEALING"
EPHESIANS 1:13-14

"eye heard
eye believed
eye we sealed"

~~RENEW~~ (A MEMBER OF OUR CHURCH CONFESSED
E THAT SHE WAS CONFUSED ABOUT THE PERSON AND
WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. SHE WAS NOT SURE
WHAT THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT MEANT EVEN
THOUGH SHE WAS CONFIDENT THAT SPEAKING IN TONGUES
WAS NOT AN EVIDENCE OF THE SPIRIT'S BAPTISM.
THE CHARISMATIC FOLK HAVE MOVED INTO A SPIRITUAL
VACUUM CREATED IN MANY CHURCHES BY THE ABSENCE
OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING IN BALANCE WITH A
BIBLICAL APPROACH TO CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.
SOMEONE HAS SAID THAT THE DEVIL HAS TWO SEATS
IN HIS HOUSE. ONE IS A RED HOT STOVE AND THE
OTHER IS A CAKE OF ICE AND HE DOESN'T CARE WHICH
ONE YOU SIT ON AS LONG AS IT IS IN THE EXTREME.
IF MORE BELIEVERS KNEW WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT
THE HOLY SPIRIT, WE WOULD BE LESS LIKELY TO FALL
INTO ERROR EITHER IN DOCTRINE OR EXPERIENCE
CONCERNING THE SPIRIT OF GOD. THERE IS LITTLE
DEBATE IN FUNDAMENTAL CHURCHES THAT THE SPIRIT
OF GOD IS OFTEN QUENCHED AND GRIEVED. HE IS
SO TOTALLY OVERLOOKED AND IGNORED THAT IF THE
SPIRIT OF GOD LEFT OUR WORSHIP SERVICES IN MANY
INSTANCES HE HAS BEEN SO ORGANIZED OUT OF THE
SERVICE THAT HIS PRESENCE WOULD NOT BE MISSED
IF HE WERE NOT PRESENT! QUESTION: HOW MANY
SERVICES HAVE YOU ATTENDED IN RECENT YEARS
WHERE YOU WERE AWARE OF GOD'S PRESENCE AND POWER?
THE ANSWER TO THIS NEED IS NOT AN EXTREME OF
EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE, BUT A SINCERE LOOK AT THE
BIBLE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WITH A YIELDED
HEART AND MIND READY TO OBEY THE PUMPTINGS AND
COMMANDS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. ONE OTHER GENERAL
COMMENT ABOUT THIS DOCTRINE CONCERNS DISPENSA-
TIONS. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT THE SPIRIT OF GOD
CAME UPON CERTAIN SELECTED PERSONS FOR SPECIAL
TASKS SUCH AS, THE ARTISTIC WORKMANSHIP IN THE
TABERNACLE (Ex. 31:4-5) AND SPECIAL FEATS OF
STRENGTH AS IN THE CASE OF SAMSON. (JUDG. 14:4-6)

3 passages: Eph. 1:13
4:30
2 Cor. 1:22

THIS MINISTRY WAS NOT RELATED TO MORAL OR SPIRITUAL CHARACTER AND WAS NOT ALWAYS PERMANENT IN NATURE. (Psa. 51:11, I SAM. 16:14) BY CONTRAST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT THE SPIRIT OF GOD INDWELLS EVERY REDEEMED PERSON. IT IS PERMANENT IN NATURE AND ONE'S EFFECTIVENESS AS A BELIEVER IS ALWAYS RELATED TO THE QUALITY OF HIS CHRISTIAN CONDUCT AND CHARACTER. THIS DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TWO TESTAMENTS HAS BEEN AN AREA OF CONFUSION WITH SOME BELIEVERS. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS MENTIONED IN EVERY CHAPTER IN EPHESIANS AND WE WILL USE THIS BOOK AS A BASIS FOR OUR CONSIDERATION FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. IN THE TEXT TODAY, NOTE THREE WORDS HEARD, BELIEVED AND SEALED. THROUGHOUT THE SCRIPTURE, THERE ARE VARIOUS EMBLEMS OR SYMBOLS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. OIL - WITH ITS OLD TESTAMENT MEDICAL ASSOCIATIONS REMINDS ONE OF THE HEALING QUALITY OF THE SPIRIT. FIRE - THE CONSUMING AND ILLUMINATING CHARACTER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT DRIVING OUT DARKNESS AND BRINGING IN LIGHT. WATER - THE UNIVERSAL CLEANSING AGENT. WIND - REMINDING ONE OF THE INVISIBLE, INDEPENDENT YET INDISPENSABLE NATURE OF THE SPIRIT'S MINISTRY. (JOHN 3:8) DOVE AND IN OUR TEXT TODAY SEAL. THERE ARE THREE WORDS IN THE TEXT AROUND WHICH WE WILL CENTER OUR THOUGHTS. THEY ARE: HEARD, BELIEVED AND SEALED.

I. THE SPIRIT'S MINISTRY AND HEARING - vs. 13

THE WORD HEARD LITERALLY MEANS "HAVING COME TO HEAR". THE WORD HEAR IN THE BIBLE REFERS TO PHYSICAL HEARING OR TO GRASP WITH THE MIND. IT IS VITAL THAT MEN "HEAR THE WORD OF TRUTH, THE GOSPEL OF YOUR SALVATION." THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS TRUTH TO THE SOULS OF MEN. AS A MATTER OF FACT, OUR LORD REFERRED TO HIM IN JOHN 16:13 AS "THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH" WHO WOULD GUIDE THE DISCIPLES INTO ALL TRUTH. IN OUR LORD'S HIGH PRIESTLY PRAYER, JOHN 17:17 HE SAID THAT "THY WORD IS TRUTH." THEREFORE, IF MEN ARE GOING

Different kinds
of Reverses : v.13

(MATT. 13:4-15)

(Thill some Chill) others

TO HEAR THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD THEY MUST BE EXPOSED TO GOD'S WORD OR THE BIBLE. EVERYONE KNOWS THAT TRUTH IN THE PHYSICAL REALM IS VITAL TO GOOD HEALTH. PROPER FOOD, REST AND EXERCISE ARE IMPORTANT IN THIS REGARD AND EVERYONE KNOWS IF WE FILL OUR LIVES WITH DRUGS, ALCOHOL, THE RESULT WILL BE PREMATURE DEATH. (HOLLYWOOD HAS GIVEN SOME STARTLING ILLUSTRATIONS OF THIS FACT.) THERE IS ALSO TRUTH IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM IF ONE NEGLECTS THE GOSPEL HE WILL DIE SPIRITUALLY, SO, THROUGHOUT THE WORD OF GOD THE ADMONITION IS GIVEN TO LISTEN TO WHAT GOD SAYS IN THE BIBLE AND DO WHAT HE SAYS! (BY THE WAY, I HAVE A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS AREA. I HAVE NO CONTROL OVER YOUR RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL MESSAGE, BUT I HAVE AN ETERNAL OBLIGATION TO MAKE SURE YOU HEAR THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL AS IT IS REVEALED IN THE BIBLE WITH NO ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS.) (GAL. 1:8) (ROMANS 10:17, JOHN 5:24, MATTHEW 11:15, REV. 2:7.) TRUTH DOES NOT FLATTER OR ALTER, BUT DEALS IN FACTS. IT IS A BIBLICAL FACT THAT YOU AND I HAVE GREAT SIN, BUT GOD IS A GREAT SAVIOUR AND MEN NEED TO HEAR THE GOOD NEWS THAT CHRIST DIED FOR THEM.

II. THE SPIRIT'S MINISTRY AND BELIEVING - vs. 13

HEARING THE TRUTH IS NOT ENOUGH, IF MEN DO NOT BELIEVE THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD, THEY WILL BELIEVE A LIE ABOUT HIM! (JOHN 8:44, II THESS. 2:11: "AND FOR THIS CAUSE GOD SHALL SEND THEM STRONG DILLUSION, THAT THEY SHOULD BELIEVE A LIE: THAT THEY ALL MIGHT BE DAMNED WHO BELIEVE NOT THE TRUTH, BUT HAVE PLEASURE IN UNRIGHTOUSNESS." ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE, LIFE B.C. OR BEFORE CHRIST IS CHARACTERIZED AS DISOBEDIENT TO GOD. DISOBEDIENCE SIMPLY STATED IS REFUSAL TO BELIEVE GOD. "HE THAT BELIEVETH ON THE SON HATH EVERLASTING LIFE: AND HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT THE SON SHALL NOT SEE LIFE; FOR THE WRATH OF GOD ABIDETH ON HIM." (JOHN 3:36) THERE ARE SEVERAL UNTRUTHS COMMONLY BELIEVED BY MANY PEOPLE:

(Untrudal) "up to putting
trip whole up."

① "I know
hes "up there" -4-

② If anyone ever believed leave - He did!

(1) SALVATION BY THE GOOD WORKS, BALANCE OF THE SCALES METHOD. (2) GOD IS TOO GOOD TO LET ANYONE GO TO HELL PHILOSOPHY. (3) I HAD A PROFESSOR WHO SAID HELL IS HERE ON EARTH AND I TEND TO AGREE WITH HIM. THESE, ARE ALL FALSE THOUGH COMMONLY BELIEVED. QUESTION: WHAT SHOULD I BELIEVE, AND WHERE DO I FIND OUT FOR SURE?
ANSWER: THE BIBLE!

III. THE SPIRIT'S MINISTRY AND SEALING - vs.13-14

THE TERM APPEARS THREE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. HERE, EPH. 4:30 AND II COR. 1:22. THE CORINTHIANS TELLS US WHERE THE SEALING TAKES PLACE - "IN OUR HEARTS". THE OTHER PASSAGE SPEAKS OF THE DURATION OF THE SEALING "UNTO THE DAY OF REDEMPTION." THE SEALING TAKES PLACE AT THE MOMENT ONE BELIEVES. IT IS UNFORTUNATE IN THE AUTHORIZED VERSION THAT THE TERM AFTER APPEARS TWICE BECAUSE THE LITERAL TRANSLATION OF THE TEXT OF THE PARTICIPLE IS HAVING BELIEVED YOU WERE SEALED WITH THE IDEA THAT THE BELIEVING AND THE SEALING TOOK PLACE SIMULTANEOUSLY!

(TO EMPHASIZE AND UNDERSCORE THE SEALING MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT I SUPPOSE EVERY TIME SOMEONE COMES FORWARD WE COULD HAVE SOME KIND OF PUBLIC DISPLAY SUCH AS LAYING ON OF THE HANDS AND CRYING OUT IN A LOUD VOICE: "YOU'VE BEEN SEALED!") MOST OF US THINK OF SEALING AS SEALING A JAR OR AN ENVELOPE OR SOMETHING OF THAT NATURE. THIS TEXT SPEAKS OF A LIVING SEAL, NAMELY, THE LIVING HOLY SPIRIT INDWELLING THE BELIEVER. IT WAS A CUSTOM IN ANCIENT TIMES TO SEAL ANY TYPE OF PACKAGE OR MERCHANDISE SENT FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER. THE SEAL GUARANTEED THAT THE PACKAGE WOULD ARRIVE AT ITS DESTINATION UNTAMPERED WITH. TODAY, THE SEAL IS USED IN LEGAL PROCEDURES SUCH AS ON DEEDS AND WILLS AND OTHER KINDS OF LEGAL TRANSACTIONS. THIS TERM WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTING TO THE EPHESIANS BECAUSE OF THEIR COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES. EPHESUS WAS A GREAT LUMBER CENTER. SHIPS LADENED WITH LOGS WOULD

UNLOAD IN THE HARBOR AT EPHESIS. MERCHANT MEN WOULD APPLY THEIR SEAL TO THE LOGS, LEAVE THEM IN THE HARBOR TILL A LATER DATE WHEN A CREW WOULD COME TO CLAIM THE MERCHANDISE. THE SEAL WAS THE MARK OF IDENTIFICATION OF THE OWNER. ALSO THE ROMAN SEAL ON A DOCUMENT WHERE A KING'S SIGNET WAS IMPLANTED IN SOFT WAX WAS A COMMON SIGN. APPARENTLY THE ROYAL SIGNET OF A KING WAS PRACTICED OFTEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. (ESTHER 3:12, DANIEL 6:17, JEREMIAH 32:10-12) THIS VERSE IS SAYING THAT GOD HAS PUT HIS MARK OF OWNERSHIP OR HIS BRAND, IF YOU PLEASE, UPON HIS PEOPLE AND THAT MARK OF OWNERSHIP IS THE HOLY SPIRIT. JUST AS NOAH WAS SHUT BY GOD INTO THE ARK, SO THE BELIEVER HAS BEEN "SHUT UP IN CHRIST AND IS SECURE THERE." THE ELEPHANT AND THE RABBIT WERE EQUALLY SAFE IN THE ARK. ANOTHER TERM WHICH IS USED - EARNEST WHICH SIMPLY REFERS TO A PROMISE, PLEDGE OR DOWNPAYMENT. IT REFERS COMMERCIALLY TO A PAYMENT IN PART IN ADVANCE TO BIND THE AGREEMENT. IN ANCIENT LAW, TWO PARTIES AGREED TO A CONTRACT AND THEN THE BUYER WOULD TAKE AWAY A SPADE OR HAND FULL OF DIRT AS IN EARNEST OR GUARANTEE OF FUTURE PAYMENT. SIMPLY STATED IT WAS SOMETHING TO TAKE HOME AS EVIDENCE OF SEALING THE BARGAIN. FROM A COMMERCIAL POINT OF VIEW THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE FIRST INSTALLMENT OF THE GUARANTEE OF ETERNAL GLORY IN HEAVEN FOR THE BELIEVER. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE FORETASTE OF LIFE TO COME AND THE GUARANTEE THAT ALL WHO ARE IN CHRIST WILL ARRIVE AT THAT ANTICIPATED DESTINATION. TO SUMMARIZE, THE SEALING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NOT SOME KIND OF EMOTIONAL HIGH GIVEN TO A FEW OF THE SUPER SPIRITUAL ELITE OR SOME KIND OF RARE SPIRITUAL ECSTASY RESERVED FOR A FEW, BUT IT IS NOTHING MORE OR LESS THAN THE PRESENCE OF GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT IN THE INDIVIDUAL BELIEVER. THE SEAL WAS A MARK OF AUTHORITY - (1 KING'S 21:7-9) IT WAS A MARK OF OWNERSHIP - (JEREMIAH 32:10-12) IT WAS A MARK OF SECURITY. BARCLAY SUGGESTS THAT WHEN MILITARY AUTHORITIES LEFT A BUILDING IN

WHICH THEY WANTED NOTHING DISTURBED THEY LEFT A SEAL ON THE DOOR. ALSO A SACRED BOOK WHOSE CONTENTS WERE CONTENTS WERE NOT TO BE TAMPERED WITH WAS OFTEN SEALED TO KEEP IT SAFE. EVEN CORN WAS SENT IN SEALED SACKS, WINE IN SEALED SKINS AND JARS. (APPARENTLY, MOUNTAIN CLIMBING WAS ONE OF F. B. MEYER'S FAVORITE HOBBIES OR PAST TIMES. IN ONE OF HIS BOOKS HE TELLS THE STORY OF SEVERAL MOUNTAIN WHO ATTEMPTED TO SCALE A HIGH AND DIFFICULT MOUNTAIN IN THE ALPS. AS THEY TRAVERSED ONE PARTICULAR AREA THE LAST MAN ON THE LINE LOST HIS FOOTING AND FELL AS DID THE SECOND MAN, BUT THE ANCHOR MAN HAD HIS PINS SECURELY IN THE MOUNTAIN AS WAS HIS AXE AND HE WAS ABLE TO REMAIN FIRM AND FAST UNTIL THE OTHERS REGAINED THEIR FOOTING. THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT THE BELIEVER IS BOUND TO THE LIVING CHRIST. THERE MAY BE SLIPS AND SCARES ALONG THE WAY TO THE CELESTIAL CITY, BUT HIS FOOTING IS FIRM BECAUSE HE IS BOUND TO CHRIST. (THE BIBLE ABOUNDS WITH THIS TRUTH - JOHN 6:37, PHIL. 1:6, JOHN 10:27, ROM. 8:35-39) OUR SECURITY DOES NOT REST IN OUR STRENGTH, BUT IN OUR SEALING.

McClain's Story

"THE HOLY SPIRIT'S INDWELLING"

EPHESIANS 2:13-22

Scripture

PM
BCC
Jan 1993

142-121
WE ARE CONSIDERING THE HOLY SPIRIT IN EPHESIANS. (REVIEW) IN EPHESIANS, THE CHURCH IS CALLED A BODY, BRIDE AND BUILDING. THIS CHAPTER DEALS WITH THE CHURCH AS A BUILDING INDWELLED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. HOWEVER, BEFORE CONSIDERING THIS IDEA, THERE IS ANOTHER REFERENCE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHAPTER AND WE WILL DEVELOP TWO IDEAS CONCERNING HIS MINISTRY AS REVEALED IN THIS CHAPTER. REMEMBER TWO KEY WORDS: (1) ACCESS AND PROCESS.

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT PROVIDES ACCESS TO GOD THE FATHER - vs. 18

THE TERM HIM REFERS TO CHRIST, THE WORD BOTH REFERS TO JEW AND GENTILE. PAUL HAD IN MIND THE BARRIERS IN THE TEMPLE. THE TEMPLE CONSISTED OF A SERIES OF COURTS MOVING FROM THE COURT OF THE GENTILES, THE COURT OF THE WOMEN, THE COURT OF THE ISRAELITES, THE COURT OF THE PRIESTS AND THEN INTO THE HOLY PLACE ITSELF. A GENTILE COULD COME NO NEARER THAN THE FIRST COURT AND A WALL WAS ERECTED TO PROHIBIT GOING INTO ANOTHER COURT AND FOR A GENTILE TO DO SO MEANT THE POSSIBILITY OF DEATH. ONE COMMENTATOR SUGGESTS THAT AN INSCRIPTION IN THE TEMPLE READ: "LET NO ONE OF ANY NATION COME WITHIN THE FENCE AND BARRIER AROUND THE HOLY PLACE. WHOSOEVER WILL BE TAKEN DOING SO WITH HIMSELF BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FACT THAT HIS DEATH WILL ENSUE." THEREFORE, THE ANCIENT WORLD WAS FILLED WITH FENCES AND BARRIERS AND NONE WAS GREATER THAN THE ONE BETWEEN JEW AND GENTILE. CAN YOU IMAGINE THE IMPACT THIS CHAPTER WOULD HAVE ON PEOPLE WHO WERE SENSITIVE TO THE MANY OBSTACLES ALONG THE SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS PATH OF THE ANCIENT WORLD. IN CHRIST, ALL SUCH BARRIERS DISAPPEAR FOREVER! IN THIS VERY

CHAPTER PAUL TELLS HOW GENTILES WHO WERE ONCE FAR OFF ARE NOW BROUGHT NEAR THROUGH THE BLOOD OF CHRIST! THE BELIEVER IS NO LONGER RESTRICTED FROM COMING INTO GOD'S PRESENCE, BUT IS IN FACT ENCOURAGED TO DO SO - HEBREWS 4:16 "LET US THEREFORE APPROACH THE THRONE OF GRACE WITH FULLEST CONFIDENCE, THAT WE MAY RECEIVE MERCY FOR OUR FAILURES AND GRACE TO HELP IN THE HOUR OF NEED." (PHILLIPS TRANSLATION) ¶ (ONE

COMMENTATOR TELLS THE STORY OF A SOLDIER IN FRANCE MANY YEARS AGO WHOSE BODY WAS BROUGHT BACK TO A CEMETARY TO BE BURIED NEAR A FRIEND. HOWEVER, BECAUSE THE DEAD SOLDIER WAS NOT THE SAME RELIGIOUS FAITH AS HIS FRIEND HE WAS NOT PERMITTED BURIAL IN THE CHURCH YARD. SO, HE WAS BURIED OUTSIDE THE FENCE OF THE CHURCH YARD. AFTER THE FUNERAL, A DAY OR SO LATER SEVERAL OF THE FOLK CAME BACK TO THE CEMETARY TO LOOK AT THE GRAVE. WHEN THEY DID SO THEY WERE PERPLEXED BECAUSE THEY COULD FIND IT. THEY KNEW THAT HIS GRAVE WAS ONLY SIX FEET FROM THE FENCE OF THE CEMETARY, BUT THEY COULD FIND NO TRACE OF A FRESHLY DUG GRAVE. WHEN THEY CONFRONTED THE PROPRIETOR OF THE CEMETARY WITH THEIR COMPLAINT, HE TOLD THEM THAT HE HAD BEEN SO TROUBLED AT THE REFUSAL TO ALLOW THE DEAD SOLDIER TO BE BURIED IN THE CHURCH YARD THAT HE HAD ARISEN EARLY THE MORNING AFTER THE FUNERAL AND WITH HIS OWN HANDS HAD MOVED THE FENCE TO INCLUDE THE BODY OF THE SOLDIER. THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT JESUS DID WHEN HE DIED ON THE CROSS, HE REMOVED ALL BARRIERS SO THAT ALL MEN JEW AND GENTILE MAY COME FREELY INTO THE PRESENCE OF A HOLY GOD.) THE WORD ACCESS AS IT APPEARS IN THIS FORM IN THE TEXT OCCURS 3 TIMES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT - ROMANS 5:2, EPHESIANS 3:12. ONE FORM OF THE WORD IS USED IN ACTS 27:27 AND TRANSLATED "DREW NEAR" A REFERENCE TO A BOAT DRAWING NEAR LAND DURING A STORM. I PETER 3:13 IT IS TRANSLATED "MIGHT BRING" WITH REFERENCE TO OUR LORD'S WORK ON CALVARY. THE TERM ACCESS IS THE GREEK WORD

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PROSAGOGE. THIS VERY WORD WAS USED TO DESCRIBE AN OFFICER IN THE ROYAL COURT WHOSE FUNCTION AND RESPONSIBILITY WAS TO INTRODUCE PEOPLE WHO DESIRED AN AUDIENCE WITH THE KING. THE BELIEVER IS NO LONGER AN OUTSIDER, NO LONGER AN ALIEN, BUT INDEED A FELLOW CITIZEN WITH THE SAINTS, A FULL FLEDGED MEMBER OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD. BECAUSE HE IS FAMILY, HE HAS RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES WHICH BELONG TO FAMILY MEMBERS ALONE! RELATE RANDOLPH EXPERIENCE AND THE TERM ACCESS. JEW AND GENTILE DID NOT APPROACH GOD FROM DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS, BUT IN GOD'S PRESCRIBED WAY INVOLVING THE ENTIRE TRINITY THROUGH THE SON, IN THE SPIRIT, TO THE FATHER. (DIA - EN - PROS)

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT PROMOTES THE PROCESS OF CHURCH GROWTH - vs. 20-22

IN THIS PASSAGE, THE CHURCH IS DESCRIBED AS A BUILDING. THE WORD BUILDING MAY BE USED BOTH AS A NOUN AND AS A VERB. AS A NOUN IT MAY REFER TO A STRUCTURE AND AS A VERB TO THE PROCESS OF BUILDING A STRUCTURE. BOTH IDEAS ARE TRUE IN THIS PASSAGE. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS BUILDING THE CHURCH AND THE CHURCH IS HIS BUILDING! LET US LOOK AT THE BUILDING: (1) THE FOUNDATION - THE WORD OF IN VERSE 20 DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS WERE THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH, BUT THEY HELPED LAY IT. THE PROPHETS IN QUESTION ARE NOT OLD TESTAMENT, BUT RATHER NEW TESTAMENT PROPHETS. AN OFFICE OR GIFT WHICH DISAPPEARED AS DID THE APOSTLES. THESE MEN WERE INVOLVED IN THE WRITING OF SCRIPTURE, A FOUNDATIONAL GIFT WHICH IN MY JUDGEMENT CEASED WITH THE COMPLETION OF A CANON. ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE, CHRIST IS BOTH THE FOUNDATION AND THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE OF THE CHURCH. (1 COR. 3:11)

PAUL SAW CHRIST'S CHURCH AS A GREAT BUILDING DESIGNED BY A MASTER ARCHITECT IN WHICH GOD IS USING LIVING MATERIAL, LIVING STONES, TO BUILD A LIVING ORGANISM INDWELT BY THE LIVING HOLY SPIRIT!

~~THE TEMPLE~~ - vs. ②
② The Framing - v. 2;

THE TERM "FITLY FRAMED TOGETHER" MEANS THAT THE PARTS OF THE CHURCH ARE PROPERLY FITTED. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THESE THREE WORDS ARE ONE GREEK WORD. WHEN GOD BUILT TEMPLE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, THE STONES WERE HEWN OUT AT OTHER LOCATIONS, THEN SHIPPED OR BROUGHT TO THE TEMPLE SITE DURING CONSTRUCTION AND NOT A SINGLE SOUND OF THE HAMMER WAS HEARD. ACCORDING TO 1 KINGS 6:7 AND THE FOLLOWING CHAPTERS THE HEWING OF THE STONES WAS DONE ELSEWHERE. IN GOD'S CHURCH, THERE IS NO SOUND OF THE HAMMER TODAY. THE LORD IS BUILDING HIS WORK ON EARTH QUIETLY, SILENTLY AND STEADILY THE CHURCH IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION. GOD'S CHURCH IS MADE UP OF PEOPLE WHO ARE INDWELT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. THE TEXT SAYS THAT THE CHURCH GROWTH. THE TENSE OF THIS WORD IS PRESENT. GOD IS BUILDING HIS CHURCH AND IT IS A GROWING ORGANISM. (ONE COMMENTATOR TELLS THE STORY OF A MAN WHO WAS FILLING OUT SOME PAPERS AND ONE QUESTION SAID: "AT WHAT AGE DID YOU FINISH YOUR EDUCATION?" THE QUESTIONER REPLIED THAT HE HAD NOT FINISHED HIS EDUCATION YET EVEN THOUGH HE WAS APPLYING FOR RETIREMENT BENEFITS! (3) THE FINISH - ③
EPH. 5:25-27. QUESTION: HOW DO YOU GET INTO THE CHURCH? ANSWER: IT IS BY BIRTH AND NOT BY JOINING. THE WORD HABITATION COMES FROM THE WORD TABERNACLE. GOD HAS ALWAYS DWELT AMONG HIS PEOPLE. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT IT WAS WITH THE TABERNACLE AND THE TEMPLE. DURING THE DAYS OF OUR LORD IT WAS IN THE FLESH. (JOHN 1:14) TODAY, GOD DWELLS AMONG HIS PEOPLE THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT. THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT THE

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HOLY SPIRIT INDWELLS THE INDIVIDUAL BELIEVER
(1 COR. 6:19, JOHN 14:16-17, ROMANS 8:9)

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THE HOLY SPIRIT ALSO INDWELLS THE CHURCH COLLECTIVELY. 1 COR. 3:16, EPH. 2:22. JUST AS GOD DWELT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AMONG HIS PEOPLE, SO HE DOES TODAY. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE IDEA OF THE INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT MAYBE SEEN BY COMPARING HIS INDWELLING WITH OLD TESTAMENT IDEAS. NO SPOT ON EARTH WAS AS SACRED TO JEWS AS THE TEMPLE AREA IN JERUSALEM. ANY PERSON WHO HAS STOOD NEAR THE WESTERN WALL OF THE REBUILT TEMPLE AND WATCHED PEOPLE COME TO THAT WAILING WALL IS MOVED BY THE INTENSITY OF THE PEOPLE. DAVID PURCHASED THE TEMPLE SITE, STORED MATERIAL FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, BUT WAS NOT PERMITTED TO BUILD THE TEMPLE. THIS TASK WAS RESERVED FOR HIS SON SOLOMON. ONE IS SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT THE TEMPLE WAS NOT LARGE IN SIZE, SOME 90 FEET LONG, 30 WIDE AND 45 FEET HIGH. IT WAS SIMPLE IN DESIGN AND IT WAS NOT DESIGNED FOR ASSEMBLING PEOPLE, BUT RATHER AS A SPECIAL DWELLING PLACE FOR GOD. COMPARED TO THE RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS OF ASSYRIANS, EGYPTIANS OR BABYLONIANS IT WAS SMALL IN SIZE AND SPLENDOR. THE MAGNIFICENT TEMPLES IN CORINTH AND EPHESUS WERE GREAT INDEED, BUT PAUL TAUGHT THE CORINTHIANS THAT THE BELIEVERS BODY IS THE VERY SANCTUARY, DWELLING PLACE OR HABITATION OF GOD! (BY THE WAY, WHEN PAUL WROTE TO THE CORINTHIANS ABOUT DEFILING THE TEMPLE OF GOD, HE WAS SPEAKING OF PEOPLE WHO CAUSED DIVISIONS AMONG BELIEVERS. IN MY OPINION, THOSE PEOPLE WHO ENGAGE IN DIVISIONS IN THE CHURCH ARE TAMPERING WITH SOMETHING OF DIVINE ORIGIN AND NATURE AND THEREFORE MUST DEAL WITH GOD ABOUT SUCH ACTIVITIES.) THIS VERSE IS A BROAD WARNING TO BOTH PASTOR AND PARISHIONER TO THINK BEFORE CAUSING DIVISION IN A LOCAL CHURCH. LET US CONCLUDE OUR STUDY OF THIS CHAPTER BY LEARNING

HOW ONE MAY GET INTO THE CHURCH. THERE ARE TWO OUTSTANDING FACTS MENTIONED IN EPH. 2:8-9

(1) WE CANNOT BUY SALVATION. THE TERM GIFT EXCLUDES ALL PURCHASE AND EARNING PROGRAMS. GOD IS TOO RICH TO SELL SALVATION AND WE ARE TOO POOR TO BUY IT! BY THE WAY, IF SALVATION WERE FOR SALE HOW MUCH WOULD IT COST AND HOW MUCH WOULD YOU PAY? (2) WE CANNOT BOAST ABOUT SALVATION. IF YOU AND I COULD WORK OUR WAY TO HEAVEN, THEN CHRIST'S DEATH WOULD BE MEANINGLESS AND ROB GOD OF HIS GLORY. BOASTING IS PART OF THE NATURAL MAN AND HIS SELFISHNESS. THESE TWO VERSES ARE CRYSTAL CLEAR ON THE SUBJECT OF HOW TO GET SAVED AND HOW TO GO TO HEAVEN.

JUNE 27, 1932

Boe. Pm. Jan
1932"THE HOLY SPIRIT'S REVEALING
AND STRENGTHENING MINISTRY"

EPHESIANS 3:5,16

(REVIEW SEALING AND INDWELLING. ¹ THE SEALING TAKES PLACE IN OUR HEARTS ACCORDING TO 2 COR. 1:22. IT IS UNTO THE DAY OF REDEMPTION AND IT OCCURS AT THE TIME OR MOMENT ONE BELIEVES ON CHRIST. BELIEVING AND SEALING TAKE PLACE AT THE SAME TIME. THEREFORE, THE SEALING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NOT SOME KIND OF EMOTIONAL HIGH GIVEN TO A FEW OF THE SUPER SPIRITUAL ELITE OR SOME KIND OF RARE SPIRITUAL ECSTASY RESERVED FOR A FEW, BUT IT ~~IS~~ GOD'S GUARANTEE ~~IN ADVANCE~~ THAT HIS CONTRACT OR AGREEMENT WITH THE BELIEVER WILL BE COMPLETED. ² THE INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT IS BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE IN NATURE.) TODAY, WE WILL LOOK AT TWO MORE WORDS AS THEY RELATE TO THE SPIRIT'S MINISTRY:

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT'S REVEALING MINISTRY - 3:5

⁶ ~~SOME FOLK CLAIM TO HAVE SPECIAL INSIGHT AND FORSIGHT CONCERNING PEOPLE AND EVENTS BECAUSE OF A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP TO THE HOLY SPIRIT. (RELATE STORY OF MAN WHO CAME TO SPURGEON AND SAID: "THE LORD TOLD ME TO PREACH IN YOUR CHURCH." SPURGEON'S RESPONSE WAS THE LORD HAD TOLD HIM NOTHING ABOUT IT! THE REVELATION IN THIS TEXT HAD TO DO WITH A MYSTERY. SIX TIMES IN EPHESIANS THE WORD MYSTERY APPEARS. THE MYSTERY RELIGIONS OF THE EAST HAD SECRETS WHICH WERE KNOWN TO THEIR MEMBERS ALONE. ANYONE REVEALING THE SECRETS DID SO UNDER THE THREAT OF SEVERE PENALTIES. IN THIS TERM, PAUL IS NOT TALKING ABOUT SOME KIND OF SECRET SOCIETY INVOLVING HANDSHAKES, PASSWORDS AND A LOT OF MUMBO JUMBO NONSENSE. IN THIS PASSAGE THE TERM MYSTERY MEANS A SACRED SECRET OR SOMETHING PRIOR TO THIS TIME NOT REVEALED, BUT~~

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REVEALED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT TO PAUL. PAUL USED THE TERM TO EXPLAIN WHAT GOD WAS DOING AMONG THE GENTILES. THE OLD TESTAMENT TAUGHT THAT THE GENTILES WOULD BE SAVED, BUT THE MYSTERY HAD TO DO WITH THE FACT THAT THE GENTILES WOULD BE ON AN EQUAL BASIS WITH JEWS. THAT WAS DIFFICULT FOR JEWS TO UNDERSTAND BECAUSE ISRAEL HAD A PLACE OF SPECIAL FAVOR WITH GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. GENTILES HAD BEEN EXCLUDED FROM GOD'S COVENANT WITH ISRAEL. SO, TO SPEAK OF EQUAL STATUS WITH THE JEWS WAS INDEED A NEW AND STARTLING REVELATION. PAUL RECEIVED THE MYSTERY NOT BY VIRTUE OF HIS OWN INVESTIGATION, BUT BY REVELATION THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. JESUS SPOKE OF SUCH MINISTRY WHEN HE SAID: "HOW BE IT WHEN HE, THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH IS COME, HE WILL GUIDE YOU INTO ALL TRUTH: FOR HE SHALL NOT SPEAK OF HIMSELF; BUT WHATSOEVER HE SHALL HEAR, THAT SHALL HE SPEAK: AND HE WILL SHOW YOU THINGS TO COME." THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS INDEED THE AGENT IN DIVINE REVELATION, THE REVEALER OF DIVINE TRUTH AND THAT WAS ESPECIALLY TRUE WITH REFERENCE TO THE SCRIPTURES. PETER SAID THE WORD OF GOD DID NOT COME TO US IN OLD TIME BY THE WILL OF MAN: BUT HOLY MEN OF GOD SPAKE AS THEY WERE MOVED BY THE HOLY GHOST. (2 PETER 1:21) MEN ARE NOT RECEIVING DIRECT REVELATIONS FROM GOD TODAY. GOD'S REVELATION TO MAN HAS COME IN THE FORM OF HOLY SCRIPTURE. THAT IS ALL THE REVELATION MEN NEED OR WILL RECEIVE DURING THIS DISPENSATION. THE INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT WILL LEAD AND GUIDE THE OBEDIENT BELIEVER. (ROMANS 8:14) WE DO NOT NEED SOME SPECIAL VISION OR REVELATION FROM HEAVEN. WE NEED TO PRACTICE THE TRUTHS OF THE REVELATION GOD HAS ALREADY GIVEN IN THE FORM OF SCRIPTURE.

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT'S STRENGTHENING MINISTRY - 3:16

WHEN A PERSON IS YOUNG AND STRONG, TO SPEAK OF WEAKNESS AND FRAILTY STRIKE A RESPONSIVE CHORD IN THE HEART. HOWEVER, AS PEOPLE GET OLDER STRENGTH BEGINS TO FAIL. (RELATE DAD'S EXPERIENCE OF SEVERE SURGERY AND HIS LAMENT OVER NOT BEING ABLE TO GET HIS STRENGTH BACK. UNTIL ONE MONTH BEFORE HIS DEATH HE KEPT WALKING TRYING TO EXERCISE TO REGAIN STRENGTH WHICH INDEED NEVER RETURNED. ALSO, RELATE HOSPITAL EXPERIENCES WHERE ONE AFTER A PERIOD OF CONVALESCENCE NEEDS THE STEADYING HAND TO STRENGTHEN WEAKENED KNEES.) MANY CHRISTIANS FEEL A SENSE OF WEAKNESS, LIMITATION, LACK OF ABILITY OR POWER WHEN IT COMES TO LIVING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. SPIRITUAL STRENGTH DOES NOT COME FROM MATERIAL SOURCES OR RESOURCES. THIS VERSE SPEAKS OF SPIRITUAL REINFORCEMENT IN THE SOUL WHICH ONLY GOD CAN PROVIDE. WE UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF PHYSICAL STRENGTH AS EXEMPLIFIED IN SAMSON IN JUDGES 16. IN BIBLE TERMS, EVERY BELIEVER HAS AN INNER MAN AND AN OUTER MAN. ACCORDING TO 2 COR. 4:16 THAT OUTWARD MAN WHO NEEDS FOOD, CLOTHING, AIR, WATER TO SUSTAIN PHYSICAL LIFE IS IN THE PROCESS OF PERISHING. THERE IS ALSO AN INNER MAN WHO ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE CAN SEE, HEAR, TASTE AND FEEL. THAT PART OF MAN IS NOT PERISHING, BUT INDEED MAY BE GROWING STRONG EVEN WHILE THE PHYSICAL MAN IS DECAYING. IT IS THAT PART OF THE BELIEVER THAT NEEDS TO BE STRENGTHENED. LET US LOOK AT ROMANS 8:26-27 FOR A SINGLE ILLUSTRATION OF HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT STRENGTHENS THE BELIEVER IN HIS INNER MAN. THIS CHAPTER IS CALLED THE SPIRIT CHAPTER. (RELATE IN CHAPTER THE SPIRITUAL BENEFITS AND BLESSINGS PROVIDED THE BELIEVER - SAMSON'S OUTLINE.)

THESE VERSES REVEAL HOW PRAYER STRENGTHENS THE BELIEVER. RELATE STORY CONCERNING MISSIONARY WHO NO MATTER HOW TIRED OR BUSY MANAGED TO SPEND TIME IN PRAYER. OBSERVERS SPOKE OF HOW HE RETURNED FROM THE PRAYER CLOSET REFRESHED AND BLESSED IN AN AMAZING WAY. GOD HAS PROVIDED US WITH TWO INTERCESSORS. ONE TO PROMPT OUR PRAYERS AND THE OTHER TO PRESENT THEM TO GOD. SOMEONE HAS SAID THAT PRAYER IS INDEED THE GOD WITHIN US PRAYING TO THE GOD ABOVE US. LET US LOOK AT THE WORDS OF ROMANS 8:26.

HELPH - THIS WORD MEANS TO SHARE THE BURDEN OR TAKE A SHARE IN. IT IS USED ONE OTHER TIME IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IN LUKE 10:40. MARY WAS IN CLASS LISTENING TO JESUS AND MARTHA WAS IN THE KITCHEN. MARTHA'S GROWING IRRITATION FOUND EXPRESSION IN THESE WORDS: "LORD, DOTH THOU NOT CARE THAT MY SISTER HATH LEFT ME TO SERVE ALONE? BID HER THEREFORE THAT SHE **HELP ME**."

INFIRMITIES - THIS IS ANOTHER TERM FOR WEAKNESS. IN THE ORIGINAL TEXT IT IS IN THE SINGULAR. IT SPEAKS OF MAN'S TOTALLY CRIPPLED CONDITION AS BEING INFIRMED. **FOR WE KNOW NOT** WHAT WE SHOULD PRAY FOR AS WE OUGHT. - THERE IS A COMMON THAT WE DO KNOW WHAT WE SHOULD PRAY FOR AND THEREFORE WE ARE APART TO BE CARELESS AND INSENSITIVE TO THE SPIRIT'S LEADING IN PRAYER. THERE IS NO WAY WE MAY SUBSTITUTE A FORM OF WORDS WHETHER WRITTEN OR MEMORIZED FOR REAL SPIRIT INTER-CESSION. STUDENTS OF CHURCH HISTORY WILL REMEMBER THAT PRIOR TO HIS CONVERSION AUGUSTINE WAS A VERY WICKED, IMMORAL YOUNG MAN. AUGUSTINE WAS GREATLY BELOVED BY HIS MOTHER, MONICA WHO WAS A CHRISTIAN AND HAD A BURDENED HEART FOR THE SALVATION OF HER SON. WHEN NEWS CAME TO HER THAT HER SON WAS LEAVING HOME FOR ITALY SHE PRAYED THAT GOD WOULD NOT LET HIM GO BECAUSE SHE FEARED HE WOULD FALL INTO GREAT SIN AWAY FROM HOME AND ITS RESTRAINING INFLUENCES. HOWEVER, AUGUSTINE DID GO TO ITALY AND IT WAS THERE HE WAS CONVERTED. IN

THAT REGARD McCLEAN: "HIS MOTHER DID NOT KNOW ~~WHO~~ TO PRAY AS SHE OUGHT, SO GOD DID NOT ANSWER HER SPECIAL REQUEST IN ORDER THAT HE MIGHT ANSWER HER LIFE-LONG REQUEST. GOD KNOWS OUR ASPIRATIONS AND HE ANSWERS IN HIS OWN WAY."

GROANINGS -

THE 3TH CHAPTER OF ROMANS PRESENTS THREE GROANINGS OR SIGHINGS.

v. 22

VERSE 22 - THE CREATION SUFFERS UNDER THE EFFECTS OF SIN. THE DUMB ANIMAL SUFFERS FROM THE BRUTALITY OF SINFUL MEN, THE SOIL SUFFERS FROM WEEDS AND THERE IS A DISCORD IN NATURE IN THE RULE OF TOOTH AND CLAW, THE SIGH OF THE WIND WHICH SPEAKS OF THE OPRESSION IN THE UNIVERSE BECAUSE OF MAN'S SIN AGAINST GOD.

v. 23

THE SAINTS GROAN - VERSE 23: THE BELIEVER IS AWAITING HIS RELEASE FROM THE PRESSURES OF LIFE. AS SOMEONE HAS SAID WE WAIT FOR THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODIES AS THE LAST REMNANTS OF THE FALL. THE CHRISTIAN IS A REDEEMED SOUL IN AN UNREDEEMED BODY.

v. 26

THE SPIRIT GROANS - VERSE 26: THERE IS A SENSE IN WHICH THE HOLY SPIRIT EDITS OUR PRAYERS AND MAKES THEM ACCEPTABLE TO GOD. QUESTION: DO YOU NEED HELP? IF YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS FOR A DOCTOR TO COME TO THE BEDSIDE AND HELP IN TIME OF ILLNESS, FOR A FIREMAN TO COME WHEN THE HOUSE IS BURNING, THE MEDICAL TEAM TO COME WHEN SICKNESS HAS STRUCK WITH SUDDENNESS, FOR THE POLICEMAN OR LAWYER OR ANYONE WHO IS READILY AVAILABLE IN TIME OF NEED. IF WE UNDERSTAND THAT KIND OF HELP SURELY THE GOD OF THE BIBLE IS ABLE TO STRENGTHEN THE BELIEVERS BY THE INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT. ACCORDING TO HEBREWS 4:16 THE THRONE OF GRACE IS A PLACE WHERE THE BELIEVER MAY RECEIVE MERCY FOR HIS FAILURES AND GRACE TO HELP IN THE HOUR OF NEED.

Bcc. JULY 11, 1982
A.M.

Feb.

PM 7, 1983

Sept. 1 - 1991
P.M."THE SPIRIT'S UNIFYING MINISTRY"

EPHESIANS 4:3

Ch 1 - Seeking
Ch 2 - IntimallyCh 3 - Revival
Ch 4 - Struggling"Make every effort
to keep the unity
of the Spirit...
(viii)"

REVIEW. RELATE EXPERIENCE CONCERNING THE BOOK ENTITLED THE BUREAU - PAGE 14. AFTER 30 YEARS OF SERVICE A STORY OF ILL WILL, HURT FEELINGS AND BITTERNESS BETWEEN TWO HIGH RANKING OFFICIALS. ORGANIZATIONAL UNION WITHOUT UNITY. UNITY IS DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE IN ANY ORGANIZATION INCLUDING THE CHURCH. ONE MAN COMMENTED CONCERNING THE SPIRITUAL STATE OF HIS CHURCH BY SAYING: "WE ARE QUITE UNITED - WE ARE ALL FROZEN TOGETHER!" OR THE PASTOR WHO SAID THAT HIS CHURCH WAS UNITED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ITS HISTORY - AGAINST HIM! WE USE THE TERM UNITED IN MANY WAYS, OFTEN. FOR EXAMPLE WE SPEAK OF THE UNITED STATES, NATIONS, MINE WORKERS, PRESBYTERIANS AND METHODISTS. WE DESIRE UNITY IN THE HOME AND EXPRESS THAT DESIRE EVEN IN THE WEDDING CEREMONY WITH THE "UNITY CANDLE." SOMESAGE OBSERVED THAT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE WORD UNITED AND UNITED IS THE POSITION OF THE EYE. UNITY IS VITAL TO AN ARMY IF IT'S TO BE EFFECTIVE, THE SAME IS TRUE OF A BALL TEAM, AN ORCHESTRA, A HOME AND ESPECIALLY THE CHURCH. THIS VERSE TEACHES THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT DIRECTS THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST AND PRODUCES UNITY WHERE HE IS UNHINDERED AND UNRESTRICTED. THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT THE ATMOSPHERE AND SPIRIT OF UNITY IN THE CHURCH IS NOT THE RESULT OF ORGANIZATIONAL UNION OR A SLICK PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN, BUT IS INDEED THE WORK AND MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. TODAY WE WILL EXAMINE THIS SUBJECT OF UNITY AS IT RELATES TO US AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.

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Social
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I. JESUS' PRAYER FOR UNITY - JOHN 17:11,21-22

THE GENERAL INTERPRETATION OF THIS PART OF OUR LORD'S PRAYER IS AS FOLLOWS: PRIOR TO HIS DEATH, OUR LORD PRAYED THAT ALL MEN OF GOOD WILL WOULD SOME HOW COME TOGETHER UNDER THE SAME RELIGIOUS BANNER, PROVIDING A UNITED FRONT AGAINST SUCH PEACE THREATENING MOVEMENTS AS COMMUNISM. THIS INTERPRETATION HOLDS THAT SOME DAY THROUGH MASSIVE ORGANIZATION ALL RELIGIOUS FOLK WILL BAND TOGETHER INTO ONE GREAT BROTHERHOOD HERE ON EARTH. THESE FOLK DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN UNITY AND UNION. OUR LORD WAS NOT PRAYING FOR GREAT UNIFORMITY IN THE CHURCH. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THERE IS ROOM FOR GREAT DIVERSITY OF GIFTS AND METHODS OF OPERATIONS WITHIN THE CONFINES OF SPIRITUAL UNITY. THERE IS A VAST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RELIGIOUS UNION AND SPIRITUAL UNITY. THE ONENESS IN OUR LORD'S PRAYER INVOLVES A PROPER RELATIONSHIP TO GOD THROUGH CHRIST. THE ONENESS AND UNITY FOR WHICH HE PRAYED WAS A ONENESS OF NATURE AND LIFE. JUST AS THE DIVINE UNITY EXISTS AND CONSISTS WITH A VARIETY OF PERSONS SO TOO THE UNITY OF MEN DOES NOT EXCLUDE DIVERSITY OF GIFTS AND ABILITIES AND EVEN VIEWPOINTS AND INTERPRETATION OF DOCTRINE. THE UNITY CHRIST DESIRES FOR HIS OWN IS NOT NECESSARILY ORGANIZATIONAL, BUT SPIRITUAL IN NATURE LIKENED TO THE UNITY EXISTING BETWEEN THE FATHER AND SON. "BELIEVERS EXPERIENCE THIS THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT AS THEY ARE MADE SHARERS OF GOD'S LIFE." (KENT, JR.) THIS SPIRITUAL UNITY MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE WILL MANIFEST ITSELF IN PEACEFUL PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS. UNLESS THERE IS INDEED A UNITY OF LIFE ALL OTHER UNION WILL BE USELESS. OUR LORD SPOKE OF THIS UNITY IN JOHN 10:16. OUR MUTUAL BOND WITH OTHER PEOPLES IS OUR MUTUAL BOND WITH OUR ONE SHEPHERD. THIS PRAYER OF OUR LORD FOR ONENESS OF LIFE WAS FULFILLED AT PENTECOST WHEN THE CHURCH OF MANY PEOPLE CAME TOGETHER IN

UNITY AND UNISON SHARING ONE COMMON LIFE TO WITNESS OF GOD'S SAVING GRACE. IT WAS THEN THAT THE CHURCH WAS INDEED ONE AS THE TRINITY IS ONE! I AM QUITE SURE THAT OUR LORD HAD NO INTENTION OF SUGGESTING THAT THE ECCLESIASTICAL WORLD BE TURNED INTO A GREAT RELIGIOUS ZOO WITH NO DISTINCTIONS OR DISTINCTIVES SIMPLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRESENTING A UNITED FRONT OF RELIGION. WITHOUT THE UNITY OF LIFE WHICH OUR LORD MENTIONED THE CHURCH NO MATTER HOW LARGE IN NUMBERS WOULD BE UTTERLY POWERLESS AND USELESS IN THE WORLD TO ACCOMPLISH GOD'S PURPOSE.

II. THE EARLY CHURCH'S PRACTICE OF UNITY

① THE PRACTICE OF UNITY IN PRAYER - Acts 1:13-14
THIS UNITY WAS MANIFESTED IN THE PLACE WHERE THEY PRAYED. THE UPPER ROOM HAS BECOME A SYMBOL OF PRAYER AND COMMUNION WITH GOD. EVERYBODY SHOULD HAVE SUCH A "PLACE". (RELATE JIGGS AND FAVORITE STUMP. MY EXPERIENCE IN THE PASTURE, PAPPY REAVEAL AND THE HAY RAKE.)

② THE PARTICIPATION - THE DISCIPLES WERE ALL THERE, THERE WERE NO HOLDOUTS, NO GIMMICKS TO GET THEM THERE, NO SUPPERS, SINGERS OR SPEAKERS. IT WAS AN EXTENDED PRAYER MEETING IN WHICH THEY WERE EXPECTED AND EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE. IN OTHER WORDS, THEY CAME THERE TO PRAY AND TO WAIT ON GOD AND FOR OTHER REASON! THE PERSISTENCE - ③
THE WORD "CONTINUED" MEANS LITERALLY THAT THEY "STUCK TO IT". THEIR UNITY IN PRAYER WAS MORE THAN A TEN MINUTE SEGMENT AT PRAYER MEETING OR SOME OTHER CHURCH FUNCTION. THEY TOOK TIME FOR AND MADE ROOM FOR PRAYER AND THEY STAYED WITH IT UNTIL GOD HEARD AND ANSWERED THEM. I'M AFRAID THAT MANY CHURCHES AS WELL AS BELIEVERS HAVE ABANDONED PRAYER AS AN INEFFECTIVE SPIRITUAL EXERCISE. SOMEONE HAS WELL SAID THAT WHEN IT COMES TO PRAYER SOME OF US ARE OCCASIONAL JOGGERS WHEN THE NEED IS FOR PEOPLE TO ENTER THE PRAYER MARATHON! PRAYER IS LIKE PHYSICAL EXERCISE.

B. Brink
suburban

MOST OF THE TIME WE DON'T "FEEL" LIKE DOING IT, BUT AS ONE GETS LIMBERED UP AND WORKS AT IT, IT BEGINS TO FEEL BETTER. "WE MUST NEVER WAIT UNTIL WE FEEL LIKE PRAYING BEFORE WE PRAY FOR OTHERS. PRAYER IS LIKE ANY OTHER WORK; WE MAY NOT FEEL LIKE WORKING, BUT ONCE WE HAVE BEEN AT IT FOR A BIT, WE BEGIN TO FEEL LIKE WORKING. WE MAY NOT FEEL LIKE PRACTICING THE PIANO, BUT ONCE WE PLAY FOR A WHILE WE LIKE DOING IT. IN THE SAME WAY, OUR PRAYER MUSCLES NEED TO BE LIMBERED UP A BIT AND ONCE THE BLOOD FLOW OF INTERCESSION BEGINS WE WILL FIND THAT WE FEEL LIKE PRAYING." (FOSTER)

B. THE PRACTICE OF UNITY IN PURPOSE - Acts 4:28-34.

HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED THE THINGS BELIEVERS ARE SAID TO DO TOGETHER IN THE BIBLE. (1) CHRISTIANS PRAY TOGETHER - Acts 3:1, 12:12. (2) BREAK BREAD TOGETHER - Acts 2:42. (3) WORK TOGETHER WITH GOD - II Cor. 6:1. (4) ASSEMBLE TOGETHER - HEBREWS 10:25. (5) CAUGHT UP TOGETHER - I THESS. 4:17, II THESS. 2:1. THERE WAS INDEED A BIBLICAL TOGETHERNESS IN THE EARLY CHURCH MANIFESTING A UNITY OF PURPOSE IN THE CHURCH TO GET THE GOSPEL TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH. (1) THIS UNITY WAS MANIFESTED IN PREACHING - vs. 31. IN THE FACE OF DANGER, THEY PROCLAIMED THE WORD OF GOD WITH BOLDNESS AND COURAGE. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR PREACHING WAS NOT UPPERMOST IN THE LINE. THE COMMISSION OF PROCLAIMING THE LORD'S RESURRECTION WAS PARAMOUNT IN THEIR THINKING. (2) THE UNITY IN THE PURPOSE WAS MANIFESTED IN THEIR POSSESSIONS - vs. 32. COMPARE ACTS 2:44. PLEASE NOTICE THAT THIS HAPPENED IN ONE LOCAL CHURCH JERUSALEM ONLY, IT WAS NOT COMPULSARY, IT AROSE OUT OF CHRISTIAN LOVE AND WAS NOT GOVERNMENTAL POLICY. THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH WAS MANIFESTED IN ITS CARE AND CONCERN FOR THE LORD'S PEOPLE IN EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE, INCLUDING THE SOCIAL SIDE. THEIR POSSESSIONS WERE INVOLVED IN THEIR PURPOSE. AS ALWAYS THERE WERE

GREAT BLESSINGS AS IN THE CASE OF BARNABUS AND GREAT PROBLEMS IN THE CASE OF ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA.

C. THE PRACTICE OF UNITY IN PERSECUTION -
Acts 5:40-42

BEATINGS DID NOT SILENCE THE CHURCH. THEY COUNTED IT ALL JOY TO BE WORTHY OF BEING DISHONORED FOR CHRIST. THIS IS A FAR CRY FROM THE PURSUIT OF APPROVAL TOO MANY CHURCHES AND BELIEVERS ARE ENGAGED IN TODAY. VANCE HAVNER REMINDS HIS READERS THAT AT THE COUNCIL OF NICEA NO MORE THAN A DOZEN OF THE 318 DELEGATES HAD NOT LOST AN EYE, HAND OR LEG FROM TORTURE OF THEIR CHRISTIAN FAITH.

III. THE MODERN CHURCH IN PURSUIT OF UNITY

THE PAST FEW YEARS HAVE SEEN EVANGELICALISM ON THE ASCENDANCY OF POPULARITY WITH SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 40 AND 50 MILLION SUPPOSED BORN AGAIN CHRISTIANS IN AMERICA. (IN MY JUDGMENT, IT IS NOTHING TO BRAGG ABOUT BECAUSE IT HAS NOT AFFECTED IN A SERIOUS MANNER THE MORAL TONE OF OUR NATION!) PRIOR TO THAT TIME THE WORD ECCUMENICAL WAS USED TO DESCRIBE A BROAD EFFORT ACROSS MANY DENOMINATIONS TO UNITE CHURCHES AROUND THE WORLD IN A UNITED FRONT. THE TERM COMES FROM THE GREEK WORD OIKOUMENE WHICH MEANS WORLD WIDE OR UNIVERSAL. EVEN AMONG SOME SUPPOSED BORN AGAIN CHRISTIANS THIS MOVEMENT HAD GREAT POPULARITY BECAUSE THEY MAINTAINED THAT LOVE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN DOCTRINE AND THERE WAS A PASSION FOR DIALOGUE WITH THEOLOGICAL LIBERALS IN ORDER FOR EVANGELICALISM TO GAIN SOPHISTICATION AND INTELLECTUAL RESPONSIBILITY. THEY MAINTAINED THAT THE GAINS OF THE ECCUMENICAL THRUST WERE FAR MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE BIBLICAL TRUTHS OF DISPENSATIONALISM, ESCHATOLOGY INCLUDING SUCH THINGS AS PREMILLENIALISM. TODAY WITH THE OLD ECCUMENICAL CONCEPT

RELATIVELY THERE IS A NEW MOVEMENT AROUND THE CHARISMATICS TO EMPHASIZE SPIRITUAL GIFTS AS OPPOSED TO DOCTRINE. (I REMIND SOME OF MY FRIENDS THAT THERE CAN BE NO GENUINE CHRISTIAN LOVE IF IT DOES NOT SPRING FROM THE FLOWER WHOSE ROOTS ARE BIBLICAL FAITH!) WITH THE WIDE-SPREAD APPROACH TO UNITE DENOMINATIONS THROUGH MERGERS THE SIMPLE TEST OF THE MOVEMENT IS THAT FEW IF ANY PEOPLE WERE AND ARE BROUGHT TO A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP THROUGH JESUS CHRIST THROUGH MOVEMENTS AND MERGERS IN AN EFFORT TO GAIN CHURCH UNITY. I READ THIS WEEK THAT ONE OF THE MAJOR DENOMINATIONS IN THIS COUNTRY LOOSES ONE MEMBER EVERY 15 MINUTES OF EVERY HOUR OF EVERY DAY OF EVERY WEEK IN EVERY YEAR. THERE WILL BE A GREAT ONE WORLD CHURCH, A GREAT SUPER CHURCH, BUT IT WILL NOT BE HEADED BY CHRIST, BUT RATHER THE ANTI-CHRIST! (READ REV. 17-18) THE QUESTION ARISES: "WILL THE CHURCH OF CHRIST EVER BE UNITED, AND WHAT IS GOD'S WAY OF UNITING THE CHURCH?" THE ANSWER TO UNITY IS MORE THAN SAYING THE SAME CREED, BELIEVING THE SAME DOCTRINE, SINGING THE SAME HYMNS, READING FROM THE SAME BIBLE AND LOVING THE SAME LORD. TO BE SURE, UNITY IN CHRIST ALLOWS ROOM FOR DIVERSITY IN DOCTRINE AND OPINIONS. THERE IS ROOM IN THE BODY OF CHRIST FOR CALVINISM AS WELL AS ARMINIASM. THERE IS ROOM FOR A JOHN WESLEY AS WELL AS A JOHN CALVIN. WHEN MARTIN LUTHER STOOD BEFORE THE DIET OF WORMS IT WAS THE MOST AUGUST ECCLESIASTICAL ASSEMBLY THE WORLD HAD SEEN TO DATE. IT WAS PRESIDED OVER BY EMPEROR CHARLES V WHOSE DOMINION EMBRACED TWO WORLDS. IT INCLUDED SIX ELECTORS OF THE EMPIRE, 30 DUKES, 30 PRALETS OF VARIOUS RANK, 7 AMBASSADORS, 5 DEPUTIES OF CITIES, A NUMBER OF PRINCES AND SOVERIGNS, COURTS AND BARRONS WITH THE POPE AND OTHERS. IMAGINE LUTHER STANDING BEFORE SUCH AN ASSEMBLY ALL ALONE. EVERY EYE WAS FIXED UPON HIM AND IN THAT SOLEMN STILL MOMENT LUTHER WAS ASKED IF HE HAD WRITTEN CERTAIN BOOKS AND WOULD HE RETRACT WHAT HE HAD WRITTEN.

→ This ch. union - greatest ever -
powerless

"Conscience"

LUTHER'S SPLENDID ANSWER WAS AS FOLLOWS:

"UNLESS I AM CONVICTED OF ERROR BY THE SCRIPTURES, I NEITHER CAN NOR DARE RETRACT ANYTHING, FOR MY CONSCIENCE IS HELD CAPTIVE BY GOD'S WORD. HERE I STAND, I CAN DO NOT OTHERWISE; GOD HELP ME. AMEN." UNITY IN THE CHURCH CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED WHEN IT IS A UNITY BORN OUT OF GOD'S WORD AND AS THE RESULT OF MATURE CHRISTIAN GROWTH. ONE REASON WHY THERE IS SO LITTLE UNITY IN CHURCHES TODAY IS RELATED TO THE REBELLION IN SOCIETY AND IN THE HUMAN HEART. MANY SCHOOL OFFICIALS HAVE GIVEN UP ON THE IDEA OF HAVING OBEDIENT STUDENTS WHO COME FROM UNDISCIPLINED HOMES WITH UNDISCIPLINED LIVES. THE SCHOOL BECOMES AN UNDISCIPLINED PLACE. HOW CAN WE EXPECT TO HAVE AN ORDERLY SOCIETY OR AN ORDERLY CHURCH UNLESS SOMETHING DRASTIC TAKES PLACE IN THE HEARTS AND LIVES OF MEN THROUGH OBEDIENCE TO THE GOSPEL AND SUBMISSION TO THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST. ACCORDING TO EPHESIANS 4:11-15 THE GREAT NEED OF MANY OF OUR CHURCHES IS NOT TO HAVE CHILDREN TOSSED TO AND FRO BY EVERY WIND OF DOCTRINE, BUT THAT WE MAY INDEED "GROW UP" TO MATURE SPIRIT LED BELIEVERS SEEKING TO ACCOMPLISH THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH. THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST IS INDEED A GREAT COMMISSION AND IT INVOLVES MORE THAN JUST WINNING SOULS TO CHRIST. THERE ARE 3 BASIC IDEAS TO THE GREAT COMMISSION THAT IS EVANGELIZE, BAPTIZE AND DISCIPLINE. IT INCLUDES ALL 3 IDEAS! FOR THOSE FOLK WHO ARE "OUT OF CONTROL" THERE IS ONE WHO IS ABLE TO PUT CONTROL BACK INTO THE LIFE AS WE YIELD TO HIM.

2-93
August 1, 1982

A.M.

"THE HOLY SPIRIT'S EQUIPPING"

EPHESIANS 6:10-18

Ch 1. Search
Ch 2. Study
Ch 3 - Study
Ch 4 - Unify
Ch 5 - Filling

(1) REVIEW SEALING, (2) INDWELLING, (3) STRENGTHENING,
 (4) UNIFYING, FILLING. SEVERAL YEARS AGO, NEWS-
 WEEK MAGAZINE CARRIED AN ARTICLE ENTITLED:
"WARS FOURTH DIMENSION". IT MENTIONED THE FACT
 THAT IN 1967 RUSSIA AND THE U.S. RATIFIED
 A TREATY OUTLAWING NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN SPACE
 AND FOR THAT REASON MOST PEOPLE ASSUMED BACK
 THEN THAT THE HEAVENS HAD BEEN DECLARED OFF
 LIMITS TO WARFARE. HOWEVER, THERE IS THINKING
 IN THE MILITARY COMMUNITY THAT ONE DAY A WAR
 MIGHT BE FOUGHT IN SPACE. MEN SPEAK OF DEATH
 RAYS, SMART BOMBS, LASERS, HUNTER-KILLER
 SATELITES. ~~ONE~~ THE MOST POWERFUL POTENTIAL WEAPON
 IN THE U.S. ARSNAL TO DATE IS THE SPACE
 SHUTTLE. IT CAN CARRY SEVEN ASTRONAUTS AND
 SIXTY-FIVE THOUSAND POUNDS OF CARGO INTO SPACE,
 RETURN TO EARTH AND BE READY FOR ANOTHER TRIP
 IN A MATTER OF DAYS. WITH IT THE PROVISION
 TO REFUEL SATELITES, PICK UP WORN OUT OR
 DAMAGED SPACE CRAFT AND REPLACE THEM WITH
 NEW ONES. IF THE U.S. EVER DECIDES TO PUT
 WEAPONS INTO ORBIT, THE SHUTTLE WILL BE ABLE
 TO REARM THEM IF NEED ARISES. IN TIME OF CRISIS
 THE SHUTTLE IS CAPABLE OF SWIPING A ~~RUSSIAN~~
 SPY SATELITE OR AN ORBITING LASER STATION IN
 THE SKY AND BRING IT BACK TO EARTH. FOR SOME
 YEARS NOW, PENTAGON PLANNERS HAVE SPOKEN
 QUIETLY ABOUT A FUTURE WAR IN SPACE. FOR THE
 CHRISTIAN, THERE IS A SENSE IN WHICH SUCH A
 WAR EXISTS HERE AND NOW. IT IS A WARFARE FEW
 UNDERSTAND OR TALK ABOUT BECAUSE IT IS UNSEEN
 TO THE NATURAL EYE, BUT ITS CASUALTIES ARE
 ASTRONOMICAL. THIS WEEK, SOME FELL VICTIM
 TO THIS WAR EVEN IN ~~OUR~~ CHURCH. DR. GAEBELEIN
 HAS CHARACTERIZED THIS WAR AS THE "CONFLICT OF
 THE AGES." IT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO EQUIPS
 AND ENABLES THE BELIEVER TO SURVIVE AND

Battleground for soldiers / playground for children

OVERCOME IN THIS INVISIBLE YET REAL WARFARE. (SOME BELIEVERS ENTER THIS CONFLICT THINKING THEY ARE EQUIPPED, BUT IN REALITY THEY ARE UNPREPARED - RELATE TO RACQUETBALL EXTERNALS WITHOUT SKILLS.) THE GREEK TEXT OF VERSE 16 READS "HAVING BEEN EQUIPPED TO QUENCH". IT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO HAS EQUIPPED THE BELIEVER FOR THE CONFLICT. THE TEXT REVEALS THREE BASIC IDEAS RELATING TO OUR SUBJECT:

I. THE CHRISTIAN'S ADVERSARY - vs. 11-12

COMMENT ON THE BOOK ENTITLED: THE FAKERS. THE RESULTS OF A MAGICIAN AND A CHRISTIAN PSYCHIATRIST. IT REVEALS THAT MANY OF THE SUPPOSED PSYCHIC HEALERS AND SEERS RESORT TO NOTHING MORE THAN TRICKERY AND FAKERY TO DECEIVE PEOPLE. HOWEVER, THEY CONCLUDE AS DOES THE BIBLE THAT THERE IS INDEED A SPIRIT WORLD NOT VISIBLE TO THE NATURAL EYE YET VERY REAL, VERY ORGANIZED AND VERY DANGEROUS. ACCORDING TO THIS VERSE, THE CHRISTIANS CONFLICT IS NOT PRIMARILY WITH HUMAN BEINGS, BUT AGAINST THE WORLD RULERS OF THIS DARKNESS AND THE TERM DARKNESS IS THE KEY. SATAN'S KINGDOM IS CHARACTERIZED BY SPIRITUAL DARKNESS. THE BIBLE CHARACTERIZES THE UNSAVED PERSON AS BOTH SPIRITUALLY BLIND AND IGNORANT. THESE BOAST OF THEIR LEARNING, CULTURE AND SOPHISTICATION, BUT IN REALITY THEIR LIVES ARE CHARACTERIZED BY SPIRITUAL DARKNESS. (II COR. 4:4) THE CHRISTIAN COMES IN CONFLICT WITH THE WORLD RULERS OF THIS DARKNESS, WICKEDNESS OR EVIL FORCES IN THE SPIRIT REALM WHO ARE OPPOSED TO GOD AND GOD'S PEOPLE. FROM THIS VERSE WE LEARN THAT SATAN'S KINGDOM IS WELL ORGANIZED, DIVIDED INTO DIFFERENT RANKS OF SPIRITUAL HOSTS WHO ARE HIS ASSOCIATES IN AND FOR EVIL. JUST AS THEIR IS GOVERNMENTAL ORDER AND RANK IN GOD'S ECONOMY, SO SATAN'S FORCES ARE DESCRIBED IN SIMILAR TERMS. THE VERSE SUGGESTS THAT SATAN'S INFLUENCE IN A POLITICAL SENSE CONCERNING THE

Darkness 1/18/1:5
 Rom. 1:21 - On 3:19 (Col 1:13) "outer darkness"
 Eph. 4:18 - 3:5-7 (2:19) Mt. 22:13/25:30

AFFAIRS OF EARTH IS SIGNIFICANT. THE PHILLIPS TRANSLATION SAYS: "UNSEEN POWER THAT CONTROLS THIS DARK WORLD, SPIRITUAL AGENTS FROM THE VERY HEADQUARTERS OF EVIL." THEREFORE, SATAN HAS RANKS OF ANGELS WHO ARE ASSIGNED SPECIAL SPHERES AND RESPONSIBILITIES THROUGH DELEGATED AUTHORITY FROM SATAN HIMSELF. THERE IS A WORLD SYSTEM OVER WHICH SATAN IS GOD. IT REFERS TO ALL WHO SEEK TO LIVE WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD OR MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO HIM. THE PRESIDING EVIL GENIUS OVER THIS SYSTEM IS SATAN HIMSELF AND THE OBJECTIVES AND GOALS OF HIS KINGDOM IS TO BE INDEPENDENT OF GOD. ALSO, THE POPULAR IDEA THAT JUST AS GOD IS KING OF HEAVEN SO SATAN IS KING OF HELL IS PURE MYTH. SATAN WILL NEVER BE KING OF HELL, BUT RATHER ITS CHIEF INMATE. HIS DESIRE IS TO BE KING OF HEAVEN! (Isa. 14:13-14)

II. THE CHRISTIAN'S ARMOUR - vs. 11, 13-17

WHEN PAUL WROTE EPHESIANS, HE WAS CHAINED DAY AND NIGHT TO THE WRIST OF A ROMAN SOLDIER. UNDOUBTEDLY PAUL AND THE SOLDIER TALKED OF MANY THINGS AND PAUL OBSERVED THE EQUIPMENT OF THE SOLDIER AND APPLIED EACH PART OF THAT EQUIPMENT TO THE CHRISTIAN CONFLICT. ARMOUR IS NO GOOD UNLESS YOU PUT IT ON. IN THE ROMAN ARMY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT WAS TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE ARMOUR AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT FOR ITS SOLDIERS TO WAGE WAR. THE TRUE SOLDIER IS ONE WHO DOES NOT FLEE IN THE FACE OF CONFLICT AND FOR THAT REASON PAUL ENCOURAGED THE EPHESIANS TO "STAND YOUR GROUND"! THE COURAGEOUS SOLDIER DOES NOT CRAWL, WALLOW, CRY, BEG OR RUN, BUT STANDS FULLY EQUIPPED IN THE FACE OF THE CONFLICT. IT IS A GREAT PRIVILEGE TO STAND FOR SOMETHING TODAY WHERE SO MANY OTHERS ARE FALLING FOR ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING! IN THE STRUGGLE FOR CHRIST, THE BELIEVER IS ENCOURAGED TO STAND FOR HIM. NOTICE THE WORDS OF A FAMILIAR HYMN: "SOLDIERS OF CHRIST ARISE, AND PUT YOUR ARMOUR ON,

✓11
STRONG IN THE STRENGTH WHICH GOD SUPPLYS THROUGH HIS ETERNAL SON; STRONG IN THE LORD OF HOSTS, AND IN HIS MIGHTY POWER, WHO IN THE STRENGTH OF JESUS TRUSTS IS MORE THAN CONQUEROR." WE SING THIS HYMN OF CHARLES WESLEY OFTEN WITHOUT THOUGHT.

IN VERSE 11 PLEASE NOTICE THE ARMOUR IS GOD'S. WE HAVE NOTHING FOR OUR OWN PROTECTION, NO WEAPONS IN OUR OWN ARSENAL, WE ARE DEPENDENT UPON GOD. THE WORD WHOLE SUGGESTS THE ARMOUR IS COMPLETE. THE ONLY PLACE WHERE NONE IS PROVIDED IS FOR THE BACK. GOD EXPECTS SOLDIERS IN HIS ARMY TO BE ON THE OFFENSIVE AND NOT IN RETREAT AND THEREFORE MADE PROVISION FOR THE FLEEING SOLDIER. LET US LOOK AT THE PIECES OF ARMOUR INDIVIDUALLY: (1)

1. THE BELT OF TRUTH - VS. 14 - THIS REFERS TO THE LEATHER GIRDLE TO WHICH THE SWORD WAS ATTACHED. IT ALSO PROVIDED PROTECTION FOR THE VITAL ORGANS AND GAVE ABILITY FOR FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT IN BATTLE. MEN CANNOT BE PROTECTED BY GOD'S TRUTH IF THEY DO NOT KNOW IT. WITHOUT EXPOSURE TO THE WORD OF GOD BOTH IN PRIVATE DEVOTIONS AND PUBLIC WORSHIP, SPIRITUAL DEFEAT IS INEVITABLE. THE CHRISTIAN IS NOT LEFT TO GUESSING AND GROPING. HE HAS GOD'S TRUTH AT HIS DISPOSAL. (2)

2. THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS - VS 14 - THE FUNCTION OF THE BREASTPLATE WAS TO COVER THE BODY IN VITAL SPOTS FROM THE NECK TO THE THIGHS. IT CONSISTED OF METAL DISKS AND WAS DESIGNED FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION FOR THE HEART. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BREASTPLATE IN ANCIENT COMBAT MAY BE SEEN IN THE WAY SOLDIERS FOUGHT. EACH MAN HAD A SHORT DAGGER WITH WHICH HE ATTEMPTED TO PENETRATE THE PROTECTIVE BREASTPLATE. IF THE EQUIPMENT WAS GOOD, THE SOLDIER WAS SAFE; IF IT WAS DEFECTIVE, IT COULD MEAN THE LOSS OF HIS LIFE. THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT CHRIST IS THE BELIEVER'S RIGHTEOUSNESS AND WE ARE CLOTHED IN HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. (II COR. 5:21)

3. (3) THE SANDALS - THE SANDAL WAS THAT PART OF THE SOLDIER'S EQUIPMENT WHICH TOUCHED THE EARTH. HOBNAILS IN THE SOLES PROVIDED ADEQUATE FOOTING FOR BATTLE. THE CHILD OF GOD IS ON "SURE GROUND" WHEN HE GOES OUT TO BATTLE SHOD WITH THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. USUALLY THE SERVANT OF THE LORD DOES BATTLE IN SATAN'S TERRITORY WHEN HE ATTEMPTS TO EVANGELIZE THE LOST. PAUL KNEW THAT THE WORLD NEEDS ABOVE ALL ELSE THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. (ROM. 1:16)
4. (4) THE SHIELD - APPARENTLY THERE WERE TWO KINDS OF SHIELDS IN THE ROMAN ARMY. ONE WAS A SMALL GLADIATOR SHIELD, WHICH COULD BE HELD IN ONE HAND. THE SHIELD IN OUR TEXT, HOWEVER, WAS ANOTHER KIND, APPROXIMATELY 30 INCHES WIDE AND 48 INCHES HIGH. IT WAS BIG ENOUGH FOR A SOLDIER TO CROUCH BEHIND AND BE FULLY PROTECTED. THESE SHIELDS WERE SO CONSTRUCTIVE THAT THEY COULD INTERLOCK AND SOLDIERS COULD MARCH AS ONE MAN IN A SOLID WALL AGAINST AN ENEMY. IT WAS MADE OF BRASS, COVERED WITH LEATHER USUALLY OBLONG IN SHAPE. ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS AND EFFECTIVE WEAPONS IN ROMAN TIMES WAS THE DART THAT COULD BE DIPPED IN PITCH AND SET AFLAME. THIS SHIELD WAS MADE OF TWO SECTIONS GLUED TOGETHER SO THAT THE DART WOULD PENETRATE TO A CERTAIN DEPTH AND THEN BE EXTINGUISHED. SOMETIMES SOLDIERS AFTER MARCHING LONG DISTANCES WERE TEMPTED TO PUT DOWN THE SHIELD, BUT SUCH PROCEDURE WAS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS. THE FAITH IS OUR SHIELD AGAINST SATAN'S DARTS OF QUESTIONS AND TEMPTATION.
5. (5) THE HELMET - THE HELMET WAS MADE OF LEATHER AND METAL PLATES. IT WAS DESIGNED TO PROTECT THE HEAD FROM A BLOW FROM A SWORD. THERE WERE TWO KINDS OF SWORDS FOR TWO KINDS OF COMBAT. ONE WAS A DAGGER, BUT THE OTHER A HEAVIER WEAPON 2 OR 3 FEET IN LENGTH WHICH WAS GRIPPED WITH BOTH HANDS AND RAISED IN AN OVERHEAD MOTION IN ORDER TO SPLIT THE SKULL OF THE ENEMY. THE MAN WHO IS IN DOUBT OF HIS OWN SALVATION WILL BE OF NO USE IN TAKING THE MESSAGE TO OTHERS. THE SOLDIER WHO

HAS NO CONFIDENCE IN BATTLE, WHO IS TOO CONCERNED ABOUT GETTING HIT WILL BE INEFFECTIVE IN COMBAT. THE HELMET OF SALVATION GUARDS THE TAUGHT LIFE OF THE MIND. AN UNGUARDED UNDISCIPLINED MIND MAKES THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR AN EASY PREY TO UNBELIEVING OR DEFILING THOUGHTS AND OTHER DECEPTIONS OF THE ENEMY, SO SAYS SANDERS. (6) THE SWORD - THE ROMAN SWORD WAS SHORT, STRONG AND SHARP DESIGNED FOR HAND TO HAND COMBAT. ACCORDING TO THIS VERSE, IT IS THE SPIRIT'S PRESENCE IN THE WORD THAT MAKES IT LIVING AND VITAL. THE HOLY SPIRIT USES GOD'S WORD TO ACCOMPLISH GOD'S WORK. (HEB. 4:12) JUST AS A METAL SWORD HAS THE ABILITY TO INFLICT WOUNDS ON ITS VICTIM, SO THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, THE WORD OF GOD, HAS THE ABILITY TO HEAL AND GIVE LIFE.

III. THE CHRISTIAN'S ARSENAL -

THE BELIEVER'S OFFENSIVE WEAPONS ARE BASICALLY TWO. (1) THE WORD OF GOD. (2) PRAYER. MUCH OF OUR FAILURE IN CHRISTIAN LIFE, IS FAILURE TO UTILIZE THE WEAPON OF PRAYER. PRAYER IS NOT AN OPTIONAL MATTER IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, BUT IS INDEED MANDATORY. THESE VERSES GIVE SEVERAL DECISIVE TRUTHS ABOUT PRAYER: (1) PRAYER IS ALWAYS APPROPRIATE - "ALWAYS" PRAYER IN ALL PLACES IN ALL OCCASIONS FOR PEOPLE IN EVERY WALK OF LIFE IS PART OF THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER'S DUTY AND RESPONSIBILITY. WHEN THE ENEMY SPRINGS A SUPRISE ATTACK UPON THE BELIEVER, HE MUST BE IN CONSTANT COMMUNICATION IN PRAYER. (2) THERE IS MORE THAN ONE KIND OF PRAYER - "ALL PRAYER" THE BIBLE SPEAKS OF SEVERAL DIFFERENT ELEMENTS OF PRAYER. (SEE BIBLE MARGIN) (3) PRAYER IS MORE THAN MUTTERING WORDS - "IN THE SPIRIT" SOMETIMES WE PRAY EMPTY WORDS FROM EMPTY MINDS WITH EMPTY RESULTS. THE SPIRIT OF GOD IS VITALLY INVOLVED IN THE PRAYER LIFE OF THE BELIEVER. ACCORDING TO ROMANS 8:26 HE EDITS OUR PRAYERS.

(4) STAY AWAKE WHEN YOU PRAY - "WATCHING... PERSEVERANCE" THE IDEA IS THAT OF SLEEPLESSNESS PRAYERLESSNESS IS DANGEROUS TO THE CHRISTIAN. THEREFORE HE IS ENCOURAGED TO STAY ALERT IN PRAYER. THE DISCIPLES FAILED TO LEARN THIS LESSON TO THEIR PERIL! (5) STICK TO PRAYING AND DON'T QUIT - THE WORD PERSEVERANCE MEANS TO STICK WITH SOMETHING WITHOUT QUITTING. THE EARLY CHURCH IN THE BOOK OF ACTS HAD LITTLE OR NO INFLUENCE IN SOCIETY AMONG THE RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL LEADERS OF THE DAY YET THEY PRAYED WITH SUCH POWER THAT THE ROMAN EMPIRE WAS TURNED UPSIDE DOWN. THERE IS A TENDENCY TO QUIT PRAYING TOO SOON. (LUKE 18:1) (6) PRAY FOR THE SAINTS - "FOR ALL SAINTS" THIS IS STRANGE LANGUAGE BECAUSE SOME WOULD THINK THE SAINTS SHOULD PRAY FOR US! WITHOUT PRAYER THERE WILL BE MANY SPIRITUAL CASUALTIES. PRAYER OPENS HEAVEN'S DOORS AND HUMAN HEARTS. IF PAUL, GREAT WARRIOR THAT HE WAS, CONSTANTLY PLEAD FOR THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS, DARE WE SETTLE FOR ANYTHING LESS. IT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO EQUIPS THE BELIEVER TO LIVE AND SURVIVE IN A SPIRITUALLY HOSTILE WORLD. ADVICE TO NEW BELIEVERS: GET A BIBLE - GET A BUDDY TO SHOW YOU HOW TO USE IT - GET A CHURCH - GET BUSY FOR GOD.

Adversary
Armour
Arsenal

(2 Cor. 10:4-5)

the enemy with
the gate = flesh.
A war of for the
soul.

EPH. 4:3

Steps In The Spirits Ministry: Unifying

We use the word united in many ways: ⁽¹⁾ United States, ⁽²⁾ United Nations, ⁽³⁾ United Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, ⁽⁴⁾ United Mine Workers. Union + Unity

Are Not the Same. (⁽²⁾ Cats - Closest)

(1) "Pastor" One Ch. is united for the first time in many years - against him!

(2) "We are united - frozen together"

Observation: United Becomes

Big I

Little U = (Disunity)

Untied By moving the i a couple of spaces!

Unity, which is a spirit of accord, cooperation, friendship, harmony, like-mindedness, peace — all impt. in any group association, sports team, orchestra, home church! This verse teaches that the Holy Spirit produces unity & peace in the church where where He NOT quenched!

- (1) Sealing
- (2) Indwelling
- (3) Strengthening

(1) Same marriages

A rare word in N.T. 2 Times

Both in Eph 4:21/3

"THE LORD'S PRAYER"

I. Jesus' Prayer For Unity
(John 17:21-23)

General View: Jesus called for all men of good will to reduce their ^{Religious} beliefs to the least possible common denominator, unite under one religious ~~and~~ banner of Brotherhood & move forward to influence the world for good. This sounds great. Surely all Christians should be willing to give up minor points of doctrine, & extend more Christian Courtesy to our brothers who may differ. (Vernon McLee suggests that such action would ~~produce~~ ^{produce} a great religious zoo in which all the animals released fr. their cages would devour each other!)

Biblical View:

Church history proves the folly of such thinking. There was a time ~~of~~ before the P Reformation when most men ~~of~~ were under the R. Ch's banner - there was outward oneness in forms of worship & R. treat. Anyone who disagreed was considered a heretic & persecuted ^{or} slain. There was universal acceptance of the Church - but never had the church been more dead & devoid of power!

Jesus was calling for the kind of unity in the Trinity...
a unity of life! A oneness of life. Our unity = to share God's life. (A common life)
This prayer was fulfilled

on the Day of Pentecost when
(Jn. 10:16) the church of many people
came together in unison +
unity - it was then that
the church was one indeed.

The Father / Son shared
a common life for all
Eternity + so shall we!!!

By the way, unity does not
mean uniformity. There is
room for differences of opinion
+ diversity of gifts, methods
of operation within the
pale of spiritual unity.

Section 11

What binds us together
today? We share a common
life (Jn. 3, Jn. 4, Jn. 5)
- "New Birth" -

Apart from this, all other unions
is useless + powerless.

A unity
of Life

Not
"cookie
cutter Christianity"

Up to
A Body

(Pattern)

II. THE Early Churches Practice of Unity - Acts 1:13-14 4:28-34 5:40-42

A. Unity In Prayer - (1:13-14) The disciples were there.

No absentees, No suppers,
No singers, No prizes —
The came ... Continued —
In the Upper Room — there
was room for prayer.

B. Unity In Purpose - 4:28- (32) 34

Unity in preaching - v. 31
Unity in possessions - v. 32

* A voluntary Act of Ch. love
Not a governmental policy.

Unity manifested in its care
of the Lord's people.

C. Unity In Persecution 5:40-42

Beatings did not silence the message. Vane Harner... at the Council of Nicaea no more than a dozen of the 318 delegates had lost an eye, leg, ~~hand~~ arm - tortured for their faith.

III. THE MODERN Church In Pursuit of Unity

The word ecumenical has been used to describe a broad effort across all denominations to unite under one banner.

Love over doctrine. (Flower
Roots)

The answer to unity is more than saying the same Creed, singing same songs. ~~that is~~ When Martin Luther stood before Diet of Worms it was the most august Eccles. Assembly in the world. It

was presided over by Emperor Charles V. 80 Delegates, 30 prelates, 7 Ambassadors, — deputies, princes, Barons — the heads of the religious world — against 1 man — a lonely monk. Luther told to retract what he had written.

"Unless I am convicted of error by the Scriptures, I neither can nor dare retract anything, for my conscience is held captive By God's Word.

Here, I stand, I can do not otherwise; 'God help me.'

The secret to unity begins in the heart — moves outward.

EPH. 4:3

Be eager, ye diligent in guarding the ~~unity~~ our Sacred Oneness in the

church. Work at it ...
all of you, all the time.
Just as in marriage & family
relationships, if self moves
to the center of the picture
- peace will be shattered.
It can't be Me #1
He #2 (Gal. 2:20)

"Satan uses people who
must have their own way."
(www)